



A simple licensing regime that allows the use of WiFi hotspot or WiMax/WLAN equipment established

--TRA Issues 2.4 GHz and 5 GHz Frequency Licensing Regulation--

Manama, 30 July 2006 – The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority issued today the Regulation on 2.4 GHz and 5 GHz Frequency Licensing. The Regulation adopts a simple method that facilitates the licensing process for certain types of frequency and is based on an online system. This method allows the use of WiFi hotspot, WiMax or Wireless LAN technologies by the business sector and individual telecommunications users in the Kingdom of Bahrain at no cost.

The online application process is simple and convenient for all frequency users. Applicants are required to fill in a form that is available on the TRA's website. The information required is general, such as the name of the applicant, the CPR or CR number and the location where the relevant equipment will be used. Applications can be submitted electronically and the approval process will take 14 days.

The license and use of spectrum is free, with a view to facilitating the widespread use of wireless access to broadband in the Kingdom.

The TRA is aware that a number of people have argued that this type of spectrum should be available without the need to register, as in other jurisdictions, where by virtue of using it you are automatically licensed subject to certain conditions being met. However, the Telecommunications Law as it stands does not allow for that approach. The process implemented by the TRA, i.e. registration through the web, is the simplest and most user-friendly method that

the TRA can devise to ensure that both its Regulation and the users of the spectrum are in compliance with the Telecommunications Law. The TRA notes all the comments it receives and when the appropriate opportunity arises it will take them into account.

Commenting on the new Regulation, the General Director of the TRA, Mr. A. Andreas Avgousti, said: "The Regulation issued today sets out the new simple method of applying for frequency licenses in the 2.4 GHz and 5 GHz bands. The online application process is simple and easy to use and allows all users of this spectrum to apply for a license in order to use the spectrum legally. We understand that concerns have been raised about the need to register. Registration is required by the Telecommunications Law, but we have taken all possible steps to make the process simple and easy to comply with. We will be keeping all views received in mind for when the appropriate opportunity arises to consider what, if any, further action can be taken in this regard. In the meantime, we encourage all individuals and companies that use equipment operating in these frequencies to ensure the legality of their activities by registering via the online application process."

Note to Editors:

Explanation of Technical Terms:

WiFi – Wireless Fidelity – Short-range, broadband wireless access technologies supporting wireless LAN (WLAN). The term “WiFi” is used to describe the technology that permits wireless access to the internet over a short distance (e.g., homes/hotspots).

WiMax – Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access – longer range, broadband wireless technologies supporting the deployment of metropolitan area networks (WMAN). The term “WiMax” is used to describe the technology that permits wireless broadband access over longer distances (e.g., cities).

About the TRA

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

- The TRA will be happy to provide hard copies of the regulation document for interested parties who do not have access to the Internet. In addition, the TRA is happy to provide copies in Braille or large print upon request and free of charge. The TRA can be contacted on telephone number 17 52 0044.