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BUILDING DIGITAL ECONOMIES
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# SMARTPHONES GROWTH AND THE BANDWIDTH DEMAND

Andrew Hanna
Chief Commercial Officer
VIVA Bahrain

Chairman
CMO Committee
SAMENA Telecommunications Council

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# EDITORIAL

## Digital Economy – boom or bust

Sustainable Internet Digital Economy is a topic of great importance and relevance in multiple ways, especially with regard to the development of the ICT community we serve and work within. The Internet is a key component of this ICT community and affects almost any transaction that is done today-whether it is online purchase, Web research, or cross-continental voice communication. Our children are captivated by tablet devices and the thousands of applications that can run on these devices, which entertain and also train the youth of today. As a matter of fact, though, the Internet, a virtual cornucopia of opportunity, is still far from having its bounds and limits defined.

We need to stop, reflect, and see the forest from the trees. We need to look at the current business models that our industry utilizes. Through a visionary lens, we need to see what will bring the new opportunities of tomorrow on a sustainable basis. In a nutshell, traditional voice revenues have greatly declined, while SMS traffic and revenues have precipitously dropped. At the same time, data traffic has exponentially increased at rates that truly are jaw-dropping. Also, data revenues are not increasing at the same rate as data traffic is rising. This should be an alarm for all the stakeholders. Issues such as the OTT impact on the network and on operators' business models are only one key element of the discussion. Other fundamental issues are: How is voice and SMS revenue degradation affecting the operators' ability to adapt to new opportunities? How can ROCE be maintained, while revenues are decreasing and there is non linear growth on the network, along with deescalation of margins over the long term? What is the legacy cost of providing voice and SMS traffic services in comparison to sky-rocketing data traffic usage with slightly increasing data traffic revenues? Can the operator community manage its robust facility growth without some sort of injection of volume and scale through consolidation? These are just a handful of issues that can be easily pinpointed in the ever-widening array of challenges that the current and emerging Internet economy faces.

To no surprise, voice revenue on a per unit basis is being replaced by a greatly discounted, nearly free VoIP application in many markets around the world. The switch from legacy mobile and fixed-line services to digital data-based VoIP services by consumers and businesses continues to occur, and speedily. SMS revenues suffer the same fate. These services, both voice and SMS, largely utilize or are capable of using legacy, previously depreciated and amortized network assets, while the highly exponential growth of data services, which in many markets, are flat rated and unlimited, use pricing packages that are replacing the previous revenue schemes with much lower margins and pricing systems. Yet the network systems that are required to support such new valuable high speed services are sustained only by the huge outlay of CAPEX displacement on an annual basis. Operators in order to stay ahead, need to invest and build greater capacity as well as greater speeds. The operators are seeking additional uptake of their network services. Competition demands bigger, better and faster. Industry predictions place CAPEX averaging at US$350 billion per annum, where most of it is invested to further develop both fixed and mobile digital network infrastructure, centered around the need to meet the demand for higher data and content services.

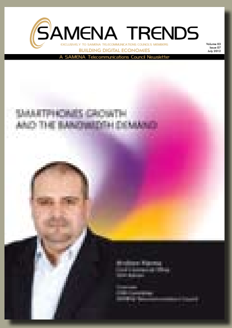
There are many captivating issues that create a conundrum not to be easily solved. Does the system have the financial wherewithal to continue to support escalating CAPEX requirements, while both margins and revenues decline? Are all stakeholders in the "new" digital economy, paying their fair share of CAPEX to facilitate their growth? Are all stakeholders beholden to the same regulatory practices and fee payments? These are truly vexing questions and there are far more that we are dealing with on a day to day basis, with regard to reviewing the Sustainable Internet Digital Economy.

SAMENA is working with groups all over the globe to acutely identify the issues and the opportunities. We certainly see digitization as a key operative activity toward the realization of the future Digital Economy as well as a means or incentive for continuing to build a robust network infrastructure that supports the demand pace and is seen as a barometer of success for our industry. In this context, the upcoming WCIT 2012 in Dubai will serve as a platform for initiating a new basis for the ICT industry's growth for decades to come, behooving all those involved to truly review the future, today.

If we fail to take these and the surrounding issues seriously, we may inadvertently aid the creation of an environment that may not be able to sustain the next-generation of services that are the needs of our children's children. Policy makers must address the fairness of the whole foundation of our industry on a long term visionary basis and drive investment incentivized policy that benefits all stakeholders of the ICT ecosystem.

Truly Yours,

**Thomas Wilson**
CEO & Managing Director
SAMENA Telecommunications Council



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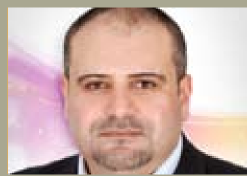


# TOP REGIONAL & MEMBER NEWS

## Mobily and Pacific Controls team up to offer M2M smart solutions

Etihad Etisalat (Mobily), the leading telecommunications company in Saudi Arabia, and Pacific Controls, the leading global provider of ICT-enabled managed services and converged engineering solutions for buildings and infrastructure projects, have announced the signing of a Partnership Agreement to jointly offer machine-to-machine (M2M) Energy Management solutions for vertical industry sectors in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

As per the agreement, Mobily and Pacific Controls will join forces to cater to the business needs of sectors such as Energy and Utilities, Government, Healthcare, Financial, Retail etc. With Mobily's telecommunication infrastructure and broadband network capabilities and Pacific Controls' expertise in the fields of energy management, remote monitoring and control through M2M applications, customers will be able to cut their operational costs by availing services of Energy Analysis, Carbon Footprint Reduction, Measurement & Verification, Continuous Commissioning and Fault Detection and Diagnostics.

In addition to adding value to customers' businesses and introducing initiatives to provide optimum benefits to end-users, the five year agreement will incorporate a state of the art Command and Control Center based in Riyadh, utilizing the latest M2M technology platform, to position Mobily and the Kingdom as one of the leading proponents in Energy Management Services.

## Qtel's Fiber Services Achieve Milestone

Qtel has reached a milestone by connecting 30,000 homes and 15,000 customers now enjoying "superfast Internet and next generation" television services. To facilitate smooth customer migration to Qtel Fiber, the service provider has initiated a two-stage process.

During the first visit, Qtel technicians will install access equipment and bring the fiber cable into the home. In the second visit, the Qtel Fiber teams will install the required router and migrate customers' services over to Qtel Fiber.

The process is being carried out zone-by-zone across Qatar, with door-to-door visits taking place in every neighborhood. When the Qtel Fibre teams arrive in a new zone, customers receive a special Qtel Fiber leaflet and authorization form, letting them know that the Qtel Fiber team is set to visit one week in advance.

Qtel Fiber team said, "We are working hard to reduce the gap between the first and second visits, as we look to bring Qtel Fiber to homes across Qatar. There are more resources going into the process over the coming months, which should ensure that more customers can enjoy the incredible speed of Qtel Fiber."

## Huawei Launches World's First Plug and Link Data Card

Huawei announced the commercial launch of the world's first plug and link data card, the HiLink E303Cs. Powered by a number of patented technologies, the HiLink E303Cs automatically connects users to the Internet in as little as 15 seconds after the data card is inserted into the USB port, without the need for a tedious dial-in process, driver installation or manual configuration. This is up to 75 percent faster than products currently on the market. The HiLink E303Cs is the first EDGE/GPRS/GSM-compatible product in the Huawei HiLink series that supports HSPA + network with 7.2 Mbps Downlink. The HiLink is available pan-India July 2012 onwards, in telecom and PC stores and online channels.

## Qtel-Etisalat Tie-up Will Enhance Connectivity

Qtel and Etisalat have joined hands to provide enhanced IP VPN connectivity to their customers in the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and other GCC countries. The installation of Etisalat's 9th Global MPLS (Multi Protocol Label Switching) node in Qatar will enable Etisalat's customers to connect their offices on Etisalat's backbone between the UAE and Qatar networks. The agreement will enable both companies to deliver "greater coverage, seamless user experience and reliable technology" to their respective customers. The agreement was signed by Abdulla al-Ahmed, Etisalat senior vice president (Business) and Yousuf Abdulla al-Kubaisi, Qtel Qatar chief wholesale and international officer.

Etisalat has installed MPLS nodes in partnerships with multiple leading carriers worldwide including London (UK), Singapore, New York (USA), Alexandria (Egypt), Riyadh (Saudi Arabia), Karachi (Pakistan), Amsterdam (Netherland) and Kuwait. Qtel has partnered with a wide range of global data carriers with a presence in the UK, the US, Europe, Singapore, Saudi Arabia and India to increase the range of MPLS services available for business customers in Qatar.

## Du Awarded Globally Recognized BS-25999 Certification for Business Continuity Management

In a true testament to the company's exceptional levels of reliability in business operations, du announced that it has been awarded the BS-25999 Certification for Business Continuity Management, the world's first standard for business continuity management (BCM), BS-25999 highlights the maturity of a company's BCM program, ensuring that all corresponding activities are conducted and implemented in a controlled manner as well as meet challenging global criteria. In a recently-held ceremony, Brian Baxter, Director of Lloyd's Register Quality Assurance Limited – UAE, presented the certificate to Osman Sultan, CEO, du. A vital incentive to maintain customer satisfaction and guarantee global compliance, the process of achieving and sustaining the Business Continuity Management (BCM) has long been at the forefront of du's business ethos. The accolade adds to the ISO27001 Certification attributed to du in 2010 for its stellar standards in Information Security Management Systems and Governance Framework.

## Huawei Opens Two New LTE Testing Labs in China

Huawei has opened new TD-LTE IOT (Interoperability Testing) labs in Xi'an and Shenzhen, China. The open IOT labs will focus on LTE solutions for voice, multi-mode roaming and multi-mode smartphones in collaboration with industry partners. The IOT lab in Xi'an is capable of conducting interoperability testing between chipsets and network systems, devices and network systems. It can also perform tests between multiple systems, including GSM/WCDMA/CDMA/TD-SCDMA/LTE TDD/FDD and using mainstream TD-LTE bands (1.9, 2.3, 2.6 and 3.5GHz). The lab's device test environment can support tests on devices from five different manufacturers simultaneously. The Shenzhen IOT lab focuses end-to-end authentication and verifying network performance with different technologies, applications and solutions. Voice, video, LCS (Location Services) and other end-to-end solutions are tested at the Shenzhen IOT lab.

## Alcatel-Lucent Publishes its 2011 Corporate Responsibility Report

Alcatel-Lucent meets aggressive 2011 Corporate Responsibility targets and renews commitments to sustainability in 2012. In its 2011 Corporate Responsibility Report, Alcatel-Lucent showcases progress on its Corporate Responsibility (CR) strategy, achievements and targets related to eco-sustainability, its people and digital inclusion. Alcatel-Lucent, a global telecommunications infrastructure provider, regards CR and sustainability as business imperatives and applies the same discipline to these activities as it does to its core business. The company published its CR reporting in line with the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI) -- of which it was named sector leader for the Communications Technology Sector -- as well as the United Nations Global Compact Advanced Level, and it adopted the reporting guidelines of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) with an A+ application level check. The company also implemented the French Grenelle II requirements a year in advance of their implementation date.

## Jordan 2nd Most Competitive Cellular Market in the Arab World

Jordan is the second most competitive cellular market in the Arab world, according to a study by the Arab Advisers Group. The "Cellular Competition Intensity Index 2012" ranked Saudi Arabia as the most competitive cellular market in the Arab world, while the Palestinian territories ranked third. Egypt ranked fourth, followed by Oman, Morocco and Iraq. The study took into account the number of operators, packages and services available in each of the 19 countries covered by the Arab Advisers Group. Telecom experts attributed Jordan's ranking to the "fierce" competition among telecom companies, which led to a "sharp" drop in the price of services. Mobile penetration in Jordan reached 123 percent by the end of March, according to figures released by the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission, which indicated on its website that there were 7.758 million mobile subscriptions in the country.

# Operator Leader's Vision

**Andrew Hanna**
**Chief Commercial Officer**
**VIVA Bahrain**
**Chairman, CMO Committee**
**Samena Telecommunications Council**

With a career spanning almost 20 years in the global telecom and ICT industry, Mr. Hanna draws on a breadth of knowledge and expertise in competitive international markets. Currently CCO at STC subsidiary VIVA Bahrain, he has played a key role in the operator's 2010 launch and highly successful vie for market share in a fiercely competitive and oversaturated climate. Leading the Product Development, Marketing, Customer Experience and Sales departments, Mr. Hanna is responsible for comprehensive steering of all commercial operations and ensuring the success of VIVA's overall value proposition. Through the development of innovative products and services, the signing of key strategic partnerships, and the careful positioning of the VIVA brand among its competitors, he has helped ensure a firm foothold for the telecom provider as it serves a rapidly growing customer base.

Prior to his post at VIVA, Mr. Hanna was General Manager for Enterprise and Government at Batelco, Bahrain, and subsequently Group General Manager. His responsibilities included the end-to-end sales, service, and marketing of Batelco's portfolio of solutions to all business customers with full P&L accountability. In that capacity, he was instrumental in effecting a transformation of the division and employee team from a transactional model to a solutions-based one.

Other senior appointments included Regional Management with Microsoft MENA, General Manager with Telecom NZ/AAPT, Ericsson Australia, and various product management, marketing and strategy roles with Telstra Australia where he started his career as part of a Leadership Development Program.

Mr. Hanna holds an MBA & Master of Marketing (Monash University, Australia), a Post Graduate Diploma in International Business (Monash University, Australia) and Bachelor's degree in Economics & Commerce from Victoria University in Australia.

Q. Please share your thoughts on being elected as the Chairman of SAMENA CMO committee.

A. I am very honored to be elected the Chairman of SAMENA CMO committee. It is a great pleasure to be a founding member of the committee and to be able to shape and drive the sales & marketing agenda with my industry colleagues across the many exciting topics that are facing us as professionals in our respective organizations.

Q. Viva Bahrain extended their full support and commitment, becoming the first member to join the SAMENA CMO Committee, what objective you had in mind before joining the committee?

A. At VIVA we pride ourselves on making sure we deliver our promise of innovation and value to the market. This also extends to our partners, and joining the committee is just a small example of being conscious of our responsibility to the industry and how such initiatives can bring value to not just us but the wider CMO community. If we are able to facilitate an environment where like-minded professionals can interact and share ideas and address challenges, then in a small way we're also helping our industry innovate and continue improving.

Q. Keeping in view the role of SAMENA, and its significance in the regional telecoms landscape, what is your vision of CMO Group's future activities?

A. I believe the role SAMENA has played regionally in the Telecom sector has been significant in driving the operator's focus on key issues. I would like to see the same for the CMO Group. We envision an environment and a forum for like-minded professionals who are facing many customer, competitive and regulatory challenges to be able to interact and engage with one another to address these issues and put forward a unified industry position that helps shape the future of our industry.

Q. Keeping in view the group's activities and vision, what benefits do you anticipate especially from the exchange of knowledge and expertise?

A. I see great benefits gained from such exchange of knowledge and expertise. We have professionals in our industry with vast and varied experiences gained in many different organizations, continents and across different commercial disciplines. I think this is of great value when shared in the right forum, where CMOs are given an opportunity to put forward their expertise and knowledge to the greater benefit. We should be able to address the key issues facing us and identify various ways to deal with them, taking into consideration the uniqueness of our markets and the development stages of each of our respective organizations. We should also be able to put forward a unified position and thought leadership across these issues.

Q. With the progress of broadband, gradual growth of the content industry, and the emergence of mobile apps, what are your thoughts about digitization being a key driver of sustainable economic growth across the SAMENA region?

A. Digitization is one of, if not the key, driver of sustainable economic growth across the region and perhaps globally also. It means different things to different organizations depending on their development stage but regardless of that stage, what is important is that it is changing how our customers are behaving and hence it is impacting our industry because we have to be conscious of those changes and adapt quickly, efficiently and effectively to them. It is at the heart of our business and will only continue to get more significant, so the sooner we are able to adopt and adapt, the better it is for us in ensuring sustainable growth of the industry and a much more customer-focused experience.

Q. What key Marketing issues would be under the spot light of CMO Committee?

A. We are actually inviting the CMO group members to highlight what their key issues are so we can capture those in our discussions. There are currently a number of key marketing issues that I believe are facing our industry and like many of my respective telecom CMO's, it's at the top of our minds. These include but certainly are not limited to such issues as Customer Experience Management, Commercialization of new technologies such as LTE and what it means for our customers and overall value proposition, real-time marketing engagement and of course Digitisation, including social marketing. We hope to address these in addition to others that will be highlighted by our members.

