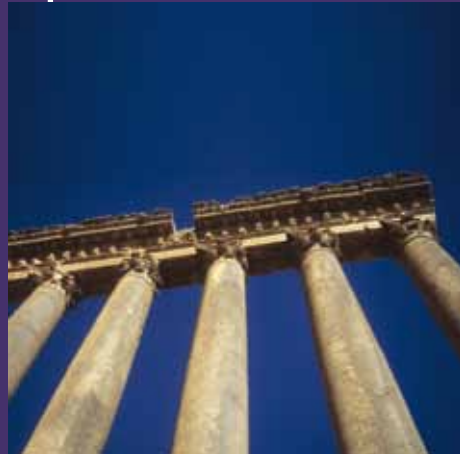


**AN INDEPENDENT PUBLIC INSTITUTION  
ESTABLISHED TO REGULATE AND DEVELOP  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS IN LEBANON**



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## FOREWORD BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) was established to develop the regulatory framework in Lebanon by which industry stakeholders can operate, do business, grow, and stimulate market growth on a national level. With the help of a highly dedicated team and in coordination with various ministries, government agencies, and the civil society, the TRA has been able to make significant progress towards assuming its mandate as provided for by Law 431/2002 and develop the telecommunications market in Lebanon in cooperation with the Ministry of Telecommunications.

The TRA deploys continuous efforts to develop the institution's capacity building and a solid best in class Lebanese regulatory framework. Our work focuses on consumer protection, promotion of fair competition, effective management of scarce resources such as spectrum and numbering and the development of the broadcasting sector in addition to encouraging secure cyber space and online safety practices.

We, at the TRA, believe that telecommunications can become Lebanon's engine for economic growth and a viable and renewable resource. We have therefore devoted our expertise to develop the sector and strive towards Lebanon's return to the international scene. We are proud of our achievements and will remain dedicated to the development of a prosperous national economy.



**Imad Y. Hoballah, Ph.D**  
Acting Chairman & CEO  
February 2012

We are determined to develop an advanced ICT market in Lebanon operating with the highest industry and global standards, a market that is vital to the country's economy and progress.

IMAD HOBALLAH

# 1. OUR MISSION

Our aim is to establish a regulatory environment that enables a competitive telecommunications market with state-of-the-art services at affordable prices to the broadest spectrum of the Lebanese population.



The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority is an independent public institution established by Law 431/2002 and mandated to regulate, develop and open the Lebanese telecommunications market to competition. The TRA effectively started operations further to the nomination of its Board Members by the Council of Ministers in February 2007.

The TRA's mission is to promote competition and ensure that the rights of users of telecommunications services are respected. The TRA issues licenses, regulations, and decisions, manages the

spectrum and the numbering plan, monitors the market for any abuse of dominant market position and anti-competitive practices, and takes remedial actions when necessary. The TRA is also responsible for promoting investments, maintaining stability in the market and developing the sector in cooperation with the Ministry of Telecommunications while at the same time, building a thriving, competitive and innovative telecommunications market.

Issuing adequate regulations and licenses and effectively and efficiently allocating scarce resources form the major pillars of the TRA's legal mandate to develop the telecommunications sector in Lebanon, and ensure a healthy, fair and competitive environment.

## 2. DUTIES AND PREROGATIVES

The TRA's work entails two aspects: one is related to regulatory framework development while the other is about implementation and enforcement.

**On the regulatory framework development side,** the TRA continuously develops and updates the regulatory framework in Lebanon based on market studies, benchmarks and international best practices. The TRA undertakes public consultations prior to taking important decisions, approving regulations, granting Service Providers' licenses or using scarce resources such as spectrum or numbering.

**On the implementation and enforcement side,** the TRA undertakes field interventions to stop illegal spectrum transmitters, seize illegally installed repeaters and jammers and solve consumer complaints.

Overall, the TRA works on promoting competition and investment, developing the sector and ensuring that the rights of telecommunications services users are respected.

The TRA duties and prerogatives are:

- Preparing draft decrees and regulations relating to the implementation of Law 431/2002, referring these drafts to the Minister, and giving its opinion on all draft laws and decrees related to the telecommunications sector;
- Encouraging competition in the field of telecom and ensuring market transparency;
- Organizing concessions, issuing licenses, amending, suspending, withdrawing and supervising the execution of these concessions and licenses;
- Managing the radio spectrum;
- Acting as a mediator and arbitration organism to resolve disputes arising between licensees;
- Managing the Numbering Plan;
- Monitoring tariffs and preventing non-competitive behavior;
- Establishing rules of interconnection and reviewing interconnection contracts;
- Setting the standards and technical requirements applicable to all telecommunications equipment in order to prevent any harm to telecommunications networks and hazards to public health or safety;
- Monitoring the quality of service;
- Facilitating the use of telecom to educational and health care institutions and disabled persons;

Based on international best practices as well as on stakeholders' and consumers' interests, the TRA contributes, while fulfilling its duties, to the development of the national economy.

