

## WORK PLAN

**TRA Three-Year Work Plan for 2007 - 2009**

# **Three-Year Work Plan of the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of the Kingdom of Bahrain**

**2007-2009**

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# WORK PLAN

## TRA Three-Year Work Plan for 2007 - 2009

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## TRA Three-Year Work Plan for 2007 - 2009

### 1 Introduction

This document is the three-year work plan of the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of the Kingdom of Bahrain ("TRA") for 2007 - 2009. The plan has been prepared taking into consideration discussions with consumers, business customers and the telecommunications industry in order to determine priorities and thus develop TRA's detailed programme for 2007-2009. This document also takes into account responses to the consultation on the draft work plan, performed from 11 March 2007 to 8 April 2007. The results of the consultation are summarized in the separate report published by TRA. The 2006 report of the TRA Development Panel was also used as input for the drafting of the work plan.

The plan will be reviewed at the end of each year and updated to reflect achievements as well as market changes. The plan will also be reviewed when the new National Telecommunications Plan is approved with a view to appropriately incorporating any changes to national policy objectives in TRA's activities.

The work plan is built upon the vision and mission of TRA:

**Our Vision:** To develop the Kingdom of Bahrain into the region's most modern communications hub and to facilitate the development of the market.

**Our Mission:** To protect the interests of subscribers and users of telecommunications services and maintain effective and fair competition between established and new entrants to the telecommunications market of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The aim of this plan is to use the **Vision of the policy, regulatory and institutional framework for the end of 2009** as a guide to our current actions. The Vision is formulated along the following action lines:

1. Policy and regulatory environment that enables sustainable competitive services, offering the best choices and quality at affordable prices for consumers in the context of the Bahraini economy (**Enabling environment**);
2. Proportionate and necessary pro-competitive regulatory intervention in place where competitive forces are unable to overcome market failures (**Fostering competition**);
3. Customers able to make fully informed choices of the services they are being offered (**Customer awareness**);

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4. Proportionate measures to achieve basic level of customer protection that market forces alone would not provide (**Customer protection**);
5. Appropriate regulatory framework contributing to the general governmental policies of national development (**Development support**);
6. Effective regulatory institutional structures reflecting market and technological developments (**Appropriate institutional structures**).

TRA believes that the policy, regulatory and institutional framework described above will significantly contribute to Bahrain becoming the region's most modern communications hub with a rapid market development bringing benefits to consumers and businesses. Nevertheless, TRA recognizes the fact that the vision may need to be implemented progressively in order to give due regard to such factors as the necessity to change the market structure smoothly without unnecessary shocks to the economy, to provide appropriate legal certainty to market players and to appropriately balance the need for a more competitive market with the necessity not to discourage market players from investing in the market.

This document sets out what the TRA considers to be areas that need to be dealt with. There may, of course, be alterations to the plan due to developments in the market requiring the immediate attention of the TRA, such as an excessive number of cases requiring regulatory action.

TRA will internally develop specific schedules of implementation for tasks included in the plan where necessary. The work plan does not include routine daily tasks. Tasks contributing to several action lines are included in the action line they relate to most (with indications of other relevant action lines).

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### 2.1. Summary of tasks

This section provides a summary table of all the tasks included in the Work Plan. Further information on each task is provided in Section 3.2.

Task number	Task name	Starts in
<b>Action Line 1. Enabling environment</b>		
1.	Review duct (and other infrastructure) construction and sharing policies and adopt proposals for improving them	2007
2.	Review the availability and diversity of high-quality and high-speed international access and, if necessary, encourage new capacity and routes. Consider possibility of taking measures related to	2007