Q. How would you see the future of telecom markets in terms of competition? Do you agree that regional markets will experience tough competition, resulting in improved QOS and reduced tariffs?

A. Although it may sound counter intuitive to a certain extent, but I think competition is a healthy part of our industry. It helps us stay sharp and focused on our customers. I believe competition will only intensify in the future as our customers become more demanding of us and of technology in general. The convergence of technologies in addition to regional and global players only serves to highlight the intensity of the competition and how customer demand is changing. For sure it will continue to put pressure on all operators to innovate, improve their service and provide value to their customers. This may or may not drive reduced tariffs. Value is perceived differently by different segments and I believe if we are able to innovate in our propositions, then it doesn't always have to mean reduced tariffs or profitability. This definitely will be discussed at our first CMO group gathering.

Q. How telecom frauds are negatively affecting on the operators' revenues, what remedies should be taken to tackle this situation?

A. I believe fraud and revenue leakage is a serious issue for our industry that all operators are addressing in one way or another. It is key to a continued and sustainable growth of our industry and needs to be addressed. We intend to highlight this in the CMO committee and utilise the collective experience of our members to tackle it by looking at best practices and effective ways of how operators are dealing with this challenge, be it by utilising technologies or changing business processes and procedures or adopting new business models or perhaps by putting all those strategies into play with various degrees of focus.

# INTRODUCING THE CMO COMMITTEE

CMOs around the world are tasked with navigating their organizations through the rapidly changing telecommunications industry. Every day, CMOs make critical commercial decision on topics such as:

- **Real-time Geo Marketing:** Is it a must-have for CVM?
- **Handset Subsidies:** Should you start offering subsidies?
- **LTE:** When is the right time to invest?
- **Net Promoter Score:** Can NPS implementation help track and deliver happy and loyal customers?
- **The Threat of WiMax:** Friend or foe?
- **Mobile Payment:** Hype or hope?

SAMENA's newly formed CMO Committee strives to provide answers to these and many other issues in a private setting that is exclusive to CMOs and select members of the SAMENA community.

## Our Mission

SAMENA will organize exclusive events to provide CMOs with the opportunity to:

- **Network with other CMOs** of leading telecommunications operators in a private setting
- **Influence SAMENA's regulatory and commercial agenda**
- **Learn about the latest innovation and global best practices.** Unlike traditional conferences, we will handpick speakers to bring commercial insight on topics relevant to SAMENA's membership.

## Join Us

If you are a CMO, or equivalent leader in your organization (e.g. Business Unit Head, VP Marketing, etc.), we would be honored to have you join our committee.

As you may know, SAMENA's last CEO Dinner in Hong Kong was attended by the CEOs of 63 telecommunications operators. We hope to make our CMO community equally as thriving in the years to come.

## Our First Invitation-Only Private Event

The first CMO Day is scheduled for 6 November in Istanbul, Turkey.

We hope you accept our invitation to join our committee, and will reach out to you to confirm your participation in the coming weeks.

**Andre Popov**
Founding Member of the CMO Committee
Partner, Peppers & Rogers Group

# SAMENA: Percentage Average Domestic & International Voice Traffic

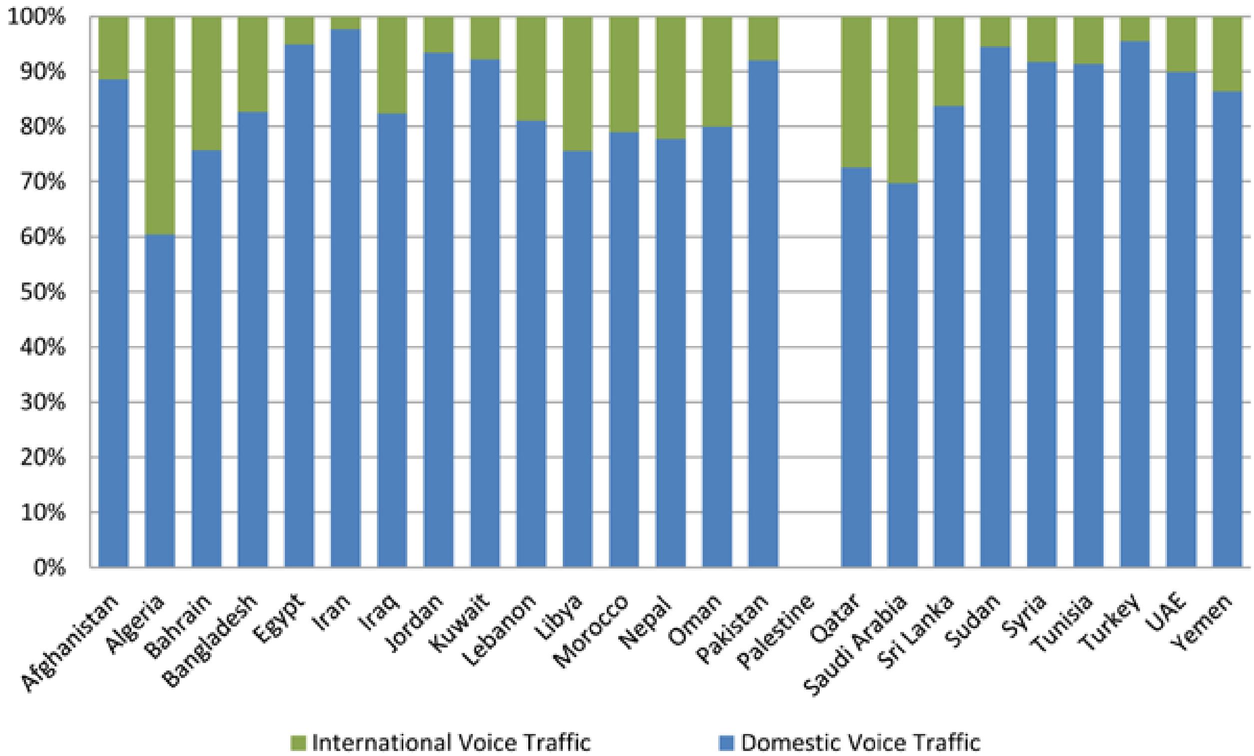



Image Source: **SAMENA**
Data Source: **ITU**

Research Note: The figure shows that within the SAMENA region, Qatar has the highest average international voice traffic in terms of minutes per subscribers per month. Similarly, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia are at number 2 and 3 respectively. On the other hand, in terms of average domestic voice traffic, Jordan is at numbers 1 in the entire SAMENA region. Lebanon, just like international voice traffic is in the top 3 list markets in terms of average domestic traffic. Expectedly, both in terms of domestic as well as international traffic, the top three markets are from the Middle East. Within South Asia, Sri Lanka has the both the highest average international voice traffic as well as average domestic voice traffic. North Africa has Libya with the highest international voice traffic whereas Egypt with the highest average domestic voice traffic.

# REGULATORY NEWS

## ACCC Announces Interim Determination for Local Bitstream Access Service

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has revealed its interim access determination (IAD) for the declared local bitstream access service (LBAS), a wholesale access service for fixed line network built or upgraded after January 2011. Having declared the service in February 2012, the new IAD contains both price and non-price terms and conditions for a wholesale non-National Broadband Network (NBN) 25Mbps/5Mbps down/uplink service. The regulator has set a price cap of AUD27 (US$27.7), with the fee set 'by benchmarking against the NBN Co wholesale broadband agreement price for a similar service'. The determination meanwhile also sets out non-price terms and conditions of access 'to provide a base set of terms if parties cannot come to a commercial agreement'.

Meanwhile, the regulator has also released its proposals for the final access determination (FAD) for the LBAS and is now seeking submissions on its proposed approach for the FAD, with the regulator reportedly calling in particular for comment on: the appropriateness of the benchmarking pricing methodology; the duration of the final access determination; and the appropriate non-price terms and conditions to be included in the FAD.

## Saudi Regulator Moves to Block Illegal Pre-paid SIM Use

Saudi Arabia's telecoms regulator, the Communications and Information Technology Commission (CITC), has announced that all mobile pre-paid top-up transactions will require the user to input his or her ID card number from the end of this month. The new regulation is part of the government's scheme to block the use of illegal pre-paid cards and to ensure that all mobile users have their details registered to help stamp out mobile phone-related crime. The CITC first unveiled the scheme several months ago but the country's mobile operators asked for some time to alter their top-up systems to incorporate the new requirements.

## UAE to Take 18 Months to Register All Sims

TRA UAE has given a timeframe of 18 months for subscribers to reregister their SIM cards under its 'My Number, My Identity' program. The process is divided into six stages to ensure that all users successfully complete their registration. Everyone with a mobile phone must go to a Du or Etisalat shop with their passport or national ID card to identify the person owning each phone line. The operators Etisalat and Du will conduct their own awareness campaigns to further announce details of the process of registering SIM cards.

## Hong Kong Regulator Plans 2.5/2.6 GHz Auction in Q1 2013

Hong Kong's Office of the Communications Authority has issued a statement on auctioning spectrum in the 2.5/2.6 GHz band. A consultation was carried out in December last year and early this year. The regulator said that no spectrum would be reserved for certain existing mobile network operators and that the available spectrum would be auctioned off with bidding open to existing operators and new entrants. The regulator will divide the spectrum in blocks of 2 x 5 MHz and a spectrum cap will not be applied. Furthermore, technical standards on the use of the spectrum will not be imposed. The Communications Authority is planning the auction for the first quarter 2013.

## Ofcom Consults on Wholesale Leased Line Price Controls

UK communications regulator Ofcom has proposed control on the wholesale prices charged by BT for products using leased telecoms lines. The proposed controls come after Ofcom concluded that BT had significant market power in a number of wholesale leased line services, and that charge controls should be imposed in the relevant markets to protect purchasers of these products. It has now published a consultation to identify the proposed level for those price controls.

The regulator expects that the controls will lead to real-term price reductions for most customers of the GBP 2 billion leased line markets, including businesses, schools, universities and libraries. Ofcom is proposing overall caps linked to inflation, with the aim of aligning he prices of these BT products with their cost by 2015. The controls relate to two groups of services - legacy leased lines using 'traditional interface' (TI) technology, and newer telecoms lines based on the Ethernet technology. The regulator is also proposing a lighter form of price control for low bandwidth Ethernet lines in west, east and central London, where BT faces greater competition.

## BTRC to Issue VoIP Licenses

The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) is inviting applications for VoIP termination licenses. The licenses will be valid for five years and cover international incoming VoIP calls only. Furthermore, it is said that mobile operators and gateway operators cannot apply for the VoIP license.

## Ukraine Regulator Targets Cut in Mobile Operator Margins

Ukrainian anti-monopoly regulator AMKU plans to start talks with the government on measures to stem the high prices at major mobile operators. According to the regulator, the profit margins at the operators are inflated. It claims Kyivstar's margin is up to 98 percent, while the profit margin of MTS Ukraine exceeds 50 percent.

## NBTC Engages ITU to Value Broadcasting Spectrum

Thailand's National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) has engaged a team from the International Telecom Union (ITU) to value the country's radio and television spectrum ahead of issuing broadcasting licenses. The regulator has also appointed a subcommittee to work on the same task separately, and teams from the Thammasat University and Sukothai Thammatirat University will work out appropriate content ratios for the digital TV licenses, The Nation writes citing NBTC vice chairman Natee Sukonrat. All of the committees are expected to finish their work this year. The regulator plans to publish the information on three classes of digital TV licenses in the Royal Gazette in September while licenses are expected to be awarded from early next year.

## Arcep Proposes Cut in Overseas Mobile Termination Rate

French regulator Arcep has started a public consultation on a proposed reduction in mobile termination rates in overseas departments. This would see rates drop to EUR 0.01 per minute in the Antilles, Guyana, Reunion and Mayotte from 01 January 2013. The decision is based on the European Commission's recommended LRIC model for calculating the costs of an efficient operator. Arcep expects the new tariff will encourage more unlimited offers and cheaper fixed-to-mobile calls, similar to mainland France. It also reduces the difference in termination rates between the overseas departments and mainland France to EUR 0.002, which should encourage calls overseas to be included more often in service bundles in mainland France. The consultation is open until 14 September.

## Zimbabwe Regulator Considers Law on Infrastructure Sharing

The Posts and Telecommunication Authority of Zimbabwe mulling legislation compelling mobile service providers to share infrastructure. Director General of the Authority, Charles Sibanda said the firms were only agreeing to share base stations when there is a commercial benefit. Sibanda said this while giving evidence before a parliamentary committee on Media, Information and Communication Technology. Sibanda responded to a question from a committee member who said there was need for firms to share base stations and only compete on services. The Committee wanted to know about the operations of Potraz and how it had used the Universal Services Fund. According to Sibanda, Potraz had raised more than US$ 44 million for the Universal Services Fund in the past the years. Sibanda said voice services accounted for the bulk of the money, at US$ 41.3 million, while internet access providers raised US$ 2 million. Sibanda said the fund had helped construct base stations in a number of under-developed areas that were due for commissioning, while other projects were still at tender stage.

# A SNAPSHOT OF REGULATORY ACTIVITIES IN SAMENA REGION
## Active Consultations & Invitations for Feedback

### UAE

The Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA) intends to develop a new policy regarding the Space Telecommunications in keeping with its values of transparency and sector engagement. The TRA strives to meet the needs of the sector and seeks the views and feedback from the sector for developing the policy. The purpose of this document is to invite comments from stakeholders on the outline of the proposed TRA Policy- Space Telecommunications, in accordance with the Telecom Law. The last date to submit responses to this consultation has been fixed as July 6, 2012. (May 31, 2012) www.tra.gov.ae

The Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA) intends to study and plan the frequency ranges of 790-862 MHz and 694-790 MHz expected to be vacated by the Broadcasting after digital switch over from analog television broadcasting. As the data traffic is growing on mobile networks and there is an increasing demand to offer more spectrum for mobile broadband to enable higher data rate services, the TRA strives to meet the needs of the sector and seeks the views and feedback from the sector for the planning of these bands. The purpose of this document is to invite comments from all concerned stakeholders regarding the TRA's intention to review and plan the spectrum allocations in the bands 790-862 MHz and 694-790 MHz. The last date to submit responses to this consultation has been fixed as July 6, 2012. (May 31, 2012) www.tra.gov.ae

# Country-Wise Policy & Regulatory Developments

### Afghanistan
### Board Chairman: Mr. Abdul WakilShergul
[Afghanistan Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (ATRA)]

The ICT Ministry with funding from the World Bank, has begun an examination of how international best practices for open access can be applied to government-owned fiber backbones in the country. The ministry has engaged a consultant and has launched a consultation on the issue. **(June 28, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

The telecommunications Ministry and the Regulatory Authority (ATRA) have issued a 3G license to MTN, which paid US$ 25 million for the spectrum license. This is the second 3G license that has been issued in Afghanistan. In March, Etisalat secured a 3G license and other operators have expressed an interest in 3G licenses as well. The communications ministry said it hoped to increase the number of internet users in the country to 50% of the population within the next two years, with help of 3G services. MTN said that 3G services would be rolled out in twenty days. **(June 21, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

The Telecommunication Regulator (TRA) has opened a tender for the expansion of mobile coverage. The regulator wants to expand coverage with 200 BTSs to 174 districts in 34 provinces. The project will be subsidized through the Telecommunication Development Fund (TDF) and ATRA is inviting licensed telecommunications operators to participate in the project. **(June 12, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

### Algeria
### Chairperson: Ms. Zohra Derdouri
[Regulatory Authority for Post & Telecommunication (ARPT)]

Orascom Telecom's CEO has said he expects to see a US$1.3 billion legal battle relating to the firm's operations in Algeria settled this year. CEO told that Orascom has not set aside any cash to cover the fine which was levied for alleged breaches of foreign exchange rules by its Algerian mobile unit Djezzy. CEO said the allegations are 'groundless' and he is confident that Orascom's legal appeal against the fine will come to a successful conclusion this year. Djezzy was first accused of wrongdoing back in 2010 and the DZD99 billion (US$1.3 billion) penalty was imposed by the government earlier this year. Orascom's initial challenge against the decision in Algeria's Court of Appeal ended unsuccessfully last month, but the Egypt-based parent company has now turned to the country's Supreme Court in an attempt to overturn the fine. Orascom is backed by international telecoms group Vimpelcom, and Djezzy – Algeria's mobile market leader – is its largest revenue generator. **(June 7, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

### Bahrain
### Chairman & General Director: Mr. Mohamed Bubashait
[Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA)]

Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) has issued an order to the country's dominant telecoms operator Batelco, setting new wholesale regulated access and interconnection rates for 2012. Under the order the telco's bitstream and wholesale DSL charges are decreasing by between 2% and 26% compared to current prices; interconnection links charges are being cut by between 30% and 50%; interconnection services charges remain unchanged; duct access rates are similarly unaltered (although the TRA has introduced a maximum price that Batelco can charge to alternative operators for the field study stage required prior to cabling); domestic leased line wholesale costs are dropping by up to 46%; fees for international leased half circuits to Gulf countries are falling by between 28% and 68%, and for Southeast/East Asia, Europe and the USA, the wholesale tariffs have been cut by between 41% and 45%. **(June 19, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

Batelco has signed an agreement with Qatar-based privately-owned submarine fiber-optic cable operator Gulf Bridge International (GBI) to connect to international capacity on GBI's newly launched undersea cable system linking all the Gulf States. Batelco is also operating a landing station in Bahrain for the new cable, under a previous agreement. The GBI international network was announced as ready for service in February 2012. **(June 6, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

### Bangladesh
### Chairman: Maj. Gen. Zia Ahmed
[Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC)]

The Telecommunication Regulator (BTRC) is inviting applications for a fifteen-year National Internet Exchange (NIX) license. Along with the invitation, the regulator also issued the licensing guidelines. Under the new guidelines, existing NIX service providers will also have to apply for the new licensee to be able to continue providing their peering services. They will have to be certified by ten ISPs that they have peering connections with the applicant. The BTRC has not set a limit on the number of NIX licenses. The license fee has been set at BDT 10,000 and the annual fee has been set at BDT 5,000. **(June 28, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

The Finance Minister has proposed a 2% tax on mobile phone bills. The tax would be deducted while paying bills for postpaid connections or recharging prepaid connections. Minister made the proposal as part of a presentation on the proposed 2012-13 budget in parliament. The 90 million mobile users in Bangladesh currently pay 15% VAT on bills. The finance minister also proposed a 1% tax on the total amount received by International Gateway (IGW) services providers and 5% on the amount paid by IGW providers to other operators for international phone calls. The budget proposal also earmarks BDT 17.37 billion for the telecommunications sector, including BDT 13.17 billion for developing the market. Minister also said the roll out of 3G technology and extension of existing 2.5G network by state-owned mobile operator Teletalk is progressing. **(June 8, 2012) www.bdnews24.com**

The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) is set to launch the second phase of audits into mobile phone operators. Chairman said the BTRC has short-listed auditors for the job and plans to start the audit next month. The commission now awaits a go-ahead from an evaluation committee to appoint two audit firms initially, BTRC chairman said. Last year, Grameenphone and Banglalink came under the scanner of the BTRC, but the audits into Banglalink hit a snag halfway, while Grameenphone rejected the audit report and took the issue to court. **(June 6, 2012) The Daily Star**

### Iran
### Minister of Communications & Information Technology: Dr. Reza Taghipour
[Communications Regulatory Commission (CRC)]

Iran plans to increase its interactions with other states in the communication fields, particularly with the member states of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), said minister of communications and information technology. "At present, communication and information technology indexes are standing at good levels, but we are eager to use other countries' experiences" to still boost and bolster our performance, Reza Taqipour said. He added Iranian officials plan to hold several bilateral meetings with a number of regional countries in a bid to prepare the grounds for mutual cooperation. ECO is an intergovernmental regional organization established in 1985 by Iran, Pakistan and Turkey with the aim of promoting economic, technical and cultural cooperation among member states. The organization was expanded in 1992 to include seven new members, namely Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. **(June 20, 2012) Fars News Agency**

### Iraq
### CEO: Dr. Buhan Shawi
[Communication & Media Commission (CMC)]

Zain Iraq has confirmed that it has invested around US$20 million in its proposed listing on the local stock exchange, its chief executive confirmed in an interview. Zain is required to list on the Iraq Stock Exchange (ISX) as part of the terms of its US$1.25 billion operating license, which it obtained in 2007. Rival operators Asiacell, which is owned by Qatar Telecom, and Korek Telecom (co-owned by France Telecom-Orange and local logistics company Agility) are also required to list on the ISX, although all three firms missed the initial deadline of August 2011. Zain has appointed BNP Paribas, Citigroup and the National Bank of Kuwait to handle its offering. **(June 22, 2012) Reuters**

### Jordan
### Chairman & CEO: Mr. Fadi Kawar
[Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (TRC)]

Mobile penetration in Jordan reached 123% by the end of March of this year, according to figures from the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC). The figures indicated that Internet penetration reached 53% by the end of the first quarter of this year, with a total of 678,882 Internet subscriptions. According to the TRC figures, the number of landline subscriptions at the end of March stood at 419,533: a 6.7% penetration rate. **(June 27, 2012) www.zawya.com**

With Internet traffic in the Middle East growing exponentially, a local expert said Jordanian mobile and Internet service providers should anticipate increasing pressure on their networks as the number of users rises. "In the next few years, Jordan will be ahead of other countries in the region in terms of Internet traffic," Jawad Abbassi, founder and General Manager of Arab Advisers Group told media. "Mobile operators in Jordan and Internet service providers need to be ready to deal with rocketing pressure on their networks caused by a sharp increase in consuming data, mainly videos and pictures." Abbassi was commenting on a recently released report by Cisco Systems, Inc., which predicted that average Internet traffic in the Middle East and Africa in 2015 would be equivalent to 4,500,000 people streaming Internet HD video simultaneously. According to the Cisco Visual Networking Index (VNI) forecast, Internet traffic in the Middle East and Africa area will grow nine-fold from 2010 to 2015 -- a compound annual growth rate of 56 per cent. "Middle Eastern and African Internet traffic in 2015 will be equivalent to 98 times the volume of the entire Middle Eastern and African Internet in 2005," the report said. Abbassi said that in Jordan, Internet traffic was likely to increase as more Jordanians become Smartphone users, predicting that Smartphone penetration, currently at about 43%, would reach 50% by the end of the year. "There is strong competition among mobile operators, especially after the launch of Third Generation (3G) services," he said. Internet penetration in Jordan reached 53% by the end of the first quarter of 2012, while the ratio of Internet subscriptions to the population stood at 11% at the end of March, according to figures posted on the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission's website. **(June 20, 2012) The Jordan Times**

Mobile service providers Virgin Group and FRiENDi GROUP have announced a strategic partnership deal to merge their regional assets and accelerate expansion in the Middle East and Africa. The combined group will manage the current operations of Virgin Mobile in South Africa and FRiENDi in Oman, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, creating a regional mobile services player with more than a million customers. Subject to local authority clearances, the two groups will merge their regional telecom operations to create a combined entity under the name Virgin Mobile Middle East & Africa (VMMEA), which will develop and operate mobile telecommunications businesses across the region. In addition, the new group plans to further strengthen its position across the region by launching in more markets across the Middle East and Africa, and is targeting a regional customer base of over five million subscribers by 2015, across both the Virgin Mobile and FRiENDi mobile brands. 'We are delighted to have agreed this strategic partnership with FRiENDi GROUP to create Virgin Mobile Middle East & Africa, and together we will create the undisputed regional leader in the MVNO space', commented Sir Richard Branson, founder and president of Virgin, adding: 'Virgin and FRiENDi GROUP bring complementary skills and assets to the new venture and I have great confidence in its future success.' Upon completion of the deal, Virgin Group will become the largest individual shareholder of the combined group, holding a 'significant minority stake'. VMMEA will be led by FRiENDi GROUP CEO and founder Mikkel Vinter, and will be headquartered in Dubai, UAE. **(June 6, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

### Kuwait
### Minister of Communication: Dr. Mohammed Al-Baseeri
[Ministry of Communication (MOC)]

The Ministry of Communications (MoC) is threatening non-paying customers with disconnection if overdue accounts are not settled. The MoC is owed KWD112.8 million (US$400 million) in unpaid bills. The Ministry, which acts as both the country's telecoms regulator and monopoly fixed line telephone operator, is writing to defaulters with an initial warning on June 10. A second reminder will be issued on June 18, and disconnections will begin on June 24 for accounts that remain overdue, Kuwaiti news agency KUNA reports. **(June 6, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

### Lebanon
### Acting Chairman & CEO: Dr. Imad Hoballah
[Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA)]

Following a decision by the Ministry of Telecommunications, state-owned cellco MTC Touch, managed by Kuwait's Zain Group, has rebranded itself to simply 'Touch'. The new moniker was officially launched on June 19, 2012. Zain (formerly MTC Group) entered into its original management contract for Mobile Interim Company 2 (MIC 2) in June 2004, and rebranded it as MTC Touch in November that year. **(June 22, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

### Morocco
**Director General: Mr. M. Azdine El MountassirBillah**
[Agence Nationale de Reglementation des Telecommunications (ANRT)]

Commercial LTE service in Morocco is expected to arrive in 2014, helping operators meet the growing demand for mobile broadband services, which is expected to total US$323 million in revenue by 2017, according to a new report from Pyramid Research. "The telecommunications regulator in Morocco, ANRT, announced on May 18, 2012, that it would issue a tender for 4G licenses in fall of the same year," says Ronda Zelezny-Green, Associate Research Analyst at Pyramid Research. The expectation is that licenses would be awarded at the beginning of 2013 with the expectation that 4G operations would commence at the end of 2013/ start of 2014. "Adoption of 4G technology will heavily depend on operators' ability to make services affordable for the average Moroccan consumer," she adds. **(June 24, 2012) www.cellular-news.com**

### Nepal
**Chairman: Mr.Bhesh Raj Kanel**
[Nepal Telecommunication Authority (NTR)]

The Nepal Telecommunications Authority (NTA) is considering an amendment to the way it sets up tariff charges under the proposed new national numbering plan. The government-backed committee will study plans to introduce a more 'scientific national numbering plan' designed to maintain the long term growth of the sector. The committee will be tasked with revisiting the existing plan with a focus on 'estimating the available numbering capacity, estimating the required numbering capacity, determining number lengths and planning for geographic numbers,' for the new scheme. **(June 28, 2012) The Himalayan Times**

The Telecommunications Regulator (NTA) has yet to start work on a plan to expand broadband access in the country as the government has yet to approve the spending. The authority had planned to use the money collected by the Rural Telecom Development Fund (RTDF) to construct the District Optical Fiber Network Program. However, an official at the NTA said the authority has not been able to start the project because it has not received a proper response from the Ministry of Information and Communications. With the delay in the start of the project, the target to complete the program by 2014 is almost impossible, the official said. The project aims to construct an internet service offering 256 kbps in 38 districts and their rural communities by 2014. The government had included the broadband project in the budget for the current fiscal year. About NPR 5 billion has been collected by the RTDF via contributions from five telecom service providers. **(June 25, 2012) The Himalaya Times**

The Telecommunications Regulator (NTA) directed Nepal Telecom (NT) to clear its remaining royalty dues worth Rs 3.27 billion. The amount covers the royalty dues of NT from fiscal year 1998-99 to 2010-11. NT had been paying four per cent of its total income as royalty. The authority concluded that Nepal Telecom should pay the committed royalty instead of four per cent of its total income. NT is expected to pay dues by end of current fiscal. Earlier, alarmed by shortfall of non-tax revenue mobilization, Finance Ministry had directed all public enterprises to clear their royalty dues as soon as possible. **(June 18, 2012) www.thehimalayantimes.com**

Nepalese mobile network, Ncell has paid the outstanding license fees that the country's Supreme Court had ordered the mobile networks to submit to the telecoms regulator. Ncell made the payment of Rs 353 million to the NTA following the court verdict. Ncell's license required it to pay four percent of its income as a license fee, or a committed settlement, whichever was higher - and due to falling pricing, the royalty fee was lower than the minimum committed fee. The company had argued that as the other operators were only held to the revenue royalty fee that it should be treated equally and not have to pay the higher minimum payment. The court disagreed, and ordered the payment of royalties to make up the difference between 2005-2011. **(June 11, 2012) www.cellular-news.com**

The Nepal Telecommunications Authority (NTA) has begun a quality of service survey along highways for mobile services. The regulator will check the strength of signals along smaller roads this year after checking the major highways last year, The Himalayan Times reports citing NTA spokesperson Kailash Prasad Neupane. **(June 8, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

### Oman
**Chief Executive Officer: Dr. Hamed Al-Rawahi**
[Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA)]

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) has launched a national project aimed at providing basic telecoms services to over 150 villages in remote and rural areas of the country. Implementation of the project will begin in the third quarter of this year and is expected to be completed by the end of 2013. Work will be carried out in cooperation with the Sultanate's two licensed telecoms operators, Omantel and Nawras, which will build a total of 120 base transceiver stations (BTS) in rural areas. 'Telecoms companies usually target areas with high population density that has economic returns in order to develop their networks and provide various services. This is an issue that the TRA is currently working on through implementing field surveys in the remaining areas, upon specifying such areas the TRA will set the plans to accomplish the coverage of the remaining villages, in coordination with other government authorities. **(June 13, 2012) www.tra.gov.om**

### Pakistan
**Chairman: Dr. Muhammad Yaseen**
[Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA)]

Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) in collaboration with Asia Pacific Network Information Center (APNIC) is hosting a 3 days technical training workshop on Internet Resource Management, DNS Security Extensions (DNSSEC) and Internet Protocol version 6 (IPv6). The objective to host this International training workshop is to provide a capacity building opportunity for technical community members. This training workshop will highlight key essentials of Internet resource management. It will focus on understanding the structures, processes, procedures and policies involved in requesting, allocating and managing Internet Protocol (IP) addresses and Autonomous System (AS) numbers. **(June 20, 2012) www.pta.gov.pk**

The Islamabad High Court has ruled in favor of the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) in a dispute between the regulator and the Pakistan Telecommunication Company Ltd (PTCL) regarding origination charges to Long Distance and International (LDI) operators dating back to mid-2006. The dispute centered on PTCL's decision to charge LDI operators, which are dependent on PTCL's network, for unsuccessful calls, arguing that the calls had been responded by Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and had therefore used PTCL's resources. PTCL stated that the duration used for IVR should be considered a successful call. For their part, the LDI providers countered, saying that the terms of conditions of PTCL's reference interconnection offer (RIO) did not address the issue, and as such they should not be charged for a service for which they cannot charge their subscribers. The PTA intervened to resolve the confrontation and, after consultation with the parties involved, ruled in August 2006 that PTCL could levy origination charges from LDI operators for both 'Revenue Time' and 'Non-Revenue Time' on calling card traffic, but at a 25% discount. PTCL rejected the decision, however, and challenged the PTA's ruling. The High Court's decision marks the end of PTCL's appeal process and will allow LDI operators to resume pre-paid calling card services. **(June 8, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

## Qatar
### Executive Director: Ms. Christa Cramer
[The Supreme Council of Information and Communication Technology (ictQATAR)]

Qatar's two mobile operators Qatar Telecom (Qtel) and Vodafone are working with regulator ictQATAR to launch mobile number portability (MNP) in the country before the end of this year, and have contracted Norway's Systor Group as the technology partner for introducing the service, reports Gulf Times. TeleGeography's GlobalComms Database says that the implementation of MNP in Qatar has been long delayed, with ictQATAR predicting in 2008 that it would be available 'by mid-2011', but after that date came and went it forecast a new schedule of 'summer 2012', although that timeframe now also looks ambitious. **(June 7, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

## Saudi Arabia
### Governor: Eng. Abdullah A. Al Darrab
[Communication & Information Technology Commission (CITC)]

Zain Saudi Arabia has selected Nokia Siemens Networks (NSN) as its 4G Long Term Evolution (LTE) mobile broadband infrastructure and services. The operator aims to address the growing demand for mobile broadband and smart phone data services by refarming its 1800 MHz GSM frequency band to offer 4G services. As part of the contract, NSN will also manage Zain's 4G networks in Jeddah, in addition to the operator's existing GSM and 3G networks in the city. Zain claimed 12% of the Saudi mobile market at the end of **March 2012. (June 7, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

Mobile service providers Virgin Group and FRiENDi GROUP have announced a strategic partnership deal to merge their regional assets and accelerate expansion in the Middle East and Africa. The combined group will manage the current operations of Virgin Mobile in South Africa and FRiENDi in Oman, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, creating a regional mobile services player with more than a million customers. Subject to local authority clearances, the two groups will merge their regional telecom operations to create a combined entity under the name Virgin Mobile Middle East & Africa (VMMEA), which will develop and operate mobile telecommunications businesses across the region. In addition, the new group plans to further strengthen its position across the region by launching in more markets across the Middle East and Africa, and is targeting a regional customer base of over five million subscribers by 2015, across both the Virgin Mobile and FRiENDi mobile brands. **(June 6, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

