

## CONSULTATION

**On the TRA Draft Three-Year Work Plan for 2007 - 2009**

**A Consultation document issued by the  
Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA)**

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The address for responses to this document is:

The General Director

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P.O. Box 10353, Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain

Alternatively, e-mail responses may be sent to the  
Authority's email address at [consult@tra.org.bh](mailto:consult@tra.org.bh)

The deadline for responses is **4 p.m. on 8 April 2007**



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## On the TRA Draft Three-Year Work Plan for 2007 - 2009

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## On the TRA Draft Three-Year Work Plan for 2007 - 2009

### 1 Introduction

This document is the draft of the 2007 - 2009 three-year work plan of TRA. The draft 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. 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 and has been produced following a series of meetings with stakeholders. The 2006 report of the TRA Development Panel was also used as input for the drafting of the work plan.

**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**);
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**);

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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. TRA intends to produce a position paper where it will outline its regulatory approach (regulatory strategy) in more detail at a later stage.

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 major 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 related to all action lines are included separately. Tasks contributing to several action lines are included in the action line they relate to most (with indications of other action plans).

In finalizing the plan and prioritizing the actions, TRA will take into account the responses received.

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#### 2 Consultation process

TRA seeks to receive comments on this proposed work plan. In order to be able to quantify the views of stakeholders and to process responses more efficiently, TRA requests stakeholders to respond to this consultation using the response form attached. Stakeholders are also free to submit additional comments if they wish to do so.

TRA invites comments on this consultation document from all interested parties. Comments can be submitted by filling in the response form at the end of this document. Comments should be submitted before **4 p.m. on 8 April 2007**.

The address for responding to this document is:

The General Director  
Telecommunications Regulatory Authority  
P.O. Box 10353, Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain

Alternatively, responses may be sent to TRA for the attention of the General Director by email to [consult@tra.org.bh](mailto:consult@tra.org.bh) or by facsimile to +973 17 532 125.

Unless submissions are marked “confidential”, TRA reserves the right to make all submissions available to the public. If a submission is marked “confidential”, reasons should be given which TRA will evaluate. TRA may publish or refrain from publishing any document or submission, at its sole discretion.

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### 3 Work Plan

#### 3.1. 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.

<b>Task number</b>	<b>Task name</b>
<b>Tasks covering all action lines</b>	
1.	Input into the drafting of the National Telecommunications Plan 2007-2009
<b>Action Line 1. Enabling environment</b>	
2.	Review of duct (and other infrastructure) construction and sharing policies and proposals for improving them
3.	Review and update of the licensing regime (also contributes to action lines 2 and 5)
4.	Collect information on spectrum needs for telecommunications purposes and issue available licences accordingly
5.	In conjunction with the Directorate of Wireless Licensing, Frequency and Monitoring, review and update the telecommunications spectrum plan, determine the spectrum available for public and private 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
6.	Evaluate the option of licensing additional mobile (MNO/MVNO) operator/s and issue a license/licenses subject to positive outcome of the evaluation
7.	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
8.	Review and update procedures for granting type approvals
9.	Adopt a framework concerning the collection, aggregation and publication of statistical data and establish key market performance indicators in order to make evaluation of market performance possible
10.	Develop dispute resolution framework
11.	Review the regime of retail price control (also contributes to action lines 2 and 4)
12.	Review and update the national numbering plan
13.	Evaluation of feasibility of implementing ENUM, and implementation thereof subject to a positive evaluation
14.	Review of legal framework for the regulation of VoIP (in conjunction

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Task number	Task name
	with adoption of the national numbering plan)
15.	Consider liberalization of directory enquiry services and proceed with liberalization subject to a positive assessment
<b>Action Line 2. Fostering competition</b>	
16.	Strategic market review and retail market reviews (also contributes to action line 1)
17.	Review of the wholesale tariffs control mechanisms
18.	Full implementation of local loop unbundling
19.	Review of the framework for accounting separation
<b>Action Line 3. Customer awareness</b>	
20.	Electronic comparator of tariffs and public information on Quality of Service levels (according to Key Performance Indicators)
21.	Consumer awareness campaigns
22.	Development of the ability of consumer and enterprise associations to participate in the activities of TRA more actively and efficiently
23.	Adopt a set of measures increasing the transparency of international roaming prices according to international best practice
<b>Action Line 4. Customer protection</b>	
24.	Number portability (also contributes to action line 1)
25.	Adopt a basic consumer rights' protection framework, particularly in relation to billing, collection and payment processes and standard subscriber agreements
26.	Establish a framework for the protection of personal data and confidentiality
27.	Review availability of basic telecommunications services and consider implementing universal access and/or universal service schemes
<b>Action Line 5. Development support</b>	
28.	Adopt a framework for assigning spectrum for experimental/R&D telecommunications purposes (in conjunction with the Directorate of Wireless Licensing, Frequency and Monitoring)
<b>Action Line 6. Appropriate institutional structures</b>	
29.	TRA regulatory approach position paper (strategy paper)
30.	Make procedures for stakeholders' interaction with the TRA more effective

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#### 3.2. Comprehensive Work Plan

Goal	Task Number and Name	Expected outcome	2007	2008	2009
<b>Tasks covering all action lines</b>					
Seek government support of the TRA Vision for the end of 2009	1. Input into the drafting of the National Telecommunications Plan 2007-2009	National Telecommunications Plan enabling the development of the policy and regulatory environment as described in the vision for the end of 2009	√		
<b>Action Line 1. Enabling environment</b>					
Create conditions for effective infrastructure rollout	2. Review of duct (and other infrastructure) construction and sharing policies and proposals for improving them	Enabling the creation of environment for effective infrastructure roll-out	√	√	
Reduce the barriers to market entry enshrined in the Licensing regime, including frequency allocation and assignment	3. Review and update of the licensing regime (also contributes to action lines 2 and 5)	Light-touch licensing regime allowing easy market entry	√	√	
Open the spectrum to the telecommunications market	4. Collect information on spectrum needs for telecommunications purposes and issue available licences accordingly	Opening the available spectrum to the telecommunications market	√	√	