### 3. STRATEGIC PROJECTS

The TRA is entrusted with a wide range of responsibilities. Since its inception, it has been concentrating its efforts on developing the regulatory framework in Lebanon and focused its work on five main axes:

#### BUILDING THE INSTITUTION

The TRA succeeded in building the institution on several fronts. The TRA adopted and applied best in class administrative and financial processes and procedures and attracted a core group of highly qualified Lebanese experts who were selected in accordance with standards of efficiency, integrity, and transparency, as well as citizenship and responsibility.

The TRA strived to equip the institution with the best in class tools to measure the quality of telecommunications services and the performance of telecommunications and data networks. This tool (QoSMS) will also be used for traffic analysis and the reporting of key performance indicators on fixed-line, wireless and data networks. The TRA has also planned the necessary steps and budget to purchase the latest equipment to efficiently manage the spectrum (SMMS), establish the rules for its use, identify entities exploiting frequencies, define spectrum occupancy, and track sources

of interference. The system will lead to better license protection from any interference and unauthorized use.

The TRA has continued to build bridges with a wide network of regional and international organizations such as AREGNET, EMERG, ITU, AIRF, ASMG, the World Bank, the European Union\* to share knowledge, represent Lebanon on the international telecom scene and secure the necessary funds to equip the institution and Lebanon with the latest tools to measure the spectrum and the quality of service.

The TRA developed a state-of-the-art website ([www.tra.gov.lb](http://www.tra.gov.lb)) to make its activities transparent and accessible to the wider public. This award winning website is a major communications tool allowing the TRA to consult with its stakeholders on matters of policy, decisions and regulations, and provide exhaustive information on telecom issues.



*\*pls. refer to "our partners" section at the end of this brochure.*



## PROTECTING CONSUMERS



The TRA has issued a number of key regulations to protect consumers' rights such as the Consumer Affairs Regulation and the Code of Practice for Value Added Services outlining the rights and obligations of telecom Service Providers towards consumers. The TRA also issued **the Quality of Service Regulation** that aims to ensure quality of telecommunications services, fairness in tariffs, and billing transparency, while also holding Service Providers accountable towards meeting the mandatory KPIs, **the Electro Magnetic Field Human Exposure Regulation** that sets acceptable levels of public exposure to EMF protecting citizens from potential health effects of harmful radio frequency in the living and working environments, and **the Type Approval Regulation** setting the conditions for the importation and usage of telecommunications network devices and equipment.

The TRA joined forces with the MoET to receive, handle and solve telecom related consumer complaints through the existing 1739 hotline. The TRA undertook major actions to promote child online safety and facilitate the use of telecommunications services by persons with special needs.

## MANAGING SCARCE RESOURCES

The TRA strives to manage scarce resources by efficiently managing the National Numbering Plan, the radio spectrum resources and setting the ad-hoc monitoring mechanisms to ensure compliance with international and national regulations. The TRA has also issued a wide number of related regulations and documents such as the Spectrum Management and Licensing Draft Regulation, the Draft Decree on Spectrum Right To Use Fees , the Draft Numbering Regulation, the Draft National Numbering Plan, and the Draft Lebanese National Frequency Allocation Table LNFT. The TRA has also taken major monitoring and other field actions to detect and solve interference problems as well as to stop illegal Radio transmission and reduce the EMF emissions.

The TRA deals with problems related to interference by stopping unauthorized users of jammers and repeaters affecting the quality of mobile and data networks. The TRA also contributed, in cooperation with the specialized judicial and security authorities, to combatting many cases of infringement on frequencies through the use of illegal equipment (repeaters) and the distribution of illegal telecommunications services.





## PROMOTING FAIR MARKET COMPETITION

The TRA took major steps towards the development of the regulatory framework in Lebanon. The TRA worked on key regulatory guidelines and studies across a number of sectors and upheld its commitment to the equal treatment of telecommunications Service Providers in Lebanon. The TRA has, in that regard, issued in the Official Gazette the Significant Market Power Regulation and the Interconnection Regulation. It has also drafted other major documents such as the Service Provider Licensing Regulation and the Rights of Way Draft decree.

