



هيئة تنظيم الاتصالات

TELECOMMUNICATIONS REGULATORY AUTHORITY  
Kingdom of Bahrain - مملكة البحرين

## TRA One Year Work Plan (2022 – 2023)

A public consultation document  
issued by the Telecommunications  
Regulatory Authority of the  
Kingdom of Bahrain

**Purpose:** To consult on the proposed TRA One Year Work Plan (2022-2023)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Telecommunications is fundamental to the digital economy. Every one of us uses the services telecommunications provide, business to support the industries and services that support us; and to keep us all connected with our friends and families, providing access to entertainment and by keeping us informed. Covid-19 has reinforced the importance of a vibrant and secure telecommunications market, a good internet connection is no longer a “nice to have” but essential—fibre connections and 5G services continue to support us as we work in new ways. Whether its working or studying from home or when we are out-and-about, or merely managing our day to day lives. Our “remote” lifestyle requires constant reliable internet access.

The Government has outlined its policies for telecommunications in the Kingdom in the Fifth National Telecommunications Plan (NTP5) and telecommunications is one of the key strategic areas in the Government’s Economic Recovery Plan for the Kingdom.



## The Authority's work program is driven by 4 key themes:



To meet the **Government policy** as set out in NTP5 and the Governments Strategy. The Authority aims to make Bahrain one of the most connected places in the world and a digital Hub providing services right across the region and beyond.



**Secure and resilient networks.** Everything is going digital, and telecommunications networks are supporting many of our key services – they touch almost every part of our lives. We need to ensure that security is built into both networks and the devices that access them. That our operators build in security and have the necessary processes in place to identify and respond to incidents. Devices need to have security “built in by design”. During this year the Authority will continue to support the wider economy and ensure they can access the services and spectrum they need as all sectors of industry digitises the way they work.



**Reliable Broadband for all.** Broadband is an essential service – we all need to have fast and reliable access in our homes and offices and when we are out and about. The Authority will continue its work to ensure that everyone can access the fibre and 5G services they require and that these services deliver the quality needed. The Authority will also ensure a vibrant competitive market.



**Protect and empower Consumers.** The Authority will continue to strive to ensure all consumers are treated fairly and that no one is left behind as services and requirements continue to evolve. Through awareness campaigns and tools, the consumer can make informed decisions about their telecommunications services. The Authority also aims to ensure that pricing plans and operators terms and conditions are easy to understand and that operators deliver what they promise.

## BACKGROUND

1. The attached work plan presents a set of proposed work streams on which the Authority seeks to receive comments from all interested parties.
2. This document sets out work streams the Authority currently seeks to address in accordance with its mission and vision. There may be alterations to the plan due to major developments in the market requiring immediate attention.
3. The Authority will internally develop an implementation plan for tasks included in the plan. The work plan does not include routine tasks or those of an internal nature.

### **Draft Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) Work Plan, 2022 – 2023**

1. The draft TRA Work Plan for the period from 2022 to 2023 includes certain tasks carried forward from the year 2021, tasks derived from the Fifth National Telecommunications Plan and additional initiatives that the Authority believes are important and relevant to the sector.
2. The Authority invites comments from all stakeholders with respect to the draft work plan (2022 – 2023) as presented in the table below. Specifically, the Authority welcomes comments with respect to:

**Issue 1:** In establishing the draft work plan, the Authority has taken into consideration the potential impact of parallel running of multiple work streams. This has been reflected in the amount of time the Authority has envisaged each work stream should take to be completed. The Authority welcomes comments with respect to the proposed timeline for each of the work streams.

**Issue 2:** The Authority welcomes comments with respect to the mentioned work streams and any potential work streams that may have been omitted from the draft work plan. Any such suggestion should be supported by a brief description of the work stream and a rationale to support any proposed prioritization. As part of the Authority's continued efforts to support the Industry, the Authority plans to hold a workshop to outline the work plan and enable everyone to comment on the presented workstreams.

**Issue 3:** The workstreams mentioned below are presented in terms of recurring and non-recurring projects. Non-recurring projects are considered as "once-off" type of projects whereas recurring projects are workstreams that are conducted on an annual basis or within the span of a couple of years. The order of projects does not indicate level of importance, but merely reflects order of topics.