## Sri Lanka
### Director General: Mr. Anusha Palpita
[Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (TRC)]

Sri Lanka ended the first quarter with 18.86 million mobile subscribers, up 6.4% year-on-year. Meanwhile, fixed-line users grew 5.5% to 958,038, the Lanka Business Online reports citing figures from the central bank. Furthermore, the number of fixed wireless access users grew slightly, by 0.6%, to 2.66 million. The number of internet users totaled 1.09 million in Q1, up 84.4% from a year earlier. **(June 8, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

Sri Lanka's mobile subscribers grew in single digits in the first quarter of 2012 from a year earlier and wireless fixed access users dropped from a quarter earlier, two years after telephones in use first exceeded the population. Mobile subscribers grew 6.4% to 18.86 million in the first quarter of 2012, in country of 20 million people. In the last quarter of 2010, Sri Lanka's teledensity, or telephones per 100 people rose to 100.7. Mobile subscribers grew in double digits up to the third quarter of 2011. The mobile market is shared between five operators, Malaysia's Axiata, UAE's Etisalat, Sri Lanka Telecom Mobitel which is part owned by Malaysia's UT group, India's Airtel and Hutchison Telecom. Fixed access wireless users grew 0.6% to 2.65 million rupees in the first quarter from a year earlier but dropped from 2.66 million in the last quarter of 2012. Sri Lanka's wireline users, who are customers of Sri Lanka Telecom, grew 5.5% to 958,038 by the end of the first quarter. Wireline use picked up after Sri Lanka Telecom started to promote broadband. **(June 7, 2012) www.lankabusinessonline.com**

## Sudan
### Director General: Dr. Izz Al Din Kamil Amin
[The National Telecommunication Corporation (NTC)]

Telecommunication firms operating in Sudan are facing difficulties in making equipment purchases and payments because of the country's foreign currency shortage and a huge variation in official and de facto exchange rates. Higher taxes and mounting competition are also posing challenges for the three major telecommunication players in the relatively underpenetrated market. Sudan lost three-quarters of its oil output when South Sudan became independent in July 2011, ending its main source of state revenue and foreign currency. That made the telecommunications sector even more critical to the wider economy, and it now accounts for about 12% of GDP. **(June 21, 2012) Reuters**

Zain Sudan aims to sign up an additional one million mobile subscribers in 2012 to boost its total customer base to 14 million by year-end. The company is targeting growth outside of the capital Khartoum. In December 2011 the Sudanese government introduced a new tax on telecoms operators to make up for the loss of oil revenue from newly independent South Sudan. Sales and services taxes for telecoms firms were increased from 20% to 30%, while a tax on profits was hiked from 15% to 30%; Zain has added the sales tax to its tariffs, but fierce competition meant it could not offset the profit tax increase with further price rises. Last year Zain Sudan began dividing its operations into two units after the South seceded in July 2011, but has yet to agree a license fee with the newly independent country. **(June 15, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

## Tunisia

### President: Mr. Hassoumi Zitoune

[National Telecommunication Commission (INTT)]

The World Bank says general calls in Tunisia are among a many costly in a world, with a cost allied to those in low-income economies or countries reduction integrated in a tellurian marketplace such as Senegal, Myanmar and a Republic of Congo. The Bank pronounced Tunisie Telecom's corner on ICT infrastructure and general entrance formula in a bad formation of Tunisia in a universe economy. The prevalence of Tunisie Telecom on general write and internet connectors costs too most to a Tunisian economy and is expected to quell ICT growth there, generally as a nation aspires to turn a informal height in a sector. According to a World Bank, opening adult a marketplace to other operators could assistance Tunisia to contest with other countries such as Morocco (three operators) and Egypt (seven operators), which, notwithstanding most reduce per capita incomes, are in a improved position to turn informal centers in a sector. **(June 27, 2012) www.news.myanmaronlinecentre.com**

As part of strengthening relations of cooperation and coordination between the Forum and the National Telecommunications Competition Council, and in order to avoid jurisdictional conflicts and potential contradictions between the decisions made by the two authorities in business for the purpose of competition in the telecommunications sector, the President of the INT and the Chairman of the Competition Council have signed a memorandum of understanding defining the role of each authority in promoting the competition in the telecommunications sector and in the fight against anticompetitive practices affecting the competitiveness of operators and telecommunications service providers.**( June 20, 2012) www.intt.tn**

## Turkey

### Chairman & CEO: Dr. Tayfun Acarer

[Information & Communication Technologies Authority (BTK)]

The boardroom deadlock in Turkey's largest carrier Turkcell Iletisim Hizmetleri AS is set to continue, major shareholder TeliaSonera AB warned following a decision from Turkey's regulator not to evaluate proposed nominees to Turkcell's board, ahead of the company's extraordinary general meeting. Turkey's Capital Markets Board, the authority in charge of the securities markets in Turkey, said that it won't evaluate a list of independent nominees to Turkcell's board of directors, citing the lack of a board resolution regarding the list. Nor will the authority evaluate proposed changes to the Turkish telecom operator's articles of association. The decision comes ahead of Turkcell's EGM, due to be held on June 29, at which TeliaSonera had hoped to end the boardroom deadlock that has plagued Turkcell for a number of years. "Without an evaluation from Turkey's Capital Markets Board regarding these issues, there will nothing to decide upon at the EGM," said TeliaSonera spokeswoman Cecila Edstrom, adding: "If Turkcell's board can't reach a resolution regarding these issues ahead of the shareholders' meeting, the deadlock in Turkcell's board could continue." TeliaSonera has for several years struggled to gain control over Turkcell, in which it has a 38% stake. The ownership conflict in Turkcell began when TeliaSonera attempted and ultimately failed in 2005 to purchase the ownership stake held by Turkcell's founder, the controversial Turkish businessman Mehmet Karamehmet and his Cukurova conglomerate. Turkcell's board has six board members in addition to its chairman, who is able to block decisions. TeliaSonera wants the number of independent board members to increase. The Swedish carrier hopes that it will be able to replace Turkcell Chairman Colin Williams who, it says, isn't acting as an independent board member, and, together with Russia's Altimo, the telecommunications arm of Russian industrial conglomerate Alfa Group, wrestle control of Turkcell from Cukurova. **(June 25, 2012) Dow Jones Newswires**

## United Arab Emirates

### Director General: Mr. Mohamed Nasser Al Ghanim

[Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA)]

Following the launch of the "My Number, My Identity" campaign by the UAE Telecom Regulatory Authority (TRA), Etisalat announced the near-completion of all procedures to begin SIM card registration for its mobile customers. Starting July 17, 2012, Etisalat customers can choose from over 100points of sale across the UAE to process their mobile registration. As per the directive of the TRA, mobile customers in the UAE are required to update their profile in the operator database and ensure all SIM holders are the same as the registered owner of the SIM card. Customers will need to register their SIM cards by submitting an application form along with valid identification document including Passport with valid residency, Emirates or GCC ID card. For business and government customers, the requirement is a valid establishment card. Registration of the SIM card is only required once and all unregistered SIM cards will be cancelled once the registration period expires. This campaign is particularly important for subscribers because it prevents any unauthorized or criminal usage of SIM cards and helps in curbing legal or social violations besides reducing frauds that have been noticed during few last years. **(June 27, 2012) www.etisalat.ae**

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) has introduced the 'My Number, My Identity' campaign, as part of efforts to register mobile subscribers. Run with operators Etisalat and Du, the campaign aims to increase awareness of the new registration procedures. The campaign highlights the importance of the mobile subscribers' role in protecting their SIM cards, which are national resources that should be used responsibly. The new procedures require the licensees to fully update the personal data of all mobile subscribers to ensure the accuracy of information provided to the regulator. **(June 19, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

According to the Telecommunication Regulatory Authority's (TRA) latest report country's active mobile subscribers grew 7.33% to 11.72 million in 2011 compared to 10.92 million in 2010. The penetration rate rose from 197% in 2010 to 199% in 2011. "Despite high mobile penetration, the UAE telecoms market still presents a significant growth potential, particularly in the broadband segment. Growing penetration of smart devices coupled with relatively young and urban population complements potential in this segment. The telecommunications sector's contribution to the UAE economy fell from 5.3% to 4.9% last year. The sector contributed Dh26 billion to the GDP. The TRA changed its way of calculating the penetration rates in the UAE in April. It now bases its calculation for the monthly penetration of telecommunications services (fixed, mobile and internet) on the UAE population figures supplied by the Ministry of Economy. These figures were based on the last nationwide census undertaken in 2005 and updated annually using a TRA calculated yearly growth rate of six per cent. According to the report, the UAE had over 1.8 million fixed line subscriptions and the fixed line penetration rate reached 31% in 2011 while the number of internet service subscriptions increased

10.5% to over 1.32 million, registering a penetration rate of 56.4%. The percentage of internet subscriptions connected by fiber technology increased by 70.8% as customers were migrated from copper networks to new advanced networks, the report said. In 2011, the share of postpaid subscriptions reached 12% of total mobile subscriptions compared to 11% in 2010. **(June 13, 2012) www.zawya.com**

Nearly 639,000 new GSM users joined the UAE mobile phone network in the first quarter of 2012, raising the total number to 12.36 million and widening the penetration ratio to 154 per cent, official data showed on Thursday. The number of new entrants accounted for nearly 87 per cent of the total new subscribers in the mobile, landline and internet networks in the second largest Arab economy, showed the figures by the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA), which oversees the telecom sector in the country. The figures showed the new mobile phone users in the first quarter hit a record high in such a period as the number exceeded the total number of new users in the first and second quarters of 2011 by nearly 110,000. At the end of March 2012, the total number of mobile phone subscribers in the UAE stood at 12.367 million, nearly 1.3 million over the number at the end of March last year, according to the report, published in Alkhaleej newspaper. It showed around 730,000 new users joined the UAE's telecom sector in the first quarter of 2012, raising the total number of mobile phone, fixed landline and broadband subscribers to 15.1 million, almost double the country's population. **(June 7, 2012) Emirates 24|7 2012**

Mobile subscribers in the U.A.E. rose 13% on the year in the first quarter of 2012, while the country's penetration rate stood at 154%, a level, analysts say, that shows there's still some growth left in the domestic market. According to data from the country's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, or TRA, mobile subscribers at the end of March amounted to 12.4 million, up from 11 million in the same period a year ago. Matthew Reed, an analyst at Informa Telecoms and Media in Dubai, noted the TRA has recently changed the figure it uses for the size of the U.A.E. population. The new figure is 8 million, compared with the 5.5 million people used previously. Using the TRA's previous figure for the U.A.E.'s population, the rate of mobile penetration was about 200%, but on the basis of the new number that drops to about 154%, said Reed. "In a sense, this is positive, in that it suggests that the U.A.E. mobile market is less saturated than might have been thought previously, so there is more room for growth," he added. Fears of an overcrowded and mature local market have been some of the major reasons why the U.A.E.'s two telecom operators have started to increasingly looking overseas for expansion. Du, the country's biggest second telco, said in May that it is looking at mobile virtual network operator, or MVNO, opportunities to expand its footprint for the first time outside its home market. Abu Dhabi-based Etisalat meanwhile already operates in Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Nigeria amongst other countries. According to the latest TRA data, the number of post-paid mobile subscribers reached 1.5 million by the end of the first quarter, while pre-paid subscribers hit 10.9 million. Internet subscribers amounted to 904,270 at the end of March, down from 1.4 million in the same period a year ago. Fixed-line telephone subscribers reached 1.9 million by the end of the first quarter of 2012, up from 1.7 million in the same quarter of 2011. **(June 7, 2012) Dow Jones Newswires**

# Regulatory Activities Beyond the SAMENA Region

## ITU

The ITU's Broadband Commission for Digital Development issued an Open Letter to G20 leaders urging them to do all they can to promote the development of the broadband networks, applications and services that will serve as the catalyst for future socio-economic growth. In the Information Society of the 21st century, countries must make the necessary investments to enable their citizens to participate in and benefit from the digital economy and global innovation - or risk exclusion, the Letter warns. Equating the importance of broadband to essential utilities like water, roads, rail and electricity, the Letter states that governments have a key role to play in stimulating broadband deployment by putting in place pro-competitive and pro-investment policies, lowering barriers to entry and making direct investment, where appropriate. It also stresses the fundamental role of the private sector in driving the roll-out of networks and services, and fuelling ongoing innovation. The ITU Secretary-General Dr Hamadoun Touré said that this meeting of the G20 is an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of the need to promote 'broadband inclusion for all and move it to the top of the international policy agenda and we must act now to ensure that future generations from all countries, and across all social strata, can take full advantage of the unprecedented power of broadband to extend access to knowledge, to culture, and to vital social services like healthcare, education and e-government. Several G20 leaders, such as President Barack Obama are already prioritizing this leadership challenge: "[A key] step in winning the future is rebuilding America. To attract new businesses to our shores, we need the fastest, most reliable ways to move people, goods, and information - from high-speed rail to high-speed Internet," he said. G20 member Australia was one of the first nations to make broadband a priority, with Prime Minister Julia Gillard recently stating that the Australian National Broadband Network will "make a difference for everyone around the nation ... in terms of our economy, we know that every 10 percentage point increase in broadband penetration delivers in the order of a 1.3 per cent one-off growth boost to the economy." Latest ITU figures show that 2.4 billion people are using the Internet. There are now over one billion mobile broadband subscriptions worldwide, and mobile is set to be the access platform of choice for most people in the developing world, where fixed line penetration remains low. However, well over half the world's people - from those in developing countries, to those living in geographically isolated communities, to marginalized groups like persons living with disabilities, the elderly, the illiterate and house-bound women - are yet to get online. "That makes digital inclusion an important issue that needs to be tackled by every country, not just the world's poorer nations," said Dr Touré. The Broadband Commission will be actively promoting its message of 'broadband for all' at other key international gatherings this year, including the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de

Janeiro in June and the United Nations General Assembly in New York September. **(June 15, 2012) www.cellular-news.com**

The International Telecommunications Union's (ITU's) Andrew Rugege on Tuesday suggested a number of proposals in the preparatory process of revising the international telecommunications regulations (ITRs). Speaking at a Ministerial meeting during an information and communication technology (ICT) Indaba, in Cape Town, he said that the revised regulations needed to examine and incorporate the human right to access to communications; accounting and charging procedures, including tax enforcement measures, international frameworks; and the quality of services, convergence and interconnection and interoperability. He also suggested looking at the protection of critical national resources and security in the use of ICTs. The ITU developed the draft ITRs in February 2012 and expected to undertake a number of discussions relating to the contents throughout the year. Rugege said that there was a need to revise the regulations, which were developed in 1988, and implemented in 1990, as many of the 178 countries that signed the initial treaty relating to the regulations had liberalized their telecommunications industry, and the government or State no longer monopolized the industry. Further, as technology had evolved and dramatically changed, from a technical and policy perspective, over the past 20 years, he believed it was time to revise and update the regulations between all the treaty members. As the industry continued to evolve, all member States and countries continued to change their policy approaches to ensure an enabling environment. ITU deputy secretary general Houlin Zhao added that there was a need to align policies to ensure competitiveness and sufficient investment in the ICT environment. He noted that about $800-billion was required in investment by 2015 to facilitate infrastructure development for mobile broadband in Africa. **(June 6, 2012) www.engineeringnews.co.za**

