



QUARTERLY REPORT OF THE BOARD

COVERING THE PERIOD 1 APRIL – 30 JUNE 2010

ECS 24/2010

4 October 2010

UTILITIES REGULATION & COMPETITION AUTHORITY

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1. Introduction

As part of URCA's continuing commitment to accountability and transparency, the Board is pleased to publish its third Quarterly Report, covering the period 1 April – 30 June 2010.

2. Summary of Key Actions – Operations

- The New Premises – Board members were updated on the progress of the project work and the expected date for the relocation of URCA's offices from Fourth Terrace off Collins Avenue to the UBS Annex Building, East Bay Street, which was scheduled for the beginning of August.
- Human Resources – The Board was advised that competency assessments, performance objectives and training development plans were shared with URCA colleagues. This was the beginning of a succession plan that embraced the entire organization. This will assist in the upskilling and training of colleagues.
- The Board enquired about liability and indemnity Insurance and there has to be further review and research on this matter to ensure that the proper contingencies are in place.
- The Board approved the URCA financial statements for 2009, covering the period 1 August 2009 to 31 December 2009. The Annual Report, which included the audited financial statements, and the Annual Plan were published within the timeframe prescribed by the Act.
- The Board received a report from the Audit Committee covering: (a) the Terms of Reference for selection of a person to conduct URCA's internal auditing and (b) the Terms of Reference being drafted for the competitive selection of URCA's external auditors for 2010.
- Recruitment of CEO: Due the expiration of the contract of the current CEO, advertisements for the position of a new URCA CEO were placed in local, regional and international publications, as part of the competitive selection process being followed to satisfy the requirements of the URCA Act.
- The Board is updated and kept abreast of any management decisions as they arise during each month.
- The Board has reviewed every month, URCA's management accounts and financial performance to ensure they are in accord with accounting standards for the period.

Summary of Key Actions – Regulatory

- The Board was made aware of various newspaper articles and comments that arose in the press from URCA decisions and/or consultations during the period and, where necessary, press releases were issued to clarify URCA's position on these issues.
- The Board was made aware of the work being done to complete an agency agreement with Bahamas Maritime Authority to collect spectrum fees for the Government. URCA continues to work on improving the daily updates of the ships' register from BMA.
- The Industry Working Group on Content Codes for broadcasting is in progress for the development of the Content Codes. This involves industry individuals and key stakeholders relevant to the development of Codes. A workshop was held with broadcasters and others who have been eager to participate in the Group.
- The Board has been updated on various Spectrum Management issues and how URCA was progressing with concerns of stakeholders in selected frequencies. The Board was advised that issues had arisen from the need to have licensees vacate or clear out of certain spectrum bands.
- Spectrum Monitoring – URCA is still working towards resolution of site acquisition with the Defence Force and Police Force to install URCA's Spectrum monitoring equipment. .
- SMP obligations – The Board was updated on how both BTC and CBL were progressing with compliance to these obligations. In particular, it was noted that:
 - The Accounting Separation with SMP operators would take several months to conclude, however, the Board was advised that URCA has been meeting with the operators to address their concerns.
 - Untying of Broadband Internet as a part of CBL's Final SMP obligation has stirred consumer concern and complaints as CBL commenced digitisation in the Eastern End of New Providence. URCA will analyse the impact of the conversion on customers.
- The Numbering Plan was published as reissue of a document that had been published by the PUC.
- The Board was updated on progress being made to develop recommendations, through a public consultation, on Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) in The Bahamas. The Board was also advised of the Public Service Broadcasting media coverage and concern with the Government budget cuts at ZNS. The Board agreed that URCA should be proactive in its relationship with the Minister for Broadcasting and give him the information that has been researched to date by URCA about audience viewing trends, programme preferences, and funding options for a PSB in The Bahamas.

- During the Quarter under review, the Board approved regulatory and other measures, including those that resulted in the following documents being published:
 - ECS 9/2010 – Public Register of Individual Licensees and Class Licensees Requiring Registration
 - ECS 10/2010 - Interim code of Practice for Broadcasting Content
 - ECS 11/2010 – Final SMP Decision: Obligations imposed on Operators with Significant Market Power (SMP)
 - ECS 12/2010 – Final Accounting Separation Guidelines BTC
 - ECS 13/2010 – Final Accounting Separation Guidelines CBL
 - ECS 14/2010 – Final Access Interconnection Guidelines
 - ECS15/2010 – Retail Pricing Rules
 - ECS 19/2010 – Results of the Public Consultation initiated 2008 for National Numbering Plan
 - ECS 20/2010 – Bahamas National Numbering Plan (Draft)
 - ECS 21/2010 – Statement of Results for the Consultation on Content Regulation: Process for Developing Codes of Practice.