Once the Authority has received and considered the responses to this Draft One-Year Work Plan (2022-2023), the Authority intends to issue a final TRA One-Year Work Plan (2022-2023), together with the reasoning for the Authority's position.

# Non Recurring Projects

No.	Nonrecurring Projects	Description	Expected Outcomes	2022				2023			
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1	<b>Review of the Licensing Framework of the Telecommunications Sector</b>	Review of the existing licensing framework, analysis of the current licenses and their continued relevance, and proposal of a new licensing system with terms and conditions that are suitable to meet the needs of the telecommunications industry in Bahrain.	To develop a new licensing framework that incorporates the changes in the terms and conditions of the same and the continued relevance of a number of class/individual licences.	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
2	<b>Review of Consumer Protection Regime</b>	Review of the current regime to ensure transparency of information and effective mechanism to strike the right balance between the interest of service providers and users.	To take necessary action to further promote trust in the use of telecommunication services.	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
3	<b>New Universal Service Regulation Framework</b>	What users need to actively participate in society are changing. We need to ensure that the universal services framework is appropriate and has the right balance between the interests of users and service providers.	Following our review to propose any necessary changes to the universal services framework.	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
4	<b>Support for innovation</b>	To launch and operate a environment for people looking to test and trial new technologies that can help develop telecommunication services.	To introduce a testing and trialling licence to facilitate innovation and development of telecommunication services that adopt emerging concepts and technologies.	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
5	<b>Review of the Number Portability Regulation (NPR)</b>	Modifications to the NPR to address issues with the current broadband transfer process	Review of the regulation to address broadband transfer process.	○	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
6	<b>BNET Independence</b>	Ensuring BNET's independence from Batelco and safeguarding non discrimination	We will undertake a review and consult to determine if changes are needed in BNET's governance arrangements to safeguard non-discrimination between all market players.	○	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
7	<b>BNET RO review and Cost model</b>	To review the revised RO submitted by BNET	To ensure that the wholesale access services are provided under fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory basis.	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
8	<b>WACC Review</b>	To review the current regulated WACC which was set in 2013.	To set a new cost of capital which will be an input into regulated prices. This WACC should reflect the business nature of BNET.	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
9	<b>Market Review: Retail Broadband and Domestic Data Connectivity</b>	To define the relevant retail market(s) for broadband and domestic connectivity and to determine whether any licensed operator holding Significant Market Power ("SMP") in a relevant wholesale market.	To ensure that the final determination and scope of regulatory framework at retail level adequately addresses competitive developments in the telecommunications market.	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
10	<b>C-band Spectrum Award</b>	Awarding permanent Frequency Licenses to MNOs in the (3400-3700 MHz) band	Permanent Frequency Licenses to MNOs in the (3400-3700 MHz) band for 15 years with renewal possibility.	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
11	<b>IoT Position Paper</b>	Position Paper on the Internet of Things	TRA's position on a number of subject matters that affect the provision of telecommunications services to enable IoT.	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
12	<b>New technologies spectrum needs plan</b>	This project aims to develop a roadmap that meets the requirements for all spectrum stakeholders in Bahrain in coordination with the SSCC including supporting GCC/ASMG harmonization of 1427-1518 MHz for Mobile TDD use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A detailed roadmap with clear action points to enable stakeholders to access the spectrum they need</li> <li>To assist in driving the development of an eco-system for Mobile TDD in 1427 –1518 MHz</li> </ul>	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
13	<b>Publication and implementation of Telecom Emergency Response Plan</b>	Lay the foundation for the sector to be able to collaborate and coordinate sector's response to telecom emergency.	Availability and operability of critical telecommunication services during disasters/emergency.	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○