## SAMENA

In response to the ITU's open invitation to submit feedback and contributions in support of the ongoing International Telecommunications Regulations (ITRs) revision process, the SAMENA Telecommunications Council presented its Contribution to the Council Working Group on ITRs. As an ITU-D Sector Member, the SAMENA Council has made its contribution on behalf of the telecoms operator community of South Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa. Views expressed in the SAMENA Council's Contribution, which consists of qualitative representation of 12 key industry goals that the SAMENA Council believes the ITRs Treaty should be attentive to, have been aimed at drawing the ITU's kind consideration on various dimensions of the ITRs Treaty in a qualitative manner. Having played an integral role in the global telecommunications industry in critical times of transformation over two decades ago, the existing ITRs treaty is being revised potentially to act as a sustainable and effective guideline in the Internet-driven communications environment of the 21st century. The revision of the 1988's ITRs serves as an opportunity for both the governments and the telecom community to embrace change by treading through the process of exploration and deliberation. According to Mr. Thomas Wilson, CEO and Executive Managing Director of SAMENA Council, "It has been an accomplishment for the SAMENA Council and its membership to have deliberated on the ITRs issue. Our operator members have been very active with us during this ITRs contribution submission process. Our work on this issue is not yet over, for there remains much to accomplish and do up till the December WCIT meeting in Dubai". Wilson also believes that "SAMENA Council's activities on ITRs have truly brought together our operator members, giving us the opportunity to serve and to represent their interests, in accordance with SAMENA's mandate. We have reasons to believe that our contribution to the ITU will augment existing efforts on the ITRs issue, and we are proud to be part of the process on behalf of our membership." In addition, the SAMENA Council listened actively to other industry stake holders, having taken an active participative role in regional WCIT related meetings. The SAMENA Council's issuance of its viewpoint on the ITRs Treaty's revision process, and its long-term impact on the future of the communications industry, is the result of extensive participation and insight-sharing by its operator members and legal advisory associates. Active in the monitoring of the ITRs revision process since the end of 2011, the SAMENA Council participated in several ITRs preparatory activities across continents. On behalf of its membership, the SAMENA Council is hopeful that its Contribution to the ongoing work on the ITRs will provide additional feedback to the ITU as final preparations for the Dubai WCIT-12 are made. **(June 7, 2012) www.samenacouncil.org**

The SAMENA Board, that took place in Hong Kong, has decided that for the year 2013 the SAMENA annual CEO event will take place in Italy, hosted by Telecom Italia in Venice. During the event more than 60 Chief Executives and the Chairmen from Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia will meet European colleagues and discuss the major issues concerning the telecom sector, joining their efforts toward common positions on how to encourage the future growth and development of telecoms markets, services and technological innovation. The main issues to be discussed at the meeting will be the relations between the telecom and the broadcasting market as well as the development of television on broadband networks. Mr. Franco Bernabè, Telecom Italia's Executive Chairman and CEO said, "I am honored to announce that in 2013 the SAMENA annual CEO Leadership event will be held in Venice and hosted by Telecom Italia. The challenges of the telecommunications and digital industry need to be faced through broader cooperation of players from all regions of the world. The Summit will be an opportunity to address relevant issues like the relations between telecom operators and broadcasters and television on broadband networks. Hosting the SAMENA annual CEO event in Italy represents an important step in this direction. I hope that this will contribute to enhanced dialogue among players of Middle East, North Africa, South Asia and Europe." Mohamed Isa Al Khalifa Chairman Board SAMENA and Group CEO Batelco said, "We are very pleased to hold the next annual CEO event in Italy and we are very thankful to Telecom Italia for hosting it in Venice. The ICT industry is developing more and more globally, therefore it is important to have sound exchange of views with players from other regions of the world. Therefore, we value very much the occasion to host for the first time the SAMENA annual CEO event in Europe and to deepen the relations with our European colleagues." **(June 6, 2012) www.zawya.com**

## GSMA

GSMA announced that it has launched an initiative that will provide consumers greater visibility of their roaming charges and usage of mobile data services when travelling abroad. At a meeting held this week in Shanghai, 24 operator groups, including America Movil, AT&T, Axiata Group Berhad, Bharti Airtel, Ltd., China Mobile, China Unicom, Deutsche Telekom, France Telecom-Orange, Hutchison 3 Group, KT Corporation, MTS, Qtel, SK Telecom, Smart Communications, Inc., SoftBank Mobile Corp., Tata Teleservices Limited, Telecom Italia Group, Telefonica, Telekom Austria Group, Telenor Group, TeliaSonera, Verizon Communications, VimpelCom and Vodafone Group agreed to undertake a number of measures which will help mobile subscribers better understand their data roaming charges and more effectively manage their use of data services. "A number of our operator members are already implementing sound transparency practices, benefitting more than a billion subscribers worldwide," said Franco Bernabe, Chairman of the GSMA and Chairman and CEO of Telecom Italia Group. "The initiative announced today will help to promote an even broader adoption of principles that will offer a more transparent and uniform experience for billions of consumers, wherever they travel." The GSMA is committed to working with mobile operators worldwide to adopt the following measures: Sending text messages to remind customers of their data roaming tariffs when they arrive in another country and turn on their mobile device; Implementing a monthly data roaming spending limit to help consumers manage their roaming bill and sending alerts when their data usage approaches the limit; and Temporarily suspending data service when usage exceeds the spending limit. In the first phase of this initiative, these operators and their group subsidiaries have agreed to implement these data roaming transparency measures by the end of 2012, covering more than 4 billion mobile connections worldwide. The GSMA will also work to promote the adoption of these guidelines across its full membership base of nearly 800 mobile operators globally. Further, the GSMA will develop a trust mark that will identify to consumers that their mobile operator is implementing these measures. **(June 21, 2012) www.manufacturingdigital.com**

## United States

The Federal Communications Commission has revealed plans to review radiation emission standards for mobile phones for the first time in 16 years. Despite a continued belief there is no establish link between radiation from phones and health problems, FCC chairman Julius Genachowski circulated the proposal to investigate whether emission standards should be changed for devices used by children. The standards were last fixed in 1996. Several global studies have concluded mobile phones do not cause cancer, and that children between seven and 19 are at no greater risk of developing brain cancer than peers who do not use the devices. However, the World Health Organization added mobile phone radiation to its list of possible carcinogens, saying it is in the same category as lead, chloroform and coffee. It called for more studies to be conducted into potential dangers. There are an estimated six billion devices in use around the world. Genachowski's proposal has to be approved by a majority of the FCC's five commissioners for a formal inquiry to take place. The inquiry would seek scientific evidence to support any changes to the current emission standards. **(June 18, 2012) www.itnews.com.au**

The USA and Mexican authorities have signed an agreement that allows the sharing of radio spectrum in the 800 MHz and 1.9 GHz bands along the U.S.-Mexican border. In a statement, the USA's telecoms regulator, the FCC said that the agreement will help support commercial broadband services and public safety mission-critical voice communications along the US-Mexico border and throughout the United States. "These agreements with Mexico will unleash investment and benefit consumers near the borders by enabling the rollout of advanced wireless broadband service and advanced systems for critical public safety and emergency response communications," Chairman Julius Genachowski stated. "I appreciate the commitment and dedication of agency staff and those at the State Department who made these important agreements possible." Specifically, the new 800 MHz Protocol allots band segments between the United States and Mexico and specifies the technical parameters for operation on these band segments within 110 kilometers (68 miles) of the common border The agreement also creates a bi-national Task Force to support the transition of incumbent operators along the border to the new allotment plan. The Protocol for 800 MHz replaces a previous agreement and paves the way for completion of 800 MHz rebanding by U.S. public safety and commercial licensees operating along the U.S.-Mexico border. The FCC ordered rebanding to alleviate interference to public safety licensees in the band caused by commercial cellular licensees. The new Protocol for the 1.9 GHz band allows Sprint Nextel to deploy CDMA service along the border with Mexico. Sprint obtained access to the 1.9 GHz band in 2004 as compensation for vacating its spectrum holding in the lower segment of the 800 MHz band in accordance with the rebanding project. **(June 11, 2012) www.cellular-news.com**

## Brazil

Brazil's mobile-phone subscriptions increased again in May albeit at a slower pace than in the first four months of the year, according to figures released by telecommunications regulator ANATEL. Total mobile phone users in Brazil rose to 254.9 million in May, up 0.78% from April, ANATEL said. A total of 1.97 million new subscribers were signed up in May, down from the 2.2 million new subscriptions seen in April. Telefonica Brasil SA (VIV), also known as Vivo, part of Spain's Telefonica SA (TEF), is still the largest operator overall but it saw its market share drop in the period, reaching 29.63% in May, down from 29.75% in April. TIM Participacoes SA (TSU) was second with 26.88%, down slightly from 26.89% the previous month. TIM is the local unit of Telecom Italia. Claro, the local unit of Mexico's America Movil SA (AMX), ranked third with 24.59% in May, up from 24.48% in April. In fourth place is Oi SA (OIBR) with 18.59%, up from 18.57% registered in April. **(June 20, 2012) www.4-traders.com**

Vivo, Claro, TIM Brasil and Oi have been chosen to provide the 4G mobile internet service in Brazil. The companies submitted bids of BRL 1.05 billion, BRL 630.191 million, BRL 340 million and BRL 330.851 million respectively, winning the spectrum auction held on June 12 by the National Telecommunications Agency (ANATEL). Frequencies in the 450 MHz band for rural mobile telephony were auctioned too, and as there were no bids, the four operators that won the 4G auction will also be required to invest in that segment. In the 4G auction notice, ANATEL did not define what internet speeds operators must offer for the 2.5 GHz band service. For the 450 MHz band, the download speed must be at least 256 Kbps and the upload speed, 128 Kbps. In addition to the national and rural telephony lots, ANATEL is also auctioning 268 lots of frequency bands for regional operations, and Sky Brasil won at least ten lots. **(June 13, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

The regulator ANATEL published its decision to go ahead with its initial proposal for the 4G auction, despite complaints from operators. The rejection of the proposals by the operators (Claro, Oi, TIM, Vivo and Sweden's AINMT) had been expected and means that the date of the auction (12 June) will be maintained. **(June 5, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

## Venezuela

The National Telecommunications Commission (CONATEL) has announced that the country's three mobile network operators, state-run Movilnet, Telefonica subsidiary Movistar and domestically-owned Digitel, have responded to last month's invitation to participate in a tender for three blocks of mobile spectrum in the 1700 MHz, 1800 MHz and 1900 MHz bands. Following receipt of the applications by a deadline of 6 June, a formal process of qualification will now be applied to the three cellcos' bids on technical, economic and legal grounds under public offering regulations. In early May CONATEL launched the spectrum tender within the IMT band 1710 MHz-2170 MHz in response to demand, with the aim of improving access to mobile telephony and broadband wireless services. The frequency allocation of 70 MHz is divided into blocks as follows: Block D-D: 1930 MHz-1940 MHz paired with 1850 MHz-1860 MHz (2×10 MHz): Block E-E: 1945 MHz-1955 MHz paired with 1865 MHz-1875 MHz (2×10 MHz); Block F-F: 1810 MHz-1825 MHz paired with 1715 MHz-1730 MHz (2×15 MHz). The regulator set the base price for 1MHz of spectrum at VEF803,000 (US$187,000) per year. The license auction should result in all three national operators receiving spectrum needed for expanding and upgrading their mobile broadband services nationwide. The trio have all deployed 3G HSPA-based networks in cities across the country, and Movistar has previously revealed ambitions to introduce 4G Long Term Evolution (LTE) technology by the end of 2012, whereas Digitel recently said it was confident of receiving 1800MHz band frequencies in the near future to enable it to roll out LTE services. **(June 11, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

## European Union

The European Commission confirmed a new cut to roaming rates in the EU will take effect from July 1. Customers will pay a maximum EUR 0.29 per minute (plus VAT) to make a call, EUR 0.08 per minute to receive a call, EUR 0.09 to send a SMS and EUR 0.70 per MB for mobile data. Also from July, the 'bill shock' rules will be extended outside the EU, so when customers use data roaming they are warned by their operator when they approach spending of EUR 50 in one bill cycle. They must then confirm whether they want to continue using data roaming. The latest roaming legislation will see prices fall further next year and in 2014, as well as introduce a new wholesale system in 2014 to allow end-users to select their own roaming offer when travelling. **(June 28, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

The European Commission (EC) has told the Independent Post and Telecommunications Authority of the Netherlands (OPTA), to disregard a ruling by the appeals court and reduce its proposed termination rates in the country. Following an appeal by the country's incumbent operators, the watchdog had to amend its initial decision and subsequently notified the EC of the higher rates set by the court. However, in February this year Brussels suspended OPTA's decision on the revised rates for three months, pending a review by the European Union (EU) regulator, the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC). In due course the agency upheld the EC's position over the setting of rates, saying the court's ruling did not follow EU recommendations on the cost-based methodology used. As such, the EC has invoked its new regulatory powers and recommended that the OPTA reduce the termination rates. OPTA expects to issue its new decision on the issue this summer. **(June 14, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

The European Commission (EC) has announced in a press release that it has put on hold plans by German network regulator the Federal Network Agency (FNA) to regulate high bandwidth leased lines, pending further investigations. In May 2012 the EC received a draft decision from the FNA concerning the market for the wholesale terminating segment of leased lines. The German regulator proposes to regulate the prices which incumbent telecoms operator Deutsche Telecom (DT) will be able to charge alternative operators to access its terminating segment of leased lines in Germany. The proposals include a price control for leased lines with a bandwidth of over 155Mbps. At the end of 2011 the FNA notified the EC that DT has significant market power for terminating segments of between 2Mbps and 155Mbps, but it concluded that terminating segments with a bandwidth of over 155Mbps are prospectively competitive and, thus, no longer susceptible to ex-ante regulation. The EC believes that the proposal could have a negative effect on competition and the future offer of leased lines under competitive conditions, as well as potentially creating barriers to the development of the single market. As such, the EC has suspended the implementation of the proposal pending a 'second phase' three-month investigation during which it, in close cooperation with the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC), will discuss with the FNA how to amend its proposal in order to make it compliant with EU law. **(June 6, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

## Germany

The Federal Network Agency (FNA) has approved an application from E-Plus to allow the mobile network operator to use its 1800 MHz spectrum for the provision of mobile broadband services, such as Long Term Evolution (LTE). Until now the frequencies had been reserved for GSM services only. In May 2011 E-Plus filed an application to use its 900 MHz frequencies for mobile broadband services in rural areas and the regulator gave its approval to the plan the following December. E-Plus is the German mobile unit of Dutch telecoms operator KPN. **(June 29, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

## Netherland

OPTA has completed a performance at the request of the Dutch ministry of economics, agriculture and innovations, looking in particular on how the roaming rules will be enforced in practice. OPTA said the new rules will lead to extra costs and the need for more supervising power. The regulator has therefore requested extra capacity, at least until 2015, in the form of an extra 1.5 FTE. OPTA also asked for the transition period between the old and the new roaming regulations to be clearly identified in order to prevent any monitoring gaps. **(June 8, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

## France

Telecom regulator ARCEP plans to launch a consultation in July on refarming the 1800 MHz band from 2G to LTE, Les Echos reports. According to unnamed sources, Orange and SFR are not in any hurry, but Bouygues Telecom, which has fewer customers and therefore more available spectrum, wants to do so quickly. Free Mobile did not exist when the 1800 MHz band was licensed. The regulator would not comment on the level of interest. **(June 21, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

Telecom regulator ARCEP has published the contributions to its public consultation on terms governing the use of frequencies by amateur radio service stations. The draft decision aims to lift certain restrictions on the use of the 50.2-51.2 MHz band to radio installations belonging to an amateur service and to permit the entire 50-52 MHz band to be used by amateur radio operators. There were 26 contributions from associations and individual amateur radio operators. Stakeholders reacted positively to draft decision submitted to consultation. Their responses did nonetheless result in several adjustments that help clarify the text, without altering the content of the provisions. ARCEP plans to adopt the decision at the conclusion of the three month notification procedure with the European Commission. **(June 17, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

Regulator ARCEP has set the cost of universal service in 2010 at EUR 30.78 million. The decision followed a public consultation. The cost breaks down as EUR 23.18 million for voice service obligations and EUR 7.54 million for operating pay phones in public areas. There is no subsidy to the Universal Service Provider, Orange France, for printed and electronic directories. **(June 9, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

## Poland

Telecom regulator the Office of Electronic Communication (UKE) has told operators that consultation on its draft proposals for the auction of spectrum in the 1800MHz range must be submitted before the end of June. The UKE added that interest in the sale has so far been very high, adding that it expects to issue invitations to tender in the second half of July. **(June 19, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

Telecom regulator UKE published results of its study on the quality of publicly available telecommunications services (QoS) in the first quarter. The study was conducted using UKE's own measurement system. The study focused on the rate of unsuccessful calls, set-up time and quality of fax transmissions. Compared to the fourth quarter of 2011, surveyed operators obtained slightly worse results for the rate of unsuccessful calls to the PSTN network, as well as the rate of unsuccessful calls in interoperator traffic, which for most of the surveyed networks exceeded the limit pre-set as a reference by UKE. Also, set-up times of calls in PSTN networks deteriorated at four network operators. Previously there were three such operators. However, the rate of unsuccessful calls from PSTN to GSM has improved. UKE also tested the quality of transmissions, which was unchanged compared to prior periods, but still does not fall below the reference value of 80 percent. **(June 12, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

