



CONSUMER GUIDE



هيئة تنظيم الاتصالات
