

TRA Announces Establishment of Permanent Consumer Advisory Group

**-- Group tasked with voicing consumer needs and requirements to
the TRA --**

Manama, 16 August 2006 – The TRA announced today the establishment of the permanent Consumer Advisory Group that will be tasked with providing feedback to the TRA on consumer-related issues. This is the first such permanent group established by the TRA, and the membership period for each member is one year subject to renewal. The formation of this group comes as an additional step towards obtaining continuous consumer feedback on issues that relate to consumers in telecommunications. It is worth noting that the TRA Development Review Panel 2006 had recommended that the TRA establish such a group in order to facilitate consumer feedback at this critical stage of early competition in the market.

The Consumer Advisory Group will enable consumers to take an active role in issues that affect them, through the recommendations they make to the TRA. The Group is independent of the TRA, and while the TRA may offer its help on request, it is not involved in the recommendations or decisions made by the group.

In line with the TRA's transparent approach to providing information, a separate section on its website will be dedicated to the group. This section will contain all the information related to the group and its activities, including the minutes of its meetings and its recommendations.

The TRA has sought to include various segments of society, reflecting the needs of all types of consumers if possible. To this end it approached all governorates in the Kingdom to name their representatives in the group, so as to ensure that all regions of the Kingdom are represented in the group. Furthermore, the TRA invited groups representing different segments of society as well as groups representing consumers with special needs. The group comprises the following members (listed alphabetically as per organization name):

Organization

Al Hekma Society for Retired
Bahrain Consumer Protection Society
Bahrain Mobility International
Capital Governorate
Central Governorate
Children & Mothers Welfare Society
Muharraq Governorate

Representative

Mr. Abdulrahman Fakhroo
Ms. Wafa Abulrahman Al Mansoori
Mr. Khalid Abu Falah
Mr. Isa Ibrahim Mandi
Ms. Lamyra Hasan Flamrzi
Ms. Sawsan Qamber
Mr. Mohammed Ali Buchiri

Northern Governorate	Mr. Jehad Sallom
Southern Governorate	Mr. Mohammed Hasan Al Faw
Supreme Council for Women	Ms. Najma Janahi
The Saudi - Bahraini Institute for the Blind	Mr. Abdulwahed Mohameed Al Khayat

During their second meeting the members of the group elected the representative of the Bahraini Consumer Protection Society, Dr. Wafa Al Mansoori, to be the chairperson of the group and the representative of the Supreme Council of Women, Ms. Najma Janahi, to be the vice chairperson.

The General Director of the TRA, in welcoming the establishment of the group, said: "It is with great pleasure that we announce the formation of the Consumer Advisory Group today as yet another step in seeking active involvement from consumers on issues that affect them. Over recent months it has become ever more evident to every one that consumers have a very important role to play in a competitive market. In particular, consumers are also beginning to realize that they need to make their voice heard in order to get what they want. In our recent consumer awareness campaign we advised consumers to "Keep Asking" from operators. Through this group we are encouraging consumers to "Keep Asking" from the TRA too. By establishing this group we aim to provide consumers with a channel that will enable them to inform us of their concerns and requirements, so that we can then take the appropriate measures to address them. We want to meet the needs of consumers and will seek to do so within the parameters the Telecommunications Law allows us. I wish the group and its members all the best in this task and we look forward to receiving their comments and recommendations for the benefit of consumers."

The chairperson of the Group, Dr. Wafa Al Mansoori, made the following statement: "I would like to thank the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority on behalf of the members for establishing the Consumer Advisory Group. This step taken by the TRA reflects the keenness of the Authority to establish direct communications with telecoms consumers."

The TRA has also announced that a Business Users Advisory Group is in the process of being established and which will be providing input to the TRA from the business user perspective.

Note to Editors:

About the TRA

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) was established by Legislative Decree No. 48 of 2002 promulgating the Telecommunications Law. The TRA is an independent body and its duties and powers include, among other things, protecting the interests of subscribers and users and promoting effective and fair competition among existing and new licensed operators. More information regarding the TRA can be viewed at www.tra.org.bh