## Sweden

National Post and Telecom Agency (PTS) has launched a secondary consultation on its third generation of competitive decisions for ex-ante regulation of four telecoms sub-markets applying to mobile and fixed call interconnection and fixed telephony access. The regulatory determinations on the sub-markets for fixed access, fixed call origination, fixed call termination and mobile call termination will be aimed at ensuring that end-users can 'continue to select fixed line rental from multiple operators and be able to call each other no matter which operator you have subscribed to,' the watchdog stated. Market participants have until August 31, 2012 to comment on the PTS' proposed market determinations/remedies, and the regulator expects to enter into consultations with the European Commission and other European regulatory authorities by early November. The final decisions are expected to be taken at the beginning of 2013. As part of its current phase of market analysis, earlier this month the PTS released its proposed mobile termination rate (MTR) of SEK0.15 (US$0.021) per minute, representing a decrease from the current SEK0.21 MTR, with the new rate set to be applicable from July 1, 2012 (applicable retroactively). The figure resulted from using an updated calculation method based on the so-called hybrid model used to determine cost-oriented rates in mobile networks. **(June 25, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

National Post and Telecom Agency (PTS) has told the country's former monopoly telco TeliaSonera that it is not in compliance with its obligations on service levels and contractual penalties regarding wholesale customers buying access to TeliaSonera's network. The incumbent must adjust its wholesale terms no later than 2 July to comply, the PTS said. After examining the contract terms, the regulator concluded that amongst other things, it is currently unclear how TeliaSonera, through service level agreements, ensures that wholesale customers get the same quality, delivery terms and services as those delivered to the telco's own retail division, while TeliaSonera's framework of damage penalties – payable on an escalating scale if it fails to live up to commitments in the wholesale agreement – was called 'insufficient'. (June 6, 2012) www.telegeography.com

The communications regulator PTS said it has begun consultations with the EU commission over its recommendation that the mobile voice termination rate should be cut from SEK 0.21 per minute to SEK 0.15. The reduction is due to come into effect on July 1. PTS added that it expects the price cut to lead to lower retail prices. **(June 6, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

## Norway

The Post and Telecommunications Agency (PT) said that Last Mile Communication AS has won an auction of frequencies in the 410.050-410.275 MHz and the 420.050-420.275 MHz bands. It was the only qualified bidder in the auction, the deadline for which was June 21 at noon. The price of the frequencies was NOK 51,100. The permit will run until December 31, 2017 and is to be used primarily for fixed and mobile services, excluding aeronautical services. Beyond this, it is up to Last Mile to decide which technology to use. **(June 22, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

The transport department has received applications for spectrum permits in the 1,920-1,980 and 2,110-2,170 MHz bands, and it has tasked the communications regulator PT with allocating the frequencies. The band is normally used for mobile broadband. The frequencies to be allocated are two bands of 45 MHz divided into nine lots, each comprising 2x5 MHz (some are 2x4.8 MHz). Three of the lots are currently available but six will not be free until December 1. To give some idea of the cost, PT said a national spectrum permit for two lots of 15 MHz in the 2 GHz band would cost an estimated NOK 900,000, and the annual fee would be over NOK 18 million. The process of establishing a floor price has not yet been completed, and PT will announce this later. It may be necessary to set a floor price even if there is no surplus demand and therefore no need for an auction. Applications for the available frequencies should be submitted by noon on July 4. **(June 14, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

## Check Republic

The Czech Telecommunications Office (ČTÚ) has reportedly backtracked on plans to auction off the 800 MHz frequency — the most suitable spectrum to build a nationwide fourth-generation network and easiest way to introduce a fourth mobile operator in the country. The regulator instead plans to attract a newcomer by extending national roaming by offering services on the existing networks of the three established mobile operators Telefónica 02, Vodafone, and T-Mobile. **(June 20, 2012) www.ceskapozice.cz**

## Ghana

The National Communications Authority has again imposed sanctions on MTN, Vodafone and Tigo for various QoS infractions after Quality of Service tests for March, 2012. MTN has been penalized GhC50,000 (US$26,000) for Call Setup delays in the Central region and a further GH¢100,000 for Call congestion in the Brong Ahafo and Central regions. Vodafone was sanctioned GhC50,000 for Call Setup delays in the Western region while Tigo received a GhC50,000 penalty for Signaling Congestion in the Brong-Ahafo region. Sanctions to Airtel on Call Congestion in the Brong-Ahafo region were suspended pending the completion of their expansion plan in Sunyani. The company has up to June 2012 to complete that project. Sanctions to Expresso on Call Setup delays were also suspended till July 2012 for infractions in the Eastern region when coverage is expected to improve in Koforidua. The company was also directed to improve coverage in Tarkwa by September 2012. **(June 12, 2012) www.cellular-news.com**

## Nigeria

Nigeria's four GSM networks have agreed to settle a disputed fine from the telecoms regulator, the NCC that was imposed after it said they were missing Quality of Service standards. However, as the fine is being paid late by all four companies, there should be a daily late fee added, but it is unclear if the settlement between the regulator and the networks includes that as well. MTN and Etisalat were both been fined N360 million (US$2.3 million), while Airtel was fined N270 million (US$1.7 million) and Globacom was served a fine of N180 million (US$1.13 million). The networks have disputed the fine as they say most of the network problems are generally outside their control. The networks have repeated their calls on the regulator to make it easier for them to upgrade their networks and improve electricity supply to the base stations. **(June 15, 2012) The Nation**

## Russia

Russian telecoms regulator ROSKOMNADZOR has announced that a total of eight companies have submitted bids to participate in next month's auction of Long Term Evolution (LTE)-suitable spectrum in the 800 MHz frequency band. The watchdog lists the interested parties as: MegaFon, Vimpelcom, Mobile TeleSystems (MTS), Rostelecom, Summa Telecom, TransTeleCom (TTK) alongside two separate subsidiaries of Swedish operator Tele2, namely Tele2-Voronezh and Tele2-Omsk. The auction process is scheduled to commence on July 12, 2012 and will see LTE-suitable frequencies in the 791 MHz-862 MHz spectrum band go under the hammer. ROSKOMNADZOR will offer four 2×7.5 MHz blocks of frequencies covering the entire Russian territory. Paired blocks will be limited to one operator apiece, and the tender will award extra 'points' to bidders which agree to open their networks up to mobile virtual network operators (MVNOs). Successful operators are obliged to complete their network rollouts within a seven-year time frame, offering services in all towns with at least 50,000 residents. **(June 15, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

## Australia

The telecoms regulator ACMA has announced a consultation on the future use of the 1800 MHz blocks of radio spectrum. The existing spectrum licenses in the 1800 MHz band will expire in two tranches. The first tranche will expire on June 17, 2013 and the second on May 3, 2015. The ACMA intends to apply the revised technical framework to all spectrum licenses in the 1800 MHz band from the June 18, 2013 onwards, irrespective of the date of expiry of each license. In 2011, the ACMA established a Technical Liaison Group (TLG) to assist in the review of the spectrum license technical framework for the 1800 MHz band. The TLG proposed changes to the core conditions and technical instruments underpinning the technical framework for spectrum licenses operating in this band. These changes include revising:

- the core conditions of the spectrum license to allow for the operation of new or emerging technologies across the next license period
- the Unacceptable Levels of Interference Determination for the 1800 MHz band made under section 145(4) of the Radiocommunications Act
- the three Radiocommunications Advisory Guidelines for the 1800 MHz band made under section 262 of the Radiocommunications Act.

The proposed changes are considered evolutionary and will ensure the technical framework provides increased flexibility and greater spectrum utility across the next 15-year spectrum license period. The ACMA is seeking comment and views from interested stakeholders by the July 27. **(June 27, 2012) www.cellular-news.com**

The Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has announced the issuing of a final access determination (FAD) for the declared domestic transmission capacity service (DTCS). Under the latest ruling, while parties will still be able to negotiate their own commercial agreements, the FAD establishes benchmark prices for regulated transmission services and non-price terms and conditions for access seekers to fall back on in negotiations. The determination will expire on December 31, 2014, and FAD prices are based upon a domestic benchmark of transmission prices in competitive areas, with the benchmark model taking account of 'the key drivers of transmission prices including the type of transmission route, distance, data rate, level of protection and quality of service'. 'Transmission is a key wholesale input to other communications services. The FAD includes prices for regulated transmission services and sends an important signal to the industry about the prices that would be expected in a competitive market,' ACCC Commissioner Ed Willett said of the development, adding: 'Overall, the ACCC expects the DTCS FAD will put downward pressure on wholesale transmission prices, particularly in regional areas, which can be passed on to consumers in the form of lower prices and new, innovative services.' **(June 25, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

The Telecoms Minister has outlined the timetable for the complete shut-down of analogue television in the country, releasing radio spectrum for use in mobile broadband services. The Minister for Broadband, Communication and the Digital Economy, Senator Stephen Conroy commented: "The Digital Switchover is a significant moment in Australian television history and the biggest technological change in broadcasting since color TV was introduced in this country more than three decades ago," Senator Conroy said. "Over 1.6 million people across five switchover regions are watching digital-only free to air TV and nationally, around 82 per cent of households have already converted to digital television." The remaining metropolitan areas still see the switch-over take place between April and December 2013. "I have also asked the Australian and Communications Media Authority to consider setting switchover dates for two remote areas: Remote and Regional Western Australia (June 25, 2013); and Remote Central and Eastern Australia (December 10, 2013)."Setting these dates now gives broadcasters and viewers certainty as we enter the last 18 months of the national switchover process." The final shut-down should be in Melbourne on the December 10, 2013. **(June 25, 2012) www.cellular-news.com**

The Communications Ministry has planned the auction for digital dividend in April 2013. The date has been decided on the advice of the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA), which believes that the date would maximize product certainty for bidders prior to the auction and provide new licensees with adequate lead time to plan and deploy networks before their licenses commence. The digital dividend auction includes spectrum in the 700 MHz band as well as spectrum in the 2.5 GHz band. This spectrum will become available mainly as a result of the switch to digital-only television broadcasting by the end of 2013. The communications ministry is working with the ACMA and the broadcasting industry to implement a restack of the spectrum, which is expected to be completed by December 31, 2014. **(June 20, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

The Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) has registered a new industry code for mobile phone base station deployment that aims to improve community consultation by the telecommunications industry. It was developed following a review by Communications Alliance, the primary telecommunications industry body in Australia. The new code contains a number of enhancements, such as: encouraging an improved collaborative approach between carriers, local councils, and the community; early identification of community-sensitive locations; improved readability of the code; a toolkit for carriers as part of the consultation process to maintain consistency in their approach; and greater accessibility of information about new base stations through a 'community consultation web portal.' The code will come into effect on 1 July. **(June 15, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

## Japan

Communications Ministry has allocated blocks of radio spectrum in the 700 MHz bands to NTT Docomo, KDDI and eAccess for use in mobile broadband services. The three networks plan to use the spectrum, known locally as the "platinum band" to offer LTE services. The fourth mobile network, Softbank Mobile was allocated a block of 900 MHz spectrum earlier this year. In a statement, eAccess noted that the allocated spectrum enables more efficient area expansion compared to 1.7 GHz band in which it is currently operating. It currently covers 95% of the population and now expects to be able to boost that to 99% while also increasing capacity in urban areas. In order to use the 700 MHz band, the operators are to discuss the migration measures with the organizations that are currently using 700 MHz band, in accordance with the guideline from the MIC. **(June 27, 2012) Kyodo News**

## Malaysia

The Malaysian Communications & Multimedia Commission (MCMC) is finalizing the allocation of 2.6 GHz spectrum. The regulator is trying to encourage cooperation among service providers in terms of the rollout of networks for 4G services. Regulator is looking at infrastructure and not service provider consolidation. The telco players will get to keep their brands, but they need to share (the spectrum) across maybe two to three networks. Nine companies have been shortlisted for the spectrum but the regulator warned not all nine companies will get spectrum. The nine companies are Celcom Axiata, DiGi.Com, Maxis, U Mobile, Asiaspace, Packet One Networks, RedTone International, YTL Communications, and Puncak Semangat. **(June 22, 2012) The Star**

## Macau

Bureau of Telecommunication Regulation (DSRT) has postponed the switchover to 3G until the end of December this year. Originally, CTM, Hutchison Telephone Macau, and Smartone Mobile Communications were going to end their 2G services on July 8. However, the public has expressed concern over the move and although the number of 2G users has been falling, on May 31 there were still 30,000 2G subscribers. The regulator has said that 3G services can start on July 9, but 2G will continue to work until December 31, 2012. Cable & Wireless Communications' business in Macau, CTM, welcomed delay in moving to 3G. The company said that it will continue the ongoing efforts for transition to 3G, including further improvement of mobile network quality and capacity. For the past months, CTM has worked with a number of community service organizations to help senior citizens to migrate to 3G. **(June 22, 2012) The Macau Daily Times**

## Thailand

The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) shrugged off what it calls a 'deliberate intervention' by the EU on its draft regulation on foreign dominance in telecommunication businesses. The regulator insisted the draft was not designed to deter foreign investment in the Thai telecoms industry. Rather, it aims at helping local operators avoid breaching the laws governing telecom and foreign businesses. Foreign shareholding is capped at a 49% stake. **(June 29, 2012) The Bangkok Post**

The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission has set a reserve price the minimum price for an auction of third generation licenses for the 2.1 gigahertz spectrum at THB4.5 billion (US$141.4 million) for 5 MHz of bandwidth. The regulator will put a total 45 MHz in bandwidth under the hammer, with the auction expected to be held in October. However, the minimum bid price has to be approved by the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission's board, which is meeting on Wednesday. The auction would be another step toward the long-awaited rollout of third-generation mobile phone services in Thailand. **(June 27, 2012) www.totaltele.com**

Telecom regulators have ordered state-owned CAT Telecom to amend its third-generation (3G) network contracts with True Corporation within 30 days. The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) yesterday said the existing contracts between CAT Telecom and True violate Section 46 of the Frequency Allocation Act of 2010, which requires license holders and spectrum owners including CAT, to manage the spectrum rights on their own. If CAT is unable to comply and amend its contracts, it could ultimately face the revocation of its 3G license from the NBTC, which in turn would have massive implications for True's mobile unit, True Move and its customers. **(June 21, 2012) www.bangkokpost.com**

The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC), plans to issue licenses for network lessors and maintenance service providers. The NBTC will draft a network facilitator license for companies that do not own spectrum but lease networks or companies who provide maintenance to network operators or telecom firms. One of the companies that will be required to get a facilitator license is BFKT (Thailand), a subsidiary of True, which leases 3G network equipment to CAT Telecom to wholesale 3G bandwidth. Also, ACT Mobile, a TOT company which provides maintenance services to its parent, will be required to get a license. **(June 8, 2012) The Nation**

## Vietnam

The mobile operators Vinaphone and MobiFone, both of which are wholly owned by state-run national PTO Vietnam Posts and Telecommunications Group (VNPT), are set to merge as part of a restructuring of state-owned enterprises; Viet Nam News cites a statement from the Ministry of Information and Communications (MIC) as saying. The proposed merger, which would create Vietnam's largest wireless service provider with over 50% of the market's roughly 130 million subscribers, still requires final approval from the government. The decision to merge the two cellcos follows the introduction of new government guidelines last year that stipulate that an institution or individual that owns more than 20% of the charter capital or stake in one telecoms operator, may not hold more than 20% of another firm operating in the same market. The new rule forced VNPT to choose between selling the majority of its shares in either Vinaphone or MobiFone, or merging the two network operators into one company. **(June 15, 2012) www.telegeography.com**

The Ministry of Information and Communications (MIC) has revoked the licenses of ten telecommunications providers, including Duong Quoc, VietGlobal Communication, and SNLink. The ministry took the licenses back as the companies failed to deploy services within two years after receiving a license, The Business Times reports. "In the coming period, after rearranging state-owned enterprises the MIC will review licenses of businesses getting telecom services provision certificates," MIC deputy minister Le Nam Thang said. Other companies at risk of losing their license are GTel and Indochina Telecom, which have internet service provision licenses in 2008 and CMC Telecom Infrastructure received an ISP license in 2009. These firms have yet to deploy registered services. Two MVNOs, Dong Duong Telecom and VTC, also face having their license revoked if they fail to deploy services shortly. **(June 11, 2012) www.telecompaper.com**

## Philippine

Philippines based PLDT has confirmed that it will meet the regulator's deadline to surrender 10 MHz of radio spectrum next month. The company's mobile subsidiary, Smart was required to surrender some radio spectrum as a condition of its takeover of Digital Telecommunications Philippines, which also owned the Red Mobile network. The merged entity has around 70% of the mobile market. Before the merger, PLDT held 25 MHz of spectrum, through two subsidiaries and gained a further 10 MHz with the acquisition of Digitel. Following the handover, PLDT will end up with 15 MHz in the 1920-1935 MHz /2110-2125 MHz ranges and a further 10 MHz in the 1925 Mhz-1945 MHz and the 2125 MHz-2135 MHz ranges. The country's second largest network, Globe Telecom has confirmed that it would be interested in bidding for the radio spectrum once it has been surrendered to the regulator. For its part, Smart is contacting customers that have not migrated to its other services before the switch-over takes place. **(June 11, 2012) www.cellular-news.com**

## Taiwan

Ministry of Transportation and Communications (MOTC) is reported to be preparing to issue eight 4G licenses later this year and is ready to submit the plans to the government for approval. The Ministry is intending to release more radio spectrum and has cleared 700MHz, 900MHz and 1800MHz for auctions. Although the licenses will be classed as 4G, they are expected to be technology neutral and could be used for 3G services if the networks prefer. Citing unnamed officials, the Taiwan Economic News said that although the three radio spectrums the ministry plans to release is sufficient enough for eight licenses; the Cabinet-level National Communications Commission (NCC) has the final say. It's estimated that bidders will pay NT$10 billion (US$334 million) as deposit for each license. **(June 11, 2012) Taiwan Economic News**



**Javaid Akhtar Malik**
Director Regulatory Affairs

**SAMENA Telecommunications Council**

# TOP TECHNOLOGY UPDATES

## Affordable 100Mbps FTTH in SA Project Gains Ground

Link Africa, which was formerly known as i3 Africa, is planning to connect 2.5 million home users and businesses via fiber connections over the next six years. The company, which aims to be South Africa's largest provider of open access telecommunications infrastructure for the cost effective delivery of high speed broadband, has a five stage approach to achieve its broadband goals.

