

# REGULATION

## Access Regulation



## Access Regulation

A Regulation issued by the Telecommunications  
Regulatory Authority

[Date]

Regulation [No.] of 2020

**Purpose:** To provide a framework for Access obligations and the requirements for the publication of a Reference Access Offer by Access Providers.

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### **Definitions**

Any word, phrase or expression used in this Regulation shall, unless the context requires otherwise or it is expressly defined herein, have the same meaning as in the Telecommunications Law and the terms below shall have the following meaning for the purposes of this Regulation only:

**Access Order** means an Order imposed pursuant to Article 2 of this Regulation and pursuant to Article 3(c)(1) of the Telecommunications Law.

**Access Obligation** means an obligation imposed pursuant to Article 3.3, 3.4 or 3.5 of this Regulation.

**Access Provider** means a Licensed Operator which has been declared by the TRA as holding a Dominant Position in a relevant market and the Separated Entity.

**Access Seeker** means a Licensed Operator seeking Access from an Access Provider. It does not include, apply or refer to Access by end users.

**Methodology for Determining Market Power** means the Methodology for Determining Market Power Determination issued by the TRA on 19 April 2003, as may be amended by the TRA from time to time.

**Methodology for the Definition of Telecommunications Markets** means the Methodology for the Definition of Telecommunications Markets Determination issued by the TRA on 19 April 2003, as may be amended by the TRA from time to time.

**Order** means an Order issued by the TRA pursuant to the provisions of Articles 3(c)(1), 57(b) or 57(e) of the Telecommunications Law.

**Reference Access Offer** means the reference offer for Access services that the Access Provider is required to provide, as described in Article 4 of this Regulation.

**Separated Entity** means NBNNetco BSC (c).

**TRA** means the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

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**Telecommunications Law** means the Telecommunications Law promulgated by the Kingdom of Bahrain Legislative Decree No. 48 of 2002.

### **Article 1 - Scope**

1.1 This Regulation applies to Access Providers.

### **Article 2 - Role and duty of the TRA**

- 2.1 The TRA may impose by way of an Access Order one or more of the Access Obligations identified in Article 3 on any Access Provider.
- 2.2 The TRA may impose by way of an Access Order any other Access-related obligations on any Access Provider. Where such other Access-related obligations are imposed, the TRA shall provide written reasons to the Access Provider.
- 2.3 The TRA will review obligations imposed on Access Providers under this Regulation that are in force when it conducts its periodic reviews under the Methodology for Determining Market Power. In doing so, it will consider whether to amend or withdraw any obligations that are in force and whether to impose additional obligations.

### **Article 3 - Access to, and use of, specific Telecommunications networks and Telecommunications facilities**

- 3.1 The TRA may, in accordance with the provisions of Article 2, impose obligations on Access Providers to meet reasonable requests for Access to, and use of, specific elements of Telecommunications networks and Telecommunications facilities.
- 3.2 Access Providers may only refuse to provide Access on the basis of objective criteria related to technical feasibility, maintenance of network integrity, or an undue risk to health and safety. Where an Access Seeker takes the view that any such refusal is not based on such objective criteria, it may initiate dispute resolution pursuant to the procedures set out in Article 57(g) of the Telecommunications Law.
- 3.3 Access Providers shall:
- (a) continue to offer, and not withdraw, Access to Telecommunications networks and Telecommunications facilities already granted, except where justified by a widely applicable upgrade to a Telecommunications

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network agreed with the TRA and subsequent to giving a reasonable period of notice;

- (b) negotiate in good faith with Access Seekers; and
- (c) make available a Reference Access Offer in accordance with Article 4.

3.4 The TRA may additionally require Access Providers to:

- (a) give other Licensed Operators Access to specified elements of either or both of the Access Provider's Telecommunications networks and Telecommunications facilities;
- (b) provide Access Seekers with Access services;
- (c) provide telecommunications services as may be specified by the TRA on a wholesale basis for resale by other Licensed Operators;
- (d) grant open Access to technical interfaces, protocols or other key technologies that are indispensable for the interoperability of telecommunications services or virtual network services;
- (e) provide co-location or other forms of facility sharing, including duct, building or mast sharing;
- (f) provide specified Access services needed to ensure interoperability of end-to-end services to users, including facilities for intelligent network services; and
- (g) provide Access to operational support systems or similar software systems.

3.5 The TRA may also require Access Providers to provide various Access services, including – without limitation – in relation to any of the following Telecommunications networks' elements or Telecommunications facilities, as applicable:

- (a) wholesale leased lines;
- (b) international capacity;
- (c) international outbound call termination facilities;

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- (d) wholesale DSLs;
  - (e) copper cable (whether partially or fully in service or not);
  - (f) main distribution frames or concentrators for bitstream access or DSL co-location;
  - (g) equipment rooms;
  - (h) local exchanges;
  - (i) dark fibre;
  - (j) fibre (whether partially or fully in service or not);
  - (k) narrowband dial-up facilities;
  - (l) ducts; and
  - (m) backhaul.
- 3.6 The TRA may, by way of a determination, add to, remove from, or otherwise amend the list of Telecommunications networks' elements or Telecommunications facilities for which Access services may be required to be provided by Access Providers pursuant to Article 3.5.
- 3.7 When considering whether to impose any Access Obligation, the TRA will assess whether such an Access Obligation is no more than is appropriate and necessary to address the market failure identified by the TRA, taking into account:
- (a) the technical and economic viability of installing competing facilities, in light of the level and rate of market development;
  - (b) the feasibility and efficiency of providing the form of Access, particularly in light of the available capacity; and
  - (c) the TRA's duty to safeguard and encourage the long-term development of competition and the long-term interests of end users.

