



NOTICE EXTENDING THE TIME FOR COMMENTS ON SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED IN RESPONSE TO BTC'S DRAFT RAIO

1. On 7th September 2010, the Utilities Regulation and Competition Authority (URCA) issued a Public Consultation document (i.e., ECS 22/2010) on the draft Reference Access and Interconnection Offer (RAIO) published by the Bahamas Telecommunications Company Ltd. (BTC) on its website on 2nd July 2010.
2. In Section 1.3.1 of the Consultation document, URCA laid out the projected timetable concerning the public consultation process, including the following statements:

“URCA will, on 22nd October 2010, separately publish BTC's responses regarding charges for its Joining Circuits and Forecasting and Planning issues that URCA has identified in this consultation document.

Interested parties will then have a two-week opportunity to comment on submissions made by BTC regarding its charges for Joining Circuits and Forecasting and Planning issues mandated by URCA in this consultation document, which should be submitted by 5th November 2010.”

3. URCA has received expressions of concern from key stakeholders regarding the time frame allowed to them to make comments on the submissions made by BTC regarding BTC's charges for Joining Circuits and Forecasting and Planning issues mandated by URCA in the consultation document. They have requested URCA to consider an extension to its deadline of 5th November 2010, as stipulated in Section 1.3.1 of the Public Consultation document.
4. Key stakeholders have premised their requests for the extension of time on being allowed additional time not only to comment on the submissions made by BTC regarding BTC's charges for Joining Circuits and Forecasting and Planning issues mandated by URCA in the consultation document but also to comment on all submissions received in response to the Public Consultation document.
5. URCA restates its position on the significance and importance of the draft RAIO as set out in Section 1.1 of the Consultation document:

“The publication by BTC of a draft RAIO marks a significant step in the development of a transparent, non-discriminatory and competitive market for electronic communications in The Bahamas. Once it is approved by URCA, the RAIO will provide a framework through which competing operators can negotiate agreements for access and/or interconnection with BTC and thus

promote the development of an open and competitive electronic communications market so that consumers, over time, have a choice of providers and services. Without a suitable RAIO in place, efficient and effective competition is unlikely to emerge in the market.”

6. Having regard to the fact that this is the industry’s first experience with a reference offer of any kind in The Bahamas, URCA considers it beneficial to all affected parties to accede to the request for an extension of time to give any interested persons a reasonable opportunity not only to comment on the submissions made by BTC regarding BTC’s charges for Joining Circuits and Forecasting and Planning issues mandated by URCA in the consultation document but also to comment on all submissions received in response to the Public Consultation document.
7. URCA hereby:
 - a. extends the timeframe for all interested parties to comment on the submissions made by BTC regarding BTC’s charges for Joining Circuits and Forecasting and Planning issues mandated by URCA in the consultation document; and
 - b. provides the opportunity for all respondents to comment on all submissions made by other parties up to 19th October 2010 in response to the Public Consultation document.
 - c. Interested parties will have until 5:00 PM on 12th November, 2010 to submit such comments.
8. For the avoidance of doubt, all submissions in response to the Public Consultation document (ECS 22/2010) should still be submitted to URCA by 5:00 PM on 19th October 2010.