The TRA renewed the licenses of Internet and data Service Providers who had previously been licensed by the Ministry of Telecommunications (MoT). Long-term licenses will be granted by the TRA upon the publication of the Licensing Regulation in the Official Gazette. The TRA has also issued spectrum licenses and authorizations according to the needs of the market, including the licenses granted to the internal security forces, army, and mobile operators during the launch of third-generation services.

## REFORMING AND DEVELOPING THE SECTOR

The TRA worked on reforming the telecommunications sector in Lebanon on several fronts. The TRA prepared for the launch of broadband services, giving highest priority to ensuring the rights of Service Providers in the use of public property especially the existing ducts and extensions. The TRA also prepared a number of draft decrees for the Council of Ministers which are necessary for the success of broadband implementation and deployment in Lebanon, including: Spectrum Right to Use Fees, Use of Public Properties by Licensed Service Providers, and New Building Requirements for Broadband Services Delivery.

On another hand, and through the preparation of technical studies at the request of the Minister, the TRA supported the MoT's efforts to launch many of the expansion projects needed for Lebanon such as the fiber optic expansion project, the 3G network project and the next generation networks project. Recently, the TRA worked closely with the MoT to develop the strategic sector reform plan by analyzing the prices of 3G services and fast digital Internet services and international capacities. The TRA has been assisting in the development of the broadcasting sector through various optimization initiatives and plans. The TRA issued forward-looking documents such as Improving FM Broadcasting Draft Document and the Analogue-to-Digital TV Migration Draft Plan.



## 4. OUR CORE VALUES

As we strive to accomplish our mission, we consistently adhere to our core values that underlie every action we take.



Our values guide our decision-making. They are the ties that bind our institution and strengthen our commitment to creating a competitive telecommunications market.



### INDEPENDENCE

The TRA is a public institution whose decision-making and actions are independent and free from any bias.

### TRANSPARENCY

The TRA is a transparent organization that discloses accurate and timely information. The TRA ensures stakeholders' participation in its decision-making through the public consultation process, which gives those affected by the TRA's decisions the ability to offer feedback and play a role in shaping future regulations.

### ACCOUNTABILITY

Upholding its legal mandate under Law 431, our institution continuously acts accountably towards first and foremost Lebanese Citizens, public audit and legal institutions and telecommunications stakeholders. Our open and inclusive approach to regulation ensures that we are held responsible for our actions and decisions and that these are reasoned and understood.

### FAIRNESS

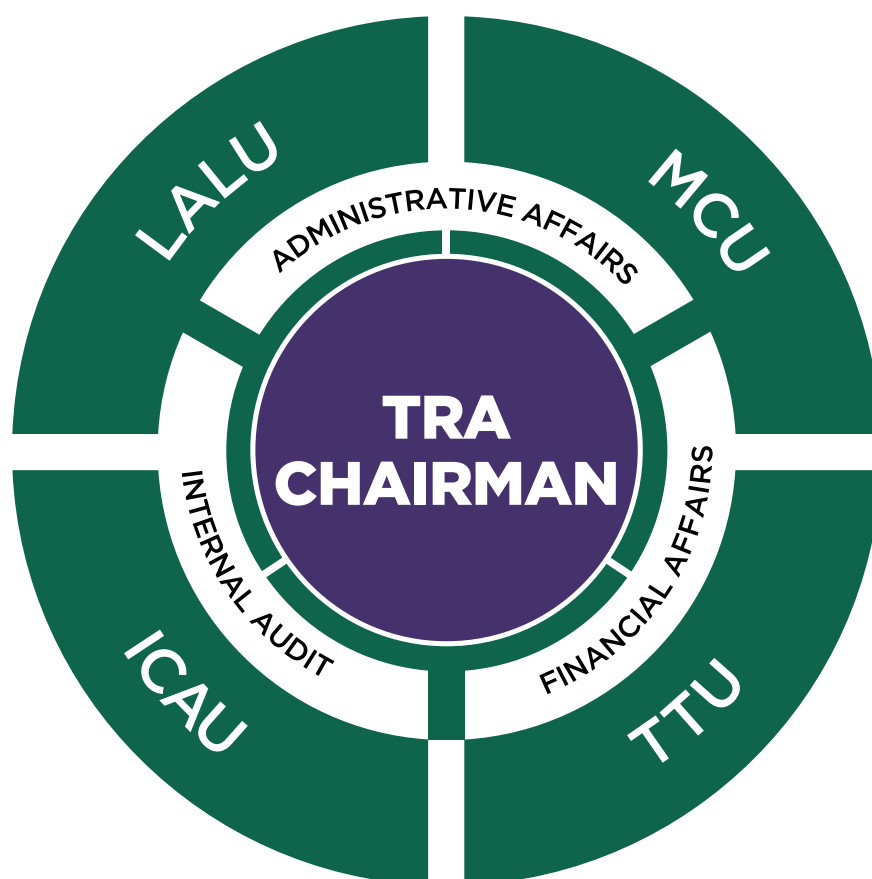
As part of our good governance model, the TRA is committed to fair and transparent treatment of all telecommunications market stakeholders.

