



TRA and members of the Telecom Industry discuss issues of priority

Manama 23 January 2007 – The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) met yesterday with members of the telecommunications industry and potential investors to discuss the issues of concern telecom operators are facing. This meeting is part of a series of meetings TRA is holding with relevant stakeholders including consumers and business users. In his opening address Alan Horne, the General Director Designate, emphasized that TRA aims to gather market input from these face to face meetings. The input will assist TRA in refining the soon to be issued consultation on the Work Plan of TRA.

The meeting was attended by TRA Chairman and Board of Director members, Under Secretary for Postal, Communications and Frequency Affairs, in addition to licensed operators and potential investors.

During the meeting the participants highlighted a number of issues as priority for the industry. Two main issues emerged as top priorities: the need to increase competitive availability of international connectivity and facilitation of access to end customers. The participants touched on what actions they consider to be a priority for TRA to facilitate competition in the market. Furthermore, the discussions focused on the relationship between new operators and the incumbent in terms of the supply of services and access to infrastructure at wholesale prices.

Alan Horne took the opportunity to announce that TRA will be undertaking a review of the market in the first half of this year. This review will include consumer surveys and data collection from operators and will give TRA and indeed all interested parties a factual picture of the state of the market in Bahrain. More information on the market review will be released by TRA in the near future.

In addition, TRA has announced that it will be setting up industry working groups on several issues such as numbering, quality of service, etc. The aim of these groups is to work together with licensees to seek

solutions on specific issues which will assist the availability of high quality competitive services. The feedback received from these groups will form the foundation for the consultative process that TRA undertakes prior to formulating its decisions. Hence giving the industry the opportunity to contribute to the decision-making process from very early stages.

TRA will also be taking another step to promote dialogue in the industry through the formation of a licensees group. This group will have the telecoms operators as members, and is envisioned to foster cooperation between licensees on matters of interest and ultimately finding solutions to their common problems.

Following on from the meeting, TRA will be incorporating the feedback received from the industry in its Work Plan that will be issued for consultation next month. The Work Plan will list in detail the projects of TRA in the next three years. The industry and public at large will have the opportunity to comment on the draft plan during the consultation process. As usual TRA will be announcing the issuance of the draft Work Plan through the local media and it will also be available for download through its website www.tra.org.bh.

About TRA

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) was established by Legislative Decree No. 48 of 2002 promulgating the Telecommunications Law . 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 TRA can be viewed at www.tra.org.bh