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Task number	Task name	Start s in
	the sharing of the available facilities	
3.	Adopt a framework for the collection, aggregation and publication of statistical data and establish key market performance indicators in order to make evaluation of market performance possible	2007
4.	In conjunction with the Directorate of Wireless Licensing, Frequency and Monitoring, review and update the telecommunications spectrum plan, determine the spectrum available for telecommunications services, develop comprehensive spectrum migration/refarming plan, review the processes associated with allocation, assignment, monitoring and enforcement in the use of telecommunications spectrum as well as procure a modern spectrum management system	2007
5.	Collect information on spectrum needs for telecommunications purposes and issue available licences accordingly	2007
6.	Evaluate the option of licensing additional mobile (MNO/MVNO) operator/s and issue a license/licenses subject to positive outcome of the evaluation	2007
7.	Review the regime of retail price control (also contributes to action lines 2 and 4)	2007
8.	Review and update of the licensing regime (also contributes to action lines 2 and 5)	2007
9.	Review and update of the national numbering plan	2007
10.	Review legal framework for the regulation of VoIP	2007
11.	Develop dispute resolution framework	2008
12.	Review and update procedures for granting type approvals	2007
13.	Evaluation of feasibility of implementing ENUM, and implementation thereof subject to a positive evaluation	2009
<b>Action Line 2. Fostering competition</b>		
14.	Strategic market review and retail market reviews (also contributes to action line 1)	2007
15.	Review of the wholesale tariffs control mechanisms	2007
16.	Implementation of local loop unbundling	2007
17.	Review of the functioning of the framework for Carrier Pre-selection with a view to updating it and/or taking other actions in this field if necessary	2007
18.	Review of the framework for accounting separation	2009
<b>Action Line 3. Customer awareness</b>		
19.	Consumer awareness campaigns	2007
20.	Electronic comparator of tariffs and public information on Quality of Service levels (according to Key Performance Indicators)	2008
21.	Development of the ability of consumer and enterprise associations to participate in the activities of TRA more actively and efficiently	2007
<b>Action Line 4. Customer protection</b>		
22.	Adopt a basic consumer rights' protection framework, particularly in relation to billing, collection and payment processes and standard subscriber agreements	2007
23.	Number portability (also contributes to action line 1)	2007
24.	Review availability of basic telecommunications services and consider implementing universal access and/or universal service schemes	2009
<b>Action Line 5. Development support</b>		
25.	Adopt a framework for assigning spectrum for experimental/R&D telecommunications purposes (in conjunction with the Directorate of Wireless Licensing, Frequency and Monitoring)	2009
<b>Action Line 6. Appropriate institutional structures</b>		
26.	Make procedures for stakeholders' interaction with TRA more effective	2007
27.	TRA regulatory approach position paper (strategy paper)	2009

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### 2.2. Comprehensive Work Plan

Goal	Task Number and Name	Expected outcome	2007	2008	2009
<b>Action Line 1. Enabling environment</b>					
Create conditions for effective infrastructure rollout	1. Review duct (and other infrastructure) construction and sharing policies and adopt proposals for improving them	Enabling environment for effective infrastructure roll-out	√	√	
Ensure adequate international capacity is in place	2. Review the availability and diversity of high-quality and high-speed international access and, if necessary, encourage new capacity and routes. Consider possibility of taking measures related to the sharing of the available facilities	Increased availability and diversity of international internet capacity as well as reduction of costs of international capacity	√	√	
Allow TRA and market players to reach informed decisions that take into account the actual market situation as well as evaluate market performance over time	3. Adopt a framework for the collection, aggregation and publication of statistical data and establish key market performance indicators in order to make evaluation of market performance possible	Statistical framework as well as ability to evaluate market performance in place	√		
Open the spectrum to telecommunications market players	4. In conjunction with the Directorate of Wireless Licensing, Frequency and Monitoring, review and update the telecommunications spectrum plan, determine the spectrum available for telecommunications services, develop comprehensive spectrum migration/refarming plan, review the processes associated with allocation, assignment, monitoring and enforcement in the use of telecommunications spectrum as well as procure	Ensuring that spectrum is available to satisfy telecommunications market needs at reasonable cost as well as ensuring effective allocation, assignment, monitoring and enforcement of the spectrum	√	√	

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Goal	Task Number and Name	Expected outcome	2007	2008	2009
	a modern spectrum management system				
	5. Collect information on spectrum needs for telecommunications purposes and issue available licences accordingly	Opening the available spectrum to the telecommunications market	√	√	
Create more open competition and greater choice in the mobile telephony market	6. Evaluate the option of licensing additional mobile (MNO/MVNO) operator/s and issue a license/licenses subject to positive outcome of the evaluation	Additional market player/s in the mobile telephony market, subject to a positive outcome of the assessment	√		
More flexible retail price control regime that would still sufficiently protect consumers	7. Review the regime of retail price control (also contributes to action lines 2 and 4)	More flexible regime for retail tariff control	√	√	
Reduce barriers to entry into telecommunications market	8. Review and update of the licensing regime (also contributes to action lines 2 and 5)	Light-touch licensing regime allowing easy market entry	√	√	
Ensure that numbering policies do not create market barriers	9. Review and update of the national numbering plan	Clear framework for numbering, including short codes, premium charge and freephone services	√ (review)	√ (implementation)	
Ensure legal certainty in the provision and ability to use innovative services, in particular VoIP	10. Review legal framework for the regulation of VoIP	Position paper on the legal status of VoIP	√		
Ensure market players and consumers obtain fast and appropriate remedy if their rights are infringed	11. Develop dispute resolution framework	Effective dispute resolution framework		√	
Reduce the barriers	12. Review and update	Simpler and more	√	√	

