



**Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of the
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Consultation Paper

A public consultation document issued by the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of the Kingdom of Bahrain (“the **Authority**”)

**The Equivalence Compliance and Technical Committee (“ECTC”)
Terms of Reference**

28 March 2023

LAD/0323/002

E-mail responses must be sent to the Authority’s email address at LAD@tra.org.bh

Alternatively, responses may be sent to the following address:

The General Director
Telecommunications Regulatory Authority
PO Box 10353
Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain

The deadline for responses is **4pm on 30 April 2023**

Purpose: To seek stakeholders’ views on the revised Terms of Reference.

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Executive Summary

The Equivalence Compliance and Technical Committee is a committee established in 2019 by the Authority that includes representatives from Bnet, Licensed Operators, and such other entities as may be determined by the Authority.

The forum of the ECTC is meant to allow Licensed Operators to discuss operational, technical, equivalence, and compliance issues. We have discussed with all operators the need to enhance the current forum of the ECTC. We want to make it more productive and meaningful, giving a voice to all Licensed Operators.

As part of this, we propose to streamline the agenda to make it more appropriate for the regulatory landscape that we currently find ourselves in.

The chairperson of the ECTC was originally appointed by and paid for by the Authority. We had proposed that the chairperson would be appointed on a rota basis. We have taken on board your disagreement with this. We instead now propose that the chairperson be appointed by the ECTC by reaching a consensus. The person so appointed may be independent of any Licensed Operator.

The ECTC meetings are currently held on a monthly basis. Our proposed way forward on this (again taking into account your feedback) is to hold the ECTC meetings on a bi-monthly basis. Extraordinary meetings may be called for, when the urgency of a matter so requires.

The ECTC was originally comprised of an independent chairperson and eight representatives being three representatives appointed by Bnet, three representatives appointed by the holders of the Licenses for Mobile Telecommunications, and two representatives appointed jointly by all the other Licensed Operators. We believe it is fairer for all operators to be able to participate in the ECTC. As such we would propose to have an independent chairperson and one representative by each Licensed Operator.

I. OVERVIEW

- 1 (Background, reasons for proposal, proposed changes, etc.)
- 2 In 2019 the Authority came up with the ECTC to make sure that the industry had the opportunity to engage with Bnet in matters related to the development of Bnet, the Reference Offer, products and services, and other technical requirements.
- 3 Following further discussions with the Licensed Operators we intend to make changes to the Terms of Reference of the ECTC to approve it and to make it more meaningful to the situation we are in today.
- 4 In October 2022, the Authority held meetings with the Licensed Operators to discuss the Terms of Reference of the ECTC.
- 5 Between November 2022 and February 2023, the Authority made the proposed changes to the Terms of Reference, based on the Licensed Operators feedback.
- 6 On 5 March 2023, the Authority held a meeting with the Licensed Operators to discuss the revised Terms of Reference of the ECTC.
- 7 The Authority therefore proposes to consult on the revised Terms of Reference. However, we will take into account the submissions that will be received before reaching a final decision on the materiality of these concerns.

II. PURPOSE OF THIS CONSULTATION

- 8 The Authority would like to receive views and comments on all aspects of the revised Terms of Reference including the issues raised in this document, by 4pm on 30 April 2023.
- 9 It would be helpful if your response could include a direct answer to the question asked in the consultation document.
- 10 The information contained in this document is intended to provide background on the revised Terms of Reference. Interested parties should not take any actions in reliance on the information or proposals contained in this document. Any views set out in this Consultation Paper should be considered as indicative and will be subject to further consideration following the receipt of comments from interested parties.
- 11 This Consultation Paper is not a binding legal document and also does not contain legal, commercial, financial, technical, or other advice. The Authority is not bound by it, nor does it necessarily represent a decision of the Authority. The issues discussed in this document

remain open to consideration and should not be construed as indicating that the Authority has formed any final opinion or decision on the ECTC.

- 12 Once the Authority has received and considered responses to this Consultation Paper, the Authority will decide whether to proceed to finalise the Terms of Reference. If appropriate, the Authority will prepare and publish a Final Direction which summarises the responses received together with the Terms of Reference.

Annex 1 - CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

1. Do you agree with the proposed changes made to the Terms of Reference? If not, please state your reasons.

Annex 2 – SUBMITTING A RESPONSE

- 1 The Authority invites comments on this consultation paper from all interested parties. Comments should be submitted no later than **30 April 2023 by 4pm.**
- 2 Responses to this document should be in a Microsoft Word format and must be accompanied by a consultation coversheet which can be downloaded from the [TRA website](#).
- 3 Responses should be sent to the Authority for the attention of the General Director by email to LAD@tra.org.bh
- 4 Alternatively, responses may be sent to the address below:
The General Director
Telecommunications Regulatory Authority
P.O. BOX 10353, Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain
- 5 Responses should include direct answers to the questions asked in the consultation paper. Interested parties are encouraged to provide answers that are fully substantiated and supported as far as possible by evidence. The questions are listed at Annex 1. Respondents do not have to answer all the questions in the consultation if they do not have a view; a short response is fine, the Authority also welcomes joint responses.
- 6 Respondents who wish to discuss the questions raised in this consultation paper may email LAD@tra.org.bh

Confidentiality

- 7 In the interest of transparency and good regulatory practice, the Authority, subject to the confidentiality of the information received, will publish all responses received on its website as soon as it receives them. 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.
- 8 Respondents are required to fill out the consultation coversheet and clearly mark any information included in their submission which is considered confidential. Where such confidential information is included, respondents are required to provide both a confidential and 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.

Next steps

- 9 Once the Authority has received and considered responses to this document, the Authority will decide whether/how to proceed. The Authority will issue its final direction and the final version of the Terms of Reference of the Equivalence Compliance and Technical Committee.