**Link Africa's aspirations include:**
Deployment of 3,500km of metropolitan backbone infrastructure in the 5 major South African by December 2013;
Deployment of FTTH (fiber to the home) and FTTB (fiber to the business) architectures to selected areas in two different locations;
Deployment of metropolitan area active networks in the 5 major South African metros by December 2013;
Deployment of the Link Africa service provisioning platform to selected areas in South Africa by July 2013;
Deployment of 2.5 million FTTH and FTTB connections in the 5 major South African metros by 2018.

Link Africa employs FOCUS technology to deploy fiber optic networks in existing underground municipal service networks. The company is also in discussions with large service providers, including Internet Solutions and MWEB, about using the fiber infrastructure to provide FTTB and FTTH services.

## Saudi Arabia, US to Exchange Green Building Technology

The Saudi Green Building Forum and US-Saudi Arabian Business Council plan to open new business opportunities in green building products and services between the two countries. According to a joint statement, the two organizations will join hands during the forum scheduled for Oct. 13-15, 2012 in Riyadh and plan to sign an agreement. The agreement is meant to foster bilateral business associations by initiating and improving trade and investment among US and Saudi companies specialized in energy, water and building materials. This agreement will also improve business opportunities between both countries by facilitating two-way exchanges of expertise and technology in the green building industry, according to the statement.

Edward Burton, president and managing director of the council, said his organization would continue to act as a key player in enhancing US-Saudi business relations. He expressed confidence the green building industry would become a pioneer for facilitating innumerable international business ventures.

## API Technologies Develops 'Push to Talk' Function on VoIP Handsets

API Technologies Corp., a trusted provider of RF/ microwave, microelectronics, and security solutions for critical and high-reliability applications, announced that it has developed a security enhancement 'Push to Talk' function for Cisco mobile VoIP handsets that enables the extension of VoIP infrastructure to mobile users who may be involved with sensitive information. Matthew Richards, Vice President/Managing Director, SSIA International, API Technologies said that "This new Push-to-Talk feature enables users to utilize mobile VoIP handsets in sensitive areas so that the line is 'open' only when the button is pressed. This eliminates the ambient background noise--which may contain sensitive information--that would typically be overheard with traditional telephone handsets". This security enhancement enables mobile VoIP communications to be extended into areas where sensitive information is being discussed. The modified handset retains all the VoIP and security/encryption, QoS and management features delivered by the original Cisco handset.

## TeliSwitch Solutions Introduces PON Automated Optical Distribution Frame

TeliSwitch Solutions has unveiled its patented Passive Optical Network Automated Optical Distribution Frame (PON-AODF) that allows for dynamic modifications of the splitting ratio in passive optical networks to be compatible to service penetration and fulfilling bandwidth service demand prerequisites. At present, PON operators sacrifice between initial versus expected service penetration rates and fulfill future higher bandwidth demands by generally utilizing splitters with 32 or 64 split ratios. At low penetration rates, this leads to wasting of OLT ports because the allocation of one port to each splitter is essential even if it works for only one customer. Moreover, the high split ratio results in bandwidth shortage when there is a rise in requirement for higher bandwidth. TeliSwitch Solutions' Co-Founder and CEO, Rafi Ben-Atar stated that TeliSwitch PON-AODF implementation provides the options to service providers to deploy only the required number of OLT ports to offer service for connected homes, thus saving as high as 50 percent on PON ports, which in turn eventually lowers overall equipment costs.

## Searching for 1,000 Times the Capacity of 4G Wireless

Researchers at Polytechnic Institute of New York University (NYU-Poly) have assembled a powerful consortium of government and business support to advance beyond today's fourth generation (4G) wireless technologies toward 5G cellular networks that could potentially increase cell phone capacity by more than 1,000 times. "This new collaboration will significantly accelerate the progress towards 5G, and it exemplifies the power of NYU-Poly's philosophy of i-squared-e– invention, innovation and entrepreneurship," said NYU-Poly President Jerry M. Hultin. "The team is built of experienced faculty entrepreneurs and highly innovative researchers. Students will learn how to create products and companies, working beside these professors and researchers from blue ribbon companies."

## Broadcom Introduces 5G WiFi Combo Chip for Smartphones and Tablets

Broadcom Corporation, a global innovation leader in semiconductor solutions for wired and wireless communications, has introduced the BCM4335, the industry's first complete 5G WiFi combo chip for smartphones, tablets, ultrabooks and other mobile devices. The new solution furthers Broadcom's wireless connectivity leadership and establishes it as the first chip vendor to sample solutions based on the 802.11ac standard for every major WiFi product segment. 5G WiFi, the 5th generation of WiFi based on the IEEE 802.11ac standard, is a major evolutionary step from the existing 802.11a/b/g/n networks. 5G WiFi dramatically improves the wireless range in the home, allowing consumers to watch HD-quality video from more devices, in more places, simultaneously. The world's first 5G WiFi routers and notebooks powered by Broadcom's 5G WiFi chips were introduced to the market in Q2 2012. Smartphones and tablets powered by the new BCM4335, which are expected to hit shelves in Q1 2013.

## Intel Upgrades 3G RF Chip with Power Amplifiers

Intel Corp. has announced the integration of a 3G HSPA radio frequency transceiver with power amplifiers on a single 65-nm de.

"This will allow our customers to introduce lower-cost 3G handsets and support the transition of the machine-to-machine market segment toward 3G-based connected devices to help enable the Internet of things," said Stefan Wolff, vice president of the Intel Architecture Group. The Smarti UE2 is proven product that has shipped in various high end smartphones, UE2 stands for UMTS/EDGE 2nd generation. The p has been added for the integrated 3G power amplifiers. Intel said the Smarti UE2p chip would be available as samples in the fourth quarter of 2012.

## University of Utah Physicists Invent "Spintronic" LED

University of Utah physicists invented a new "spintronic" organic light-emitting diode or OLED that promises to be brighter, cheaper and more environment-friendly than the kinds of LEDs now used in display screens. "It's a completely different technology," says Z. Valy Vardeny, University of Utah distinguished professor of physics and senior author of a study of the new OLEDs in the July 13, 2012 issue of the journal Science. "These new organic LEDs can be brighter than regular organic LEDs." However, it could be five years before the new LEDs hit the market because right now, they operate at temperatures no warmer than about minus 28 degrees Fahrenheit, and must be improved so they can run at room temperature, Vardeny adds. The new kind of OLED invented by the Utah physicists also uses an organic semiconductor, but isn't simply an electronic device that stores information based on the electrical charges of electrons. Instead, it is a "spintronic" device - meaning information also is stored using the "spins" of the electrons.

# YAHSAT - Setting New Global Connectivity Standards

Yahsat, the United Arab Emirates, based satellite operator in Abu Dhabi will be launching its innovative YahClick “broadband everyone” satellite service in five key markets which includes Iraq, Afghanistan, South Africa, Nigeria and Angola. YahClick will provide local businesses and consumers with cost effective, high performance, wide reaching, and reliable internet connectivity. YahClick will be operational across most of its coverage area spanning a total of 28 markets, in South West Asia, Africa and the Middle East, including the GCC states, by October 2012.

The launch of YahClick affirms Yahsat’s position as one of the region’s leading satellite communications solutions provider and creating a means of global connectivity via satellite broadband services, which is at the forefront of the company’s business vision.

Yahsat has appointed market leading Service Partners, in its launch markets, through a highly selective process from a wide applicant pool of reputable and experienced telecommunications providers. For the past two years, the YahClick team has been working with Service Partners to train them and ensure full YahClick operational readiness in their area.

Over the next few weeks YahClick Service Partners will be announcing a range of high speed, flexible and cost effective packages, with broadband speeds as high as 15 Mbps, suited to provide the most underserved markets where internet connectivity is scarce, and even some of the better connected urban areas for backup solutions. Satellite broadband solutions provide a significantly more reliable service compared to some terrestrial internet services. With an uptime availability of 99.5%, the reliability of broadband satellite internet is the key differentiator between the two forms of internet connectivity systems. The reliability of the YahClick connection sets it apart from terrestrial services thanks to the state-of-the-art satellite communications technology it deploys.

YahClick's business model is one where the operations behind the service are managed on a central basis with advanced teleport equipment maximising the performance of the service regardless of in-market outages or infrastructure conditions. Service Partners will manage the YahClick system centrally via an online operations system eliminating the need for in-country infrastructure, saving considerable costs that are passed on to the end customer. The network as a whole is managed from a central Network Operations Center in Abu Dhabi, fully backed up 24/7 in cooperation with HughesNetwork Systems.
Yahsat CEO,Tareq Abdul Raheem Al Hosani explains: "The driving force behind the launch of YahClick is our vision and understanding of specific market needs and the desire to reach communities where there is a requirement to develop and deliver quality customised satellite broadband internet solutions. Working with Service Partners who are experts in their fields is an invaluable asset to the business."

According to media reports released earlier this year, based on statistics byInternet World Stats, Africa has only 6.2 per cent share of the world's internet users despite being home to 15% of the world's population, further highlighting the need for a service such as YahClick.

"The percentage of internet users in Africa is far below the levels shown in other regions. Improved broadband services in Africa will lead to a significant increase in the number of people within reach of internet services. Today, broadband services are a necessity, providing much needed access to information, education, government services, and opportunities to trade and prosper. Other markets where there is great potential are the fast developing consumer markets in the Middle East and South West Asia. We look forward to seeing our YahClick service making a strong impact on the economies of these regions," added Tareq Abdul Raheem Al Hosani, Yahsat CEO.

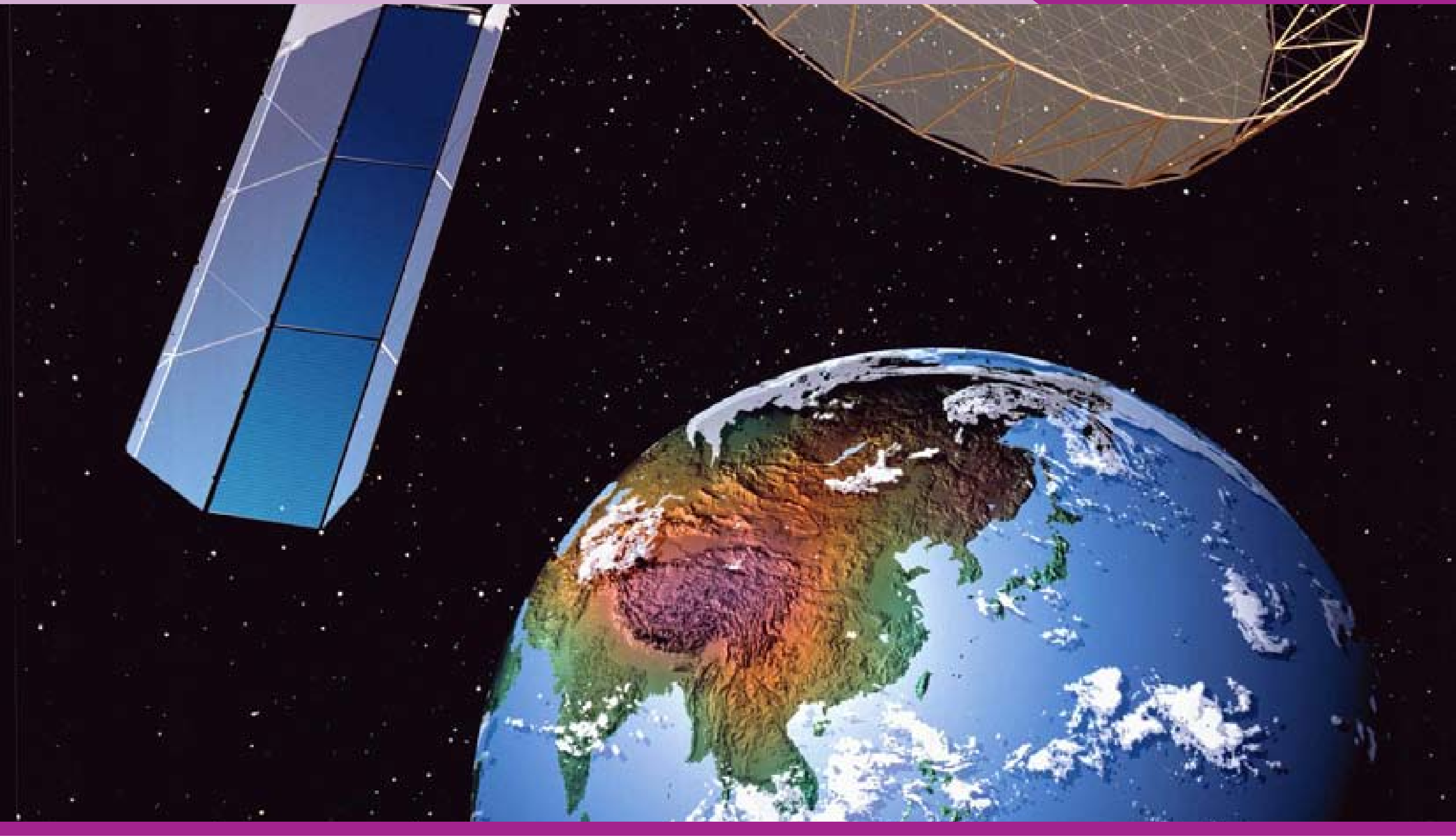
According to the World Bank, a 10% increase in broadband penetration can deliver a 1.3% increase in a country's GDP. This is especially important to the Middle East, Asia and Africa where Internet penetration is very low in comparison to North America, Australia and Europe. Through increased broadband penetration Yahsat believes communities will be empowered and equipped to drive their own economic success forward.

The YahClick service is designed to provide broadband satellite internet to everyone and is set to open new business opportunities and connectivity to a wide range of industries, NGOs, government, and education organisations throughout the country by providing reliable, high-bandwidth internet connectivity to urban, rural and remote communities.

YahClick is beamed through Yahsat'sY1B Satellite, successfully launched in April 2012. Y1B is the first satellite in the region to offer Internet connectivity through Ka-band multi-spot beams, with reusable frequencies to maximize spectrum efficiency. The multi-spotbeam technology means higher power on the ground, which enables use of a smaller antenna size.

Since the launch of Y1B satellite, the full YahClick system has undergone comprehensive testing and validation to ensure the product is ready to achieve maximum performance.