## 5. OUR STRUCTURE



To allow the TRA accomplish its mission, the Administrative and Financial Decree 14264, issued in 2005, provided for the structuring of the institution around four main units, in addition to an administrative affairs section and a financial core.

The TRA Board is composed of a full-time Chairman and four full-time Board Members, appointed for a five-year non-renewable and non-extendable mandate. Each unit is headed and managed by a Board Member, as described in the below organization chart.



Despite the distinct units structure, teamwork and coordination between different departments at the TRA result in a project-based work system with a consumer centric approach.

## The four units are:

### 1 | MARKET AND COMPETITION UNIT (MCU)

The MCU's mission is to ensure fair competition in the telecommunications market. This Unit is responsible for all economic affairs related to the telecommunications market including its financial and technical aspects. Through conducting economic, financial and technological research, assessments and analyses, the MCU studies the potential of the telecommunications market and guides its development. A large part of its role focuses on suggesting policies and setting conditions for technical services and monitoring compliance with these conditions. In addition, the MCU is responsible for studying tariffs and fees to ensure fair competition.

### 2 | TELECOMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES UNIT (TTU)

The TTU deals with technology in general and telecommunications equipment and makes sure to assign technical resources -such as radio frequency spectrum- efficiently to the maximum benefit of the country. Its duties include radio frequency spectrum and numbering management as well as ensuring the proper technical implementation of interconnection agreements. In addition, it plays a monitoring role regarding quality of service and rights of easement on properties owned by the state and the municipalities. By closely monitoring the latest developments in technology and by setting standards, it ensures the existence of a modern and developed telecommunications market.



### 3 | INFORMATION AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS UNIT (ICAU)

The ICAU oversees all information matters with the aim of increasing public awareness and protecting consumer interests while promoting transparency. In addition to responding to enquires about the TRA's activities, it is responsible for organizing forums and lectures, disseminating reports and literature, and managing the TRA's website. In its role as the main link between consumers and the TRA, it prepares consumer statistics, questionnaires, reports and analyses, and deals with complaints concerning disputes between Service Providers and subscribers.

### 4 | LEGAL AFFAIRS AND LICENSING UNIT (LALU)

The LALU is responsible for monitoring the activities of Service Providers, managing licensing procedures and updating the legal framework of the telecom sector in line with its needs. In addition, it prepares dispute and complaint documents referred to it by the TRA and mediates between telecommunications Service Providers, relevant administrations and municipalities concerning the utilization of public properties.

