



TRA awards two National Fixed Wireless Services (NFWS) licenses to MTC-Vodafone Bahrain and Mena Telecom

Manama, 8 January 2007- The Acting General Director of the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of the Kingdom of Bahrain, Dr. Mohammed J.K. Alghatam, received Dr. Ahmed Al Shatti, Chief Operation Officer in MTC-Vodafone Bahrain and Mr. Osama Sanad, Chief Financial Officer in Mena Telecom on the occasion of the award of the two National Fixed Wireless Services (NFWS) licenses.

The award comes after the completion of the auction process for the NFWS licenses, which ended on 13 December 2006 with the opening of the financial bids. Upon the completion of the process it was announced that MTC-Vodafone Bahrain with a bid of approximately BD 5.5 million and Mena Telecom with a bid of approximately BD 4.5 million were the two highest bidders for the NFWS licenses.

Pursuant to the NFWS licenses, both companies have to commercially launch their national fixed wireless services within 18 months from the date of the award. Their obligations include a minimum requirement of coverage for 40% of the population that increases to full coverage in 48 months subject to a set timetable. In addition, the licenses also outline the applicable penalties in case of failing to meet these deadlines.

The NFWS licenses will pave the way for fixed wireless connectivity to customers for voice and data services. This in turn means that the two companies awarded the licenses will be able to provide services to end customers. The licenses entitle the two companies to offer local voice telephony, and subject to obtaining the additional relevant licenses, they may also provide international calls, internet and other services. .

The Acting General Director of the TRA, Dr. Mohammed J.K. Alghatam gave the following statement after the award of the licenses: "It is with great pleasure that we arrive at the important milestone of awarding the

National Fixed Wireless Services licenses. We believe that this is yet another vital step in creating service level competition in the telecommunications sector in the Kingdom. We are looking forward to the availability of wireless broadband services to consumers and businesses. The TRA will be monitoring the progress of the launch for these new licenses and expect to see both companies offering new, innovative services at competitive prices.”

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