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Goal	Task Number and Name	Expected outcome	2007	2008	2009
	5. In conjunction with the Directorate of Wireless Licensing, Frequency and Monitoring, review and update the telecommunications spectrum plan, determine the spectrum available for public and private 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	Ensuring spectrum is available to satisfy telecommunications market needs as well as ensuring effective allocation, assignment, monitoring and enforcement of the spectrum	√		
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	Additional market player/s in the mobile telephony market, subject to a positive outcome of the assessment	√		

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Goal	Task Number and Name	Expected outcome	2007	2008	2009
	outcome of the evaluation				
Ensure adequate international capacity is in place	7. 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	√		
Reduce the barriers to bringing equipment into the market of Bahrain	8. Review and update procedures for granting type approvals	Simpler and more straightforward framework for type approvals, minimizing the cost and time to market for equipment suppliers	√		
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	9. Adopt a framework concerning the collection, aggregation and publication of statistical data and establish key market performance indicators in order to make evaluation of market performance	Statistical framework as well as ability to evaluate market performance in place	√		

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Goal	Task Number and Name	Expected outcome	2007	2008	2009
	possible				
Ensure market players and consumers obtain fast and appropriate remedy if their rights are infringed	10. Develop dispute resolution framework	Effective dispute resolution framework	√		
Retail price control regime that would ensure a level playing field for all licensees and would sufficiently protect the consumer	11. Review the regime of retail price control (also contributes to action lines 2 and 4)	More flexible regime for retail tariff control	√		
Ensure that numbering policies do not create market barriers	12. Review and update the national numbering plan	Clear framework for numbering, including short codes, premium charge and freephone services	√		
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)	√ (possible implementation)	
Ensure legal certainty in the provision of innovative services, in	14. Review legal framework for the regulation of VoIP (in conjunction with adoption of	Clear legal framework for the provision of VoIP services	√		

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Goal	Task Number and Name	Expected outcome	2007	2008	2009
particular VoIP	the national numbering plan)				
Make provision of directory services more effective	15. Consider liberalization of directory enquiry services and proceed with liberalization subject to a positive assessment	Establishing the feasibility of liberalizing directory enquiry services and proceeding with liberalization subject to a positive assessment	√		
<b>Action Line 2. Fostering competition</b>					
Evaluate present regulatory regime and propose specific actions for the future	16. 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	√ (review)	√ (review and implementation)	√ (implementation)
Ensure that competition is enhanced through the use of adequate wholesale products priced at the level of the costs incurred by an efficient operator	17. Review of the wholesale tariffs control mechanisms	Wholesale tariffs reflecting costs incurred by an efficient operator	√		
	18. Full implementation of local loop unbundling (in conjunction with the broadband internet development strategy)	Creating possibility of partial infrastructure competition	√		
Ensure that adequate	19. Review of the framework for	Increased transparency of		√	

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Goal	Task Number and Name	Expected outcome	2007	2008	2009
information on the costing of the services to be regulated is available	accounting separation	regulated accounts			
<b>Action Line 3. Customer awareness</b>					
Increase transparency of service offers 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 consumer ability to choose and protect themselves in the competitive market	21. Consumer awareness campaigns	Increased knowledge of consumers' rights and threats to them	√	√	
Increase public participation in regulation	22. 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	√	√	√
Provide consumers with the ability to take informed decisions in relation to	23. Adopt a set of measures increasing the transparency of international roaming prices according to	Appropriate measures in place assisting consumers in obtaining information on how to take full advantage of	√		

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Goal	Task Number and Name	Expected outcome	2007	2008	2009
international roaming services	international best practice	international roaming services			
<b>Action Line 4. Customer protection</b>					
Increase customer choice and enhance competition in the voice markets	24. Number portability (also contributes to action line 1)	Customers' ability to change their service provider while retaining their numbers	√	√	
Ensure that basic consumer rights are protected	25. 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	√		
Ensure appropriate level of consumer trust in telecommunications services	26. Establish a framework for the protection of personal data and confidentiality	A framework creating consumer trust that personal data and confidentiality will be protected		√	
Ensure that the most socially vulnerable have access to basic telecommunications services	27. 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	28. 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		√	
<b>Action Line 6. Appropriate institutional structures</b>					
Increase legal certainty in relation to possible regulatory actions	29. TRA regulatory approach position paper (strategy paper)	Transparent regulatory strategy in place	√		
Render interaction with TRA effective, simple and straightforward	30. Make procedures for stakeholders' interaction with the TRA more effective	More effective way to interact with TRA consistent with international best practice	√	√	√

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### 4 Appendix

#### RESPONSE FORM

### CONSULTATION ON THE TRA DRAFT WORK PLAN 2007-2009

This form should be emailed to [consult@tra.org.bh](mailto:consult@tra.org.bh) by **4 p.m. on 8 April 2007**.

Alternatively, responses may be sent to TRA for the attention of the General Director by facsimile to +973 17 532 125.

TRA will use the responses to this consultation to refine the Draft Work Plan and set priorities.

Contact details of the interested party responding:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Questions:

1. Which 10 tasks, of those included in the TRA Work Plan, should be given priority? Please indicate the tasks in order of importance – from the most important to the least important:

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2. Should any additional tasks be included in the draft list? What priority should they be given compared to the tasks identified above?

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3. Other comments:

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