### **Article 4 - Reference Access Offer**

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- 4.1 An Access Provider shall make available a Reference Access Offer. A Reference Access Offer must include offers for all Access services that the Access Provider is required to provide, and must set out a description of the relevant offerings, unbundled according to market needs where this is technically and economically feasible together with the associated terms, conditions and tariffs. A Reference Access Offer must also contain all necessary information regarding technical specifications and network characteristics for Access Seekers to be able to effectively and efficiently acquire and use each Access service.
- 4.2 As a minimum the following information must be provided in a Reference Access Offer:
- (a) description of the services and facilities to be provided, including their technical characteristics;
  - (b) location of the points of access and of other associated facilities (including co-location space), subject to reasonable concerns regarding network security and national security;
  - (c) technical standards for access (including any usage restrictions and other security issues);
  - (d) conditions for access to ancillary, supplementary and advanced services (including operational support systems, information systems or databases for pre-ordering, provisioning, ordering, maintenance and repair requests);
  - (e) forecasting, ordering and provisioning procedures;
  - (f) tariffs, terms of payment and procedures for billing, collection and billing disputes;
  - (g) interoperability tests, where applicable;
  - (h) traffic or network management;
  - (i) maintenance and quality of access services;
  - (j) measures to ensure compliance with requirements for network integrity, site security and relevant rules relating to personnel;
  - (k) terms relating to intellectual property rights, if applicable;

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- (l) dispute resolution procedures between parties including reference to the TRA for dispute resolution;
- (m) confidentiality;
- (n) rules for allocation between operators when supply is limited; and
- (o) standard terms and conditions of supply.

### **Article 5 - Approval of the Reference Access Offer**

- 5.1 At the request of the TRA and/or every twenty-four (24) months (whichever is the shorter), Access Providers shall submit a draft Reference Access Offer to the TRA for approval within a period of time as reasonably determined by the TRA.
- 5.2 The TRA shall review the draft Reference Access Offer, taking into account whether the terms and conditions (including tariffs) of the draft Reference Access Offer are fair and reasonable, and in compliance with the Telecommunications Law and any relevant position papers, guidelines or other instruments issued by the TRA. The TRA shall then publish the draft Reference Access Offer for consultation, together with its reasons as to whether it proposes to:
- (a) approve the draft Reference Access Offer as submitted; or
  - (b) not approve the draft Reference Access Offer. In this case, the TRA shall also publish a draft order, setting out the proposed terms and conditions (including tariffs, if applicable) that the Access Provider will be required to reflect in the final version of its Reference Access Offer.

The TRA's consultation document shall set out the process and timeline for the review of the draft Reference Access Offer.

- 5.3 Following the conclusion of the consultation process, the TRA may issue:
- (a) an approval letter, if it approves the draft Reference Access Offer as submitted by the Access Provider; or
  - (b) an order, if Article 5.2(b) applies.

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- 5.4 An Access Provider that has been issued with an order pursuant to Article 5.3(b) shall submit a revised draft Reference Access Offer to the TRA for approval. If the TRA is:
- (a) satisfied that the revised draft Reference Access Offer fully reflects the terms of the order, it shall issue an approval letter;
  - (b) not satisfied that the revised draft Reference Access Offer fully reflects the terms of the order, or if the Access Provider does not submit a revised draft Reference Access Offer, the TRA may issue a further order deeming the version of the Reference Access Offer annexed to its previous order to be final and binding on the Access Provider.
- 5.5 The Reference Access Offer shall be effective from the date specified in the approval letter or order (as applicable), or, if no date is specified, from the date of the approval letter or order. The Access Provider shall publish the approved Reference Access Offer or deemed final Reference Access Offer (as applicable) on its website within two (2) weeks of the date of the approval letter or order, and upon request make copies available free of charge to any Access Seeker within a reasonable time-frame.
- 5.6 After publication, a Reference Access Offer shall remain in force until such time as a revised Reference Access Offer becomes effective. Any proposed change (including updates) to the terms of the Reference Access Offer shall be submitted to the TRA for approval in accordance with this Article 5.

### **Article 6 - Tariffs**

- 6.1 Tariffs for all Access services shall be in compliance with the Telecommunications Law and any relevant position papers, guidelines or other instruments issued by the TRA.

### **Article 7 - Confidentiality**

- 7.1 Where a Licensed Operator acquires information from another Licensed Operator before, during or after the process of negotiating Access or in relation to the provision or acquisition of Access, it must use that information solely for the purpose for which it was supplied, and must respect at all times the confidentiality of information transmitted or stored. Information received in such circumstances must not be provided (in any form) to any other party, including other departments or subsidiaries or partners of the recipient.

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### **Article 8 - Enforcement and penalties**

- 8.1 The TRA shall enforce this Regulation and measures made thereunder through decisions, determinations, and orders made in particular under Articles 3, 35 and 65 of the Telecommunications Law.
- 8.2 Any material breach of this Regulation shall be deemed to constitute a material breach of the Telecommunications Law and, where appropriate, of any relevant telecommunications licence held by the relevant Licensed Operator.