#### **The departments which are directly affiliated to the TRA chairman and CEO are:**

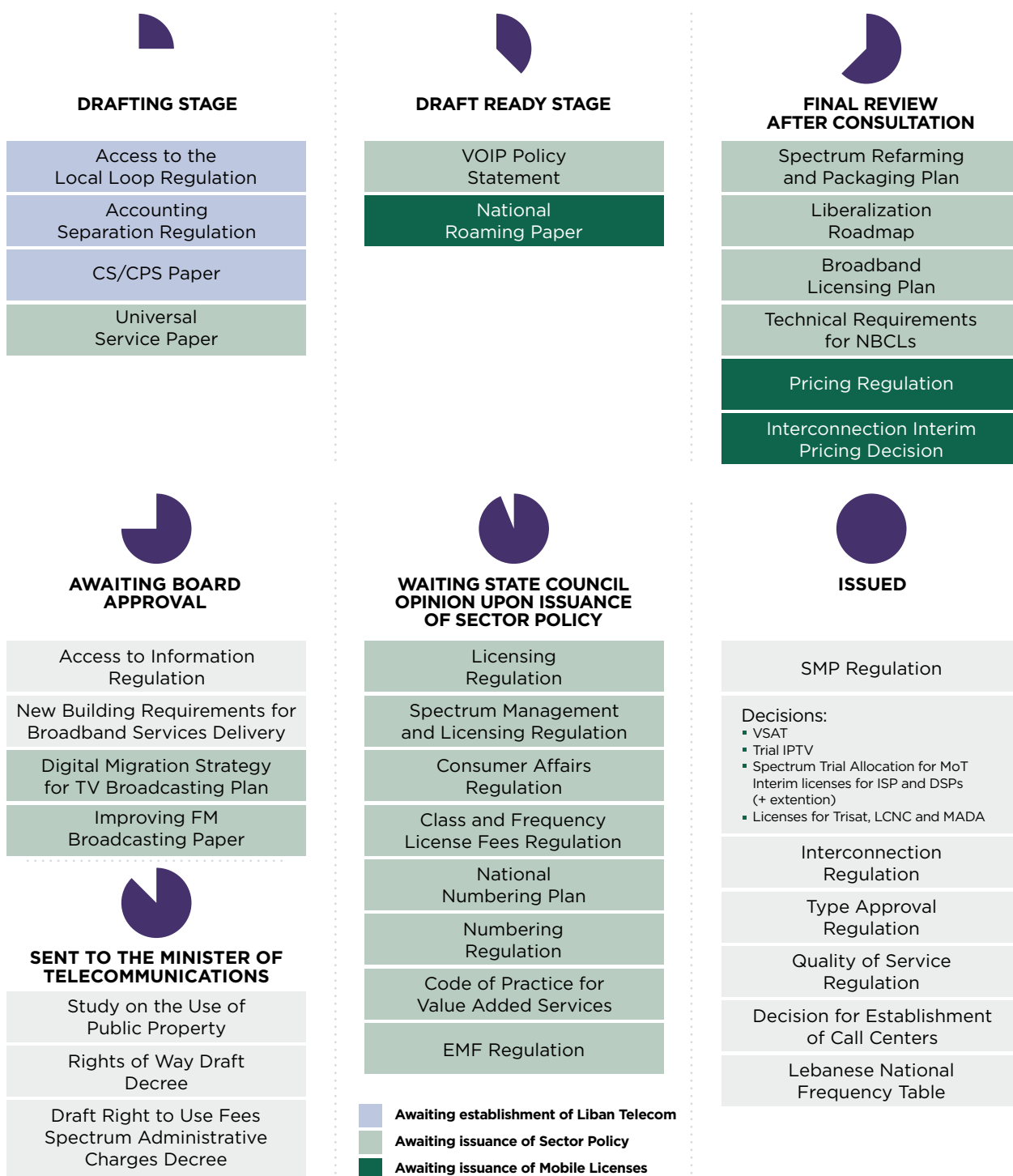
- The department of administrative affairs whose aims are the implementation of the TRA's internal Code of Practice, the management of human resources and its general administration.
- The department of financial affairs which is responsible for budget control, accounting, project financing, and its implementation.
- The department of internal auditing, whose aim is the auditing of the TRA accounts in line with the budget and the TRA administration's financial decisions.



## 6. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The TRA succeeded during the first five years of its mandate, and after the completion of all procedures and public consultations in accordance with best international standards, in adopting the necessary regulations required to carry out its responsibilities and obligations according to the Law.

Since its establishment, the TRA has been working extensively on setting a regulatory framework that would ensure the success of telecommunications liberalization and development.





## 7. OUR PARTNERS

The TRA has developed a wide network of local, regional and international partners. We made sure to collaborate with public and private institutions that have a direct interest in developing the sector and with whom the TRA's cooperation was necessary in order to fulfill its prerogatives. These partners have all contributed to the capacity building of our institution.

### LOCAL PARTNERS

AUB  
Civil Aviation  
Customs Directorate  
Higher Council for Privatization  
LIBNOR  
Maritime Transport  
Ministry of Defense  
Ministry of Economy and Trade - CPD  
Ministry of Information  
Ministry of Interior and Municipalities  
Ministry of Justice  
Ministry of Social Affairs - HCCP  
Ministry of Telecommunications  
Ministry of Transport and Public Works  
Order of Engineers  
State Council

### INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

AIRF  
AMIDEAST  
ANACOM  
AREGNET  
ASMG  
EMERG  
European Union  
FRATEL  
ICTA  
ITU  
TRA Bahrain  
USAID  
World Bank  
USTTI

## 8. THE WAY FORWARD

The TRA is committed to bringing the country back to the international scene by implementing best in class regulations and developing the telecommunications sector while relying on the great talent and potential of the Lebanese people. These are the challenges that the TRA eagerly chose to meet and will continue to make progress towards in cooperation with its partners.





## TRA

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