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Goal	Task Number and Name	Expected outcome	2007	2008	2009
to bringing equipment into the market of Bahrain	procedures for granting type approvals	straightforward framework for type approvals, minimizing the cost and time to market for equipment suppliers			
Potential use of next generation identification systems	13. Evaluation of feasibility of implementing ENUM, and implementation thereof subject to a positive evaluation	ENUM system in place (subject to a positive outcome of the evaluation)			√ (evaluation and possible start of implementation)
<b>Action Line 2. Fostering competition</b>					
Evaluate present regulatory regime and propose specific actions for the future	14. Strategic market review and retail market reviews (also contributes to action line 1)	Reinforcing pro-competitive regulatory framework, including evaluation of the possibility of introducing new pro-competitive measures, such as carrier selection, wholesale line rental and/or further structural/functional separation	√		
Ensure that competition is enhanced through the use of adequate wholesale products priced at the level of the costs incurred by an efficient operator	15. Review of the wholesale tariffs control mechanisms	Wholesale tariffs reflecting costs incurred by an efficient operator	√	√	
	16. Implementation of local loop unbundling	Creating possibility for partial infrastructure competition	√	√	
	17. Review of the functioning of the framework for Carrier Pre-selection with a view to updating it and/or taking other actions in this	Ensuring effective possibility of using Carrier Pre-selection for provision of competitive services	√		

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Goal	Task Number and Name	Expected outcome	2007	2008	2009
	field if necessary				
Ensure that adequate information on costing of services to be regulated is available	18. Review of the framework for accounting separation	Simpler and clearer framework for accounting separation as well as necessary transparency of regulated accounts			√
<b>Action Line 3. Customer awareness</b>					
Increase consumer ability to choose and protect themselves in the competitive market	19. Consumer awareness campaigns	Increased knowledge of consumers' rights and threats to them	√	√	
Increase transparency of service offerings to consumers	20. Electronic comparator of tariffs and public information on Quality of Service levels (according to Key Performance Indicators)	Enhanced consumer ability to compare the service offers of various operators in relation to their price and quality		√	
Increase public participation in regulation	21. Development of the ability of consumer and enterprise associations to participate in the activities of TRA more actively and efficiently	Increased input regarding the activities of TRA from the public, as well as increased awareness about TRA	√		
<b>Action Line 4. Customer protection</b>					
Ensure that basic consumer rights are protected	22. Adopt a basic consumer rights' protection framework, particularly in relation to billing, collection and payment processes and standard subscriber agreements	Basic consumer rights effectively safeguarded	√		
Increase customer choice and enhance competition in the voice markets	23. Number portability (also contributes to action line 1)	Customers' ability to change their service provider while retaining their numbers	√	√	
Ensure that the most socially vulnerable have access to basic telecommunications services	24. Review availability of basic telecommunications services and consider implementing universal access and/or universal service schemes	Adequate and affordable access to basic telecommunications services by all user groups			√

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Goal	Task Number and Name	Expected outcome	2007	2008	2009
<b>Action Line 5. Development support</b>					
Foster Research and Development (R&D) activities in Bahrain	25. Adopt a framework for assigning spectrum for experimental/R&D telecommunications purposes (in conjunction with the Directorate of Wireless Licensing, Frequency and Monitoring)	Creating incentives for experimental/R&D activities in the field of radio equipment			√
<b>Action Line 6. Appropriate institutional structures</b>					
Render interaction with TRA effective, simple and straightforward	26. Make procedures for stakeholders' interaction with TRA more effective	More effective way to interact with TRA consistent with international best practice	√	√	
Increase legal certainty in relation to possible regulatory actions	27. TRA regulatory approach position paper (strategy paper)	Transparent regulatory strategy in place as a basis for the Work Plan for the next planning period			√