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No.	Nonrecurring Projects	Description	Expected Outcomes	2022				2023				
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
14	<b>Telecom Security drill exercise</b>	Prepare the sector and conduct drills in collaboration with operators and relevant security entity based on the Telecom Emergency Response Plan.	Sector is continuously tested and is prepared to handle telecom emergency.	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
15	<b>Implementation of Telecom sector SIEM</b>	Working with the concerned governmental entities to determine and implement actions to support information sharing relating to cyber threats affecting the sector.	Sector capability to detect and respond to security incidents and events.	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
16	<b>Publication of Sector's Cyber Security Strategy</b>	Publication of the telecommunications security strategy (2022-2025) and drive the implementation of various initiatives arising out of the strategy.	Align the sector with international best practices and adoption of measures to ensure a secured and resilient telecommunications environment that enables a trusted digital ecosystem.	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
17	<b>Upgrade the Spectrum management and Monitoring Systems</b>	Upgrade TRA's systems to provide effective spectrum monitoring and management. This system should also provide additional online services and assist in enforcement and identifying sources of interference.	Enhancing the TRA Radio Spectrum management & Monitoring capabilities & efficiency.	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
18	<b>Enhancement of the Type approval regulation and process</b>	Update the current regulations to stimulate the growth and development of a market in Bahrain for the supply of telecommunications equipment that is streamlined and clear, with the support of all relevant stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robust market for supply of telecommunications equipment.</li> <li>Support the development of competition and associated benefits for consumers.</li> <li>Streamline the current importation processes (customs clearance).</li> </ul>	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
19	<b>Issue Maritime services Regulations</b>	The regulation will cover all maritime services & reflect the international maritime Regulations and the WRCs outcome.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear procedure in terms of applying for maritime services.</li> <li>Specify the marine channels to be used in accordance with the ITU appendix 15, 17 &amp; 18.</li> </ul>	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
20	<b>Update the Fixed Link Policy</b>	The modification and enhancement of the current fixed links policy to overcome technical and administrative shortfalls and ensure the Authority's policies and systems facilitate the adoption of the latest technologies in line with WRC and regional harmonisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To systematically process and manage operators fixed links.</li> <li>To clarify the TRA's position on the utilization of frequency bands that have been identified as candidate bands for 5G and how it intends to handle current use of the bands.</li> </ul>	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
21	<b>Schedule of Fees Update</b>	To amend the current schedule of fees in light of recent technological evolution to further push the Kingdom to become the region's most modern telecoms hub and further grow the telecoms market.	To update the calculation methodology for spectrum utilization fees for different Satellite based services/systems as well as introduce new testing & innovation licences, and Aircraft licences	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
22	<b>Public Radio Stations "PRS" Regulation Enhancement</b>	Improving the procedures for obtaining approvals for the deployment, development and maintenance of telecom tower sites.	Review the permitting and rectification processes with an aim to speed up and simplify them Identify a definition and processes for tower companies	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
23	<b>Telecom services comparator tool</b>	Develop and offer a tool/website to assist consumers to explore & compare telecommunication services.	Empower consumer with enablers to make informed decisions and increase knowledge of telecommunication services and products in the sector.	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
24	<b>Strategic Working Group (SWG) to combat spam calls &amp; messages</b>	Establish SWG to identify metrics, report data and propose solutions on spam communication on telecommunication services.	To work on collective mechanisms to reduce the impact of spam calls and text messages.	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
25	<b>Cyber Safety Program</b>	This initiative aims to advocate on the national efforts against cyber threats amid the students of the Kingdom of Bahrain in building digital skills resilience.	To collaborate with schools and educational institutions to liaise with local & international entities to ensure outreach of fundamental cyber safety and the responsible use of ICTs.	○	○	●	●	●	○	○	○	○

