



## **TRA plans to conduct its first Strategic and Retail Market Review for the Telecommunications Sector**

**Manama, 13 February 2006** – The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) announced today that it is to begin a strategic review of telecommunications in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The review will take place over the coming months.

TRA has been operating for three years, during which many new licenses have been issued, markets have developed significantly, and competition has intensified for a number of services. But it is unclear to what extent and in which retail markets competition has become effective. Accordingly, TRA will conduct a rigorous review based on market surveys in order to obtain a clearer picture of the state of telecoms markets in Bahrain. Such strategic reviews are quite common in liberalized markets, where regulators conduct them periodically so as to assess the state of the market and identify how they should respond to market needs.

One element of the review will be an assessment of the current state of competition in retail markets, and will involve identifying specific markets and the state of competition in each of these markets.

A further element of the strategic review will be the aim to understand the needs of all consumers in Bahrain, and to determine the extent to which these needs are being met and how they might be better met in the future. This part of the strategic review will involve significant market research and will contribute to the development of consumer-focused TRA policies.

TRA expects that the results of the review of the telecommunications sector will be published early in the second half of 2007. At about the same time, TRA will put forward its proposals for the regulatory framework for retail markets, based on the specific market reviews.

In order to accomplish this project, TRA will require considerable assistance from the various stakeholders in the industry. TRA will be pleased to receive by 28 February 2007 views and comments from consumers and operators on the proposed review process.

Commenting on the publication of the draft strategic review document, the General Director of the TRA, Mr. Alan Horne, said: "Three years on from the establishment of the TRA, we feel that the time is now right to conduct a comprehensive strategic review of the telecoms market in Bahrain. This strategic review will enable the TRA to understand which regulations are required to promote competition effectively, and offer us valuable insight into consumer expectations regarding telecommunications services. We plan to use the feedback received in the process to better understand and, in turn, address the needs of both the industry and consumers. We are aware that this is not a project that can be carried out in isolation from the various stakeholders, and as such we are inviting interested parties to submit their comments on the published document in order to assist us in serving the industry for the benefit of operators and consumers alike".

### **Notes to Editors:**

#### 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](http://www.tra.org.bh)