



News Release

TRA Launches Its First State of the Nation Review on Online Safety “A Road Map for the Future”

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Under the Patronage of H. E. Sheikh Ahmed bin Atiyatallah Al Khalifa, Minister of Cabinet Affairs, Minister Responsible for the Telecommunications Sector, on 25 October 2010 The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of the Kingdom of Bahrain (TRA) will launch the State of the Nation Review into internet and digital media safety awareness and risk assessment, “Online Safety: A Road Map for the Future”, at which the recommendations designed to move towards a safer online environment for all will be unveiled.

These recommendations arise from a comprehensive State of the Nation Review on Online Safety completed on behalf of TRA earlier this year. It provides analysis of Internet safety issues amongst adults and children, and sets out recommendations to ensure the safety of young people and adults navigating the information highway.

The State of the Nation Review project, led by Professor Julia Davidson, from Kingston University, London and Doctor Elena Martellozzo from Middlesex University, explored the experiences and level of awareness amongst young people (aged 7 to 18) and adults regarding use of the internet and general digital media safety. The findings are based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative research techniques in public and private sector schools.

TRA’s Deputy General Director, Mr. Rob Middlehurst said “Online Safety has become a topic of growing concern in recent years. As a forerunner in the region, TRA has initiated a campaign by initially organizing and hosting an international conference on “Safesurf” Creating a National Consensus for Online Safety which also witnessed the cooperation of local ISPs who committed to make the internet safer to the users. During which TRA also started the state of the nation review project.”

Mr. Middlehurst went on to say “This is the first such review to be conducted not only in Bahrain but in the whole region. It identifies the dangers and explains the potential risks to online users, and through the recommendations sets out a roadmap that will bring together online users, parents, educational institutions, law enforcement agencies, legislators, ISPs and software providers to collectively build safer online environment.”

TRA’s Communications and Consumer Affairs Director Mr. Basil Al Arrayed said “The ongoing campaign and the initiatives that we are planning to implement will not only be a first in the Arab Region, but also the world, building on the successes of the 2010 conference, and the

recommendations of the State of the Nation review, TRA will on behalf of the Kingdom build a campaign that will not only raise the level of ICT literacy but empower parents to better understand the risks and challenges they and their children face using the Internet. Providing them with the knowledge required to deal with online abuse and protect their children. We will also seek to build the infrastructure required to protect ICT users of all capabilities. During the conference initiatives that will at a country level will provide some of the foundations required to ensure that the Kingdom's internet subscribers are protected from internet harm."

About TRA

Since its establishment in 2002 the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of the Kingdom of Bahrain (TRA) has been working with government, consumers, operators and investors to develop the Kingdom of Bahrain into the region's most modern communications hub and to facilitate the growth of the market. As an exemplary Regulator for the region, TRA independently carries out its duties in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner. More information about TRA can be viewed at www.tra.org.bh

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