**Emil Samarah**
Regional Director - MENA
Yahsat Pr JSC



# SATELLITE NEWS

## Sky-Stream Selects Two Eutelsat Satellites to Support Increasing Demands from Maritime and Energy Sectors

Dubai-based Sky-Stream has selected capacity on two satellites operated by Eutelsat Communications to respond to connectivity demands from customers engaged in the marine and oil & gas sectors. Sky-Stream has contracted for a total of 70 MHz of bandwidth which will be progressively deployed on two Eutelsat satellites: EUTELSAT 3C and EUTELSAT 10A. Their combined footprint provides coverage across Europe and the Mediterranean Basin, the Middle East and Africa. Sky-Stream will use the new capacity to offer GSM backhaul, Internet access and on-Demand video services to its maritime and oil & gas customers.

## Frontier Communications to Offer Satellite Broadband to Rural Customers

Frontier Communications has announced plans to expand its services to rural customers by offering satellite-based broadband via a partnership with Hughes Network Systems. Frontier, which operates in 27 states, entered the South Carolina market two years ago after acquiring several Verizon properties. Currently the company has 86,300 customers statewide, including in the local tri-county area, although the company's main offices in the state are out of the Simpsonville and Myrtle Beach areas.

## Vodacom Ropes in Satellite for Farmers

Vodacom Business and Agri SA have partnered to provide satellite based communication solutions to Agri SA's members and the wider rural community. This agreement follows a resolution adopted by Agri SA's congress in 2011, whereby they were instructed to investigate alternative telecommunication systems for rural users. "By partnering with Agri SA we will have the opportunity to bring Vodacom's satellite based voice and data solutions to the rural community, including Agri SA members," said Chris Lazarus, Managing Executive, Vodacom Business Services. He added that "Vodacom is well aware of the fact that rural areas of South Africa are under-serviced with regard to connectivity. This has presented real challenges to not only the farming community, but to their customers, service suppliers and rural communities in general.

With this service, Farm leaders will be offered the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the communication system at the forthcoming congresses in the various provinces. Vodacom will also shortly be launching ten pilot projects around the country for farmers to evaluate and to provide us with the necessary feedback.

## Telkom Unveils New Satellite Services

Telkom unveiled SpaceStream Home, an IP-based communication solution making use of the latest satellite technology. This addition to Telkom's satellite product portfolio offers voice and Internet services to small business and residential customers. SpaceStream Home offers Internet access with a download rate of up to 512kbps and either one or two Voice over IP, telephony lines per single deployment. Currently a monthly bandwidth cap of 1 Gigabyte is linked to the Internet service. "An area of focus for Telkom's satellite strategy is to enable voice and data services in areas where normal wire line or wireless access networks are not cost effective or where high reliability cannot be ensured," said Steve Lewis, Telkom's Managing Executive of Product House. Telkom said that their initial focus with this product will be on customers who are currently serviced by manual exchanges and old copper wire line technologies.

## Boeing Wins US$339 Million Deal for 10th U.S. Communications Satellite

The U.S. Air Force said it had awarded Boeing Co a US$339 million contract to build the 10th satellite in its Wideband Global Satellite Communications program, which includes equipment that will nearly double the bandwidth of the new satellite system. The new satellite also includes a new wideband digital channelizer which will nearly double satellite bandwidth over the current WGS configuration. The Air Force is buying WGS satellites 7 through 10 under a commercial-like operating model that it said had generated significant savings for the U.S. government. The 10th satellite was initially slated to cost US$377 million. The first three satellites are operational and in geosynchronous orbit providing wideband communications to troops around the globe. The fourth satellite in the system was launched in January 2012 and is being readied for operations.

## UAE Satellite Offers Broadband

The UAE's newly launched second communications satellite Y1B will begin transmitting broadband services to five countries this month, said Yahsat. Launched in April, the second national satellite will offer what's called YahClick, a commercial broadband internet service for businesses and a consumer that offers better ground reception, negating the need for larger towers, the company said. Yahsat said that Y1B is "the first satellite in the region to offer internet connectivity through Ka-band multi-spot beams, with reusable frequencies to maximize spectrum efficiency. The multi-spot beam technology means higher power on the ground, which enables use of a smaller antenna size."

The availability of a new broadband service that does not depend on landlines should greatly boost the regional economies now served by Y1B, Yahsat said, given World Bank estimates that a 10 per cent increase in broadband penetration can translate into a 1.3 percent increase in a country's GDP.

## Orbital-built HYLAS-2 Broadband Communications Satellite Successfully Launched

Orbital Sciences Corporation, one of the world's leading space technology companies, announced that the HYLAS 2 satellite, built by the company for Avanti Communications Group PLC, was successfully launched into orbit aboard an Ariane 5 rocket from Kourou, French Guiana. The mission began on Thursday, August 2, 2012, with the lift-off of the Ariane 5 space launch vehicle at 4:54 p.m. (EDT). The satellite successfully separated from the rocket's final stage approximately 34 minutes after liftoff. Mr. Christopher Richmond, Orbital's Senior Vice President of Communications Satellites, said, "The HYLAS 2 mission is going very well so far following another successful launch by Arianespace. Over the next several weeks, we will work with the engineering team from Avanti to conduct in-orbit testing to verify the spacecraft's systems before it enters commercial service." It carries 24 active Ka-band user beams and six gateway beams and will produce approximately 5.0 kilowatts of payload electrical power. The Ka-band spot beams on the HYLAS 2 will provide two-way communications services to facilitate high-speed delivery of data to end-user applications such as corporate networking, broadband Internet access, business continuity services and video distribution.

## Successful Launch of Intelsat 20 Continues Service for Africa's Leading Video Neighborhood through 2027 and Beyond

Intelsat S.A., the world's leading provider of satellite services, announced that an Ariane 5 V208 launch vehicle successfully launched the Intelsat 20 satellite from Kourou, French Guiana. Liftoff occurred at 4:54 p.m. EDT. Built by Space Systems/Loral, Intelsat 20 will provide C-band and Ku-band for DTH television, cellular backhaul and VSAT services. The Intelsat 20 video neighborhood provides premium programming that is carried by the top Indian cable MSOs and DTH operators, reaching more than an estimated 90 million Pay-TV subscribers across India. Intelsat 20 also hosts the largest DTH platform in Africa. Once operational in September, Intelsat 20 will replace Intelsat 7 and Intelsat 10 at 68.5° East, and is expected to have a service life of more than 18 years. "With C-band coverage over four continents and four regionally focused Ku-band beams, Intelsat 20 provides enhanced replacement capacity for our prime video neighborhood at 68.5° East for DTH and distribution services," said Intelsat CEO David McGlade. Intelsat 20 is the third of five launches planned for 2012. Intelsat 21 and Intelsat 23 are also scheduled for launch in the third quarter.

# ROAMING NEWS

## M-Tel Offers Cheaper Roaming Packages

Bulgarian operator M-Tel started offering a 80 percent discount for all types of roaming packages that provide minutes for calls and internet. The most significant decrease is offered to Blackberry customers. They can benefit from 80 percent lower prices for 'Blackberry Mail Away' roaming packages. For instance, customers pay BGN 3.90 for a 3 MB package and BGN 9.90 for 10 MB. Subscribers with a high consumption can even choose 'Blackberry Mail Away 30' which has a preferential price of BGN 28.68. All packages for mobile internet and Blackberry traffic are valid across the EU networks and the preferred networks of Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey and Switzerland. A 50 percent price reduction for the consumer package which offers mobile internet in roaming is also applied. Customers pay BGN 0.83 for 'M-Tel Net Wings 60' which offers 1 MB, and BGN 11.90 for 'M-Tel Net Wings 10' which offers 10 MB. Up to 22 percent lower prices are also offered for calls, messaging and internet in EU countries, Liechtenstein, Iceland, Norway and the network of AT & T in the US with the packages 'M-Tel Pack2Go'.

## Mach Launches Bill Shock Platform for Mobile Roaming

Mobile roaming service provider, Mach announced the launch of its new Bill Shock Prevention solution. The company said that its solution ensures compliance with regulatory requirements, and helps operators improve revenue assurance by avoiding some of the problems that have been associated with the provision of roaming services such as bill disputes or exposure to debt. Mach's Bill Shock Prevention solution gives operators exactly this kind of insight, playing a vital role in helping them to grow roaming revenues through increased usage and improved customer retention.

Part of Mach's M Serve cloud-based portfolio of fast-to-market mobile data monetization services, Bill Shock Prevention monitors subscriber data roaming usage in real-time and provides immediate alerts. Operators can pre-define usage thresholds that then trigger alerts to the operator and send SMS notifications to subscribers. End-users are also able to query data usage when roaming through SMS to gain real-time insight into their current usage levels.

## 3 Sweden Lowers Roaming Rates in Europe, Scandinavia

3 Sweden said it has once again significantly reduced its roaming charges in Europe and Scandinavia, effective 01 July, after sharply cutting prices across Europe in 2011. Data roaming is now up to 69 percent cheaper in the EU and Nordic countries. In addition to lowering its standard price, 3 has cut the prices of additional overseas services. This change concerns mainly zone 1 and zone 2, namely selected countries in Europe and Scandinavia, and applies to the packages 3Global, 3Global Plus, 3Samtal Norden, 3Samtal Europa, 3Global Mobilsurf and 3Global Bredband. Under the new standard rates for European roaming, outgoing voice calls will cost SEK 3.2 per minute including VAT, incoming calls SEK 0.88 per minute, an SMS will cost SEK 0.99, an MMS will cost a maximum of SEK 7.73, and mobile data will cost SEK 7.73 per 1 MB.

## M-Tel Launches New Roaming Tariff

Bulgarian mobile operator M-Tel launched '3 for free premium', a new roaming tariff that has no monthly or activation fees. With this offer, for every three minutes of calls, whether incoming or outgoing to Bulgaria, users receive three bonus minutes for calls to all networks in the EU. The new tariff plan can be activated by sending a SMS to the short number 17970. The new roaming tariff plan offers 28 percent lower prices for calls to Bulgaria compared to the standard EU roaming tariffs applied from 1 July. According to the EU regulation, the tariff for outgoing calls is BGN 0.68 per minute (including VAT), wh

ile M-Tel charges BGN 0.49 per minute for voice calls with its new tariff. Another change concerns the limit for data roaming imposed from July, which is now applied worldwide.

## Czech Telecom Regulator Cuts Termination Fee

The Czech Telecommunication Office (CTU) has decided to cut by half the so-called termination fee, or the maximum wholesale price that operators charge each other for phone calls made among their networks. The CTU has been gradually decreasing the price in line with EU rules and between years 2005 and 2011 it slashed it by 65.3 percent. It said it decided to cut the termination fee to 0.55 Czech crown a minute from 1.08 crowns as of July 15 for new contracts, and as of September 15 also for existing contracts. Telecom companies operating on the Czech market are Spanish group Telefonica's unit Telefonica Czech Republic, the UK's Vodafone and Deutsche Telekom AG's T-Mobile.

## VivaCell Discounts Roaming in Georgia

Armenian mobile operator VivaCell has introduced cheap on-net calls for subscribers using roaming services in Georgia. Calls cost AMD 25 per minute when roaming on the 374 97 mobile network until 17 September. The offer is open to subscribers of the Call to Armenia service.

## China Mobile and Clearwire Advance Plans for Global Roaming

China Mobile International Limited and Clearwire announced that the two companies have signed a non-binding memorandum of understanding (MOU) that lays the foundation for international roaming between China and the United States using TD-LTE. Under the MOU, China Mobile International Limited and Clearwire plan to collaborate on business and technical aspects of their respective operations to define and institute the process necessary to support international roaming and to ensure the operators' systems and devices are able to support roaming. China Mobile and Clearwire are developing TD-LTE networks in their respective domestic markets. Through mutual collaboration, the companies will provide their customers with 4G roaming capability and help 4G services to follow the same global pattern towards international accessibility as other wireless technology.

## TRA Publishes Guidelines to Fix Malware

UAE's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) has published guidelines that will enable computer users to detect and fix their PCs in case of infection by the malware Domain Name System (DNS) Changer. The DNS Changer malware might have resulted in the loss of connection to the Internet on July 9 for users with infected PCs, according to TRA. The DNS Changer malware functions by achieving full control of the user's DNS server and then controlling what sites the user connects to on the Internet. Through this type of control they also can direct the user to fraudulent or phishing websites that would eventually lead to the ability of hackers to steal important information from the user's PC. Redirecting the user by hackers is carried out by creating a server called a Rogue DNS giving users fake answers, alters their search, and redirects their search to malicious websites.

## Hong Kong Regulator Plans 2.5/2.6 GHz Auction in Q1 2013

Hong Kong's Office of the Communications Authority has issued a statement on auctioning spectrum in the 2.5/2.6GHz band. A consultation was carried out in December last year and early this year. The regulator said that no spectrum would be reserved for certain existing mobile network operators and that the available spectrum would be auctioned off with bidding open to existing operators and new entrants. The regulator will divide the spectrum in blocks of 2 x 5 MHz and a spectrum cap will not be applied. Furthermore, technical standards on the use of the spectrum will not be imposed. The Communications Authority is planning the auction for the first quarter 2013.

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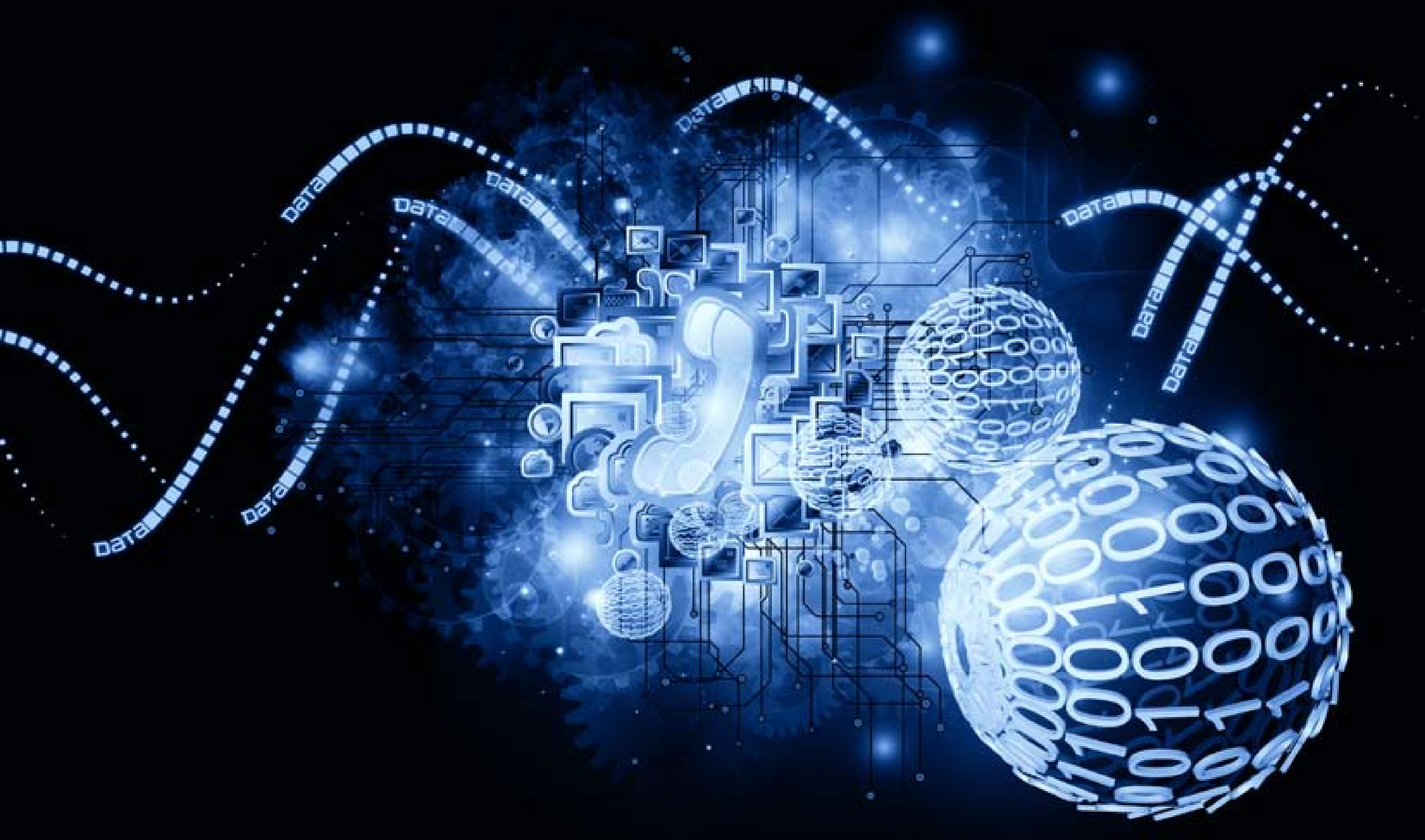

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