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No.	Recurring Projects	Description	Expected Outcomes	2022				2023					
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
1	<b>Market Indicator Reports</b>	Annual and quarterly reports that cover a wide range of telecommunications indicators and statistics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To monitor the sector and analyse the impact of regulatory actions.</li> <li>To provide timely information to operators &amp; other stakeholders.</li> </ul>	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
2	<b>Annual Arab Price Benchmarking Report</b>	Benchmarking of telecommunications services prices amongst Arab countries and with OECD countries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To facilitate tracking the telecommunications' sector performance overtime and relative to other countries.</li> <li>To provide timely information to operators and other stakeholders.</li> </ul>	●	●	○	○	●	●	○	○		
3	<b>Annual Consumer Surveys</b>	Surveys on digital services access and usage for residential and business consumers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To enable better understanding of digital services access and usage.</li> <li>To enable monitoring of the sector and analysis of impact of regulatory actions.</li> <li>To provide timely information to operators and other stakeholders (including ITU/UN requests for information).</li> </ul>	○	○	○	●	●	●	○	○		
4	<b>Annual Consumer Experience Review</b>	Research on consumers' awareness of TRA and satisfaction level with telecommunication service providers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To measure consumer satisfaction trends across multiple components and markets in addition to gauge the awareness level of TRA.</li> <li>Publication of consumer experience findings.</li> </ul>	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○		
5	<b>Compliance Program</b>	On-going mystery shopping of licensed operators' various work streams in relation to subscribers' rights and obligations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify compliant and non-compliant licensees, follow up and encourage self-regulatory compliance.</li> <li>Enhancements to the Service Provider Portal 2.0 user experience and reporting.</li> </ul>	○	●	●	●	○	○	○	○		
6	<b>Monitoring Eol requirements</b>	Monitoring BNET's Equivalence of Input ("Eol") obligations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring all LOs have access to the same BNET products, on terms that are not unduly discriminatory, so they can compete on equal footing.</li> <li>Ensuring that Batelco and BNET's IT systems are separate, in line with the Separation guidelines.</li> </ul>	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○		
7	<b>Publication of QoS Measurements Findings</b>	Continue to undertake reviews of quality of services provided by all networks in the Kingdom. Through both technical measurements and the use of crowdsourcing techniques.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empowering consumers to take informative decisions.</li> <li>Foster Competition.</li> <li>Enhance Bahrain's ranking in the global indices.</li> </ul>	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
8	<b>Familiarisation of radiocommunications services</b>	Provide workshops to the stakeholders to introduce the available electronic services and the way of using them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate the procedures for submitting applications, online payment and follow-up the status of the applications for the clients.</li> <li>Ease of understanding by the clients.</li> </ul>	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	●		
9	<b>Awareness Campaigns</b>	Year-long campaigns dedicated to consumer empowerment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raising awareness amongst consumers on the overall consumer choice in the Telecommunication industry.</li> <li>Enlighten the public with the Domain Name cycle and, and further promote the registering phases to encourage engagement.</li> <li>Promote the use of roaming services / roaming rights for subscribers in the Kingdom of Bahrain.</li> </ul>	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING A RESPONSE

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (“the Authority”) invites comments on this draft work plan from all interested parties. Comments should be submitted to the Authority no later than 4pm on **24 May 2022**

Responses should be sent to the Authority, preferably by email (or by fax or post), to:

The General Director  
MCD@tra.org.bh  
Telecommunications Regulatory Authority  
P.O. Box 10353  
Manama  
Kingdom of Bahrain  
Fax: +973 1753 2125

Responses should include:

- a. The name of the company/institution/association etc.
- b. The name of the principal contact person;
- c. Full contact details (physical address, telephone number, fax number and email address); and
- d. In the case of responses from individual consumers, name and contact details.

The Authority expects the responses to follow the same structure as set out in previous draft work plans. The Authority also invites respondents to substantiate their responses, wherever possible, by providing factual evidence to support their responses.

In the interest of transparency, the Authority will make all submissions received available to the public, subject to the confidentiality of the information received. The Authority will evaluate requests for confidentiality in line with relevant legal provisions and the Authority’s published guidance on the treatment of confidential and non-confidential information.<sup>1</sup>

Respondents are required to mark clearly any specific information included in their submission that they consider confidential. Where such confidential information is included, respondents are required to provide both a **confidential** and a **non-confidential** version of their submission. If a submission is marked confidential in its entirety, reasons for this should be provided. The Authority may publish or refrain from publishing any document or submission at its sole discretion.

<sup>1</sup> The Authority, “A Guidance Paper issued by the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority on its treatment of Confidential and Non-confidential Information”, Guidance Paper No. 2 of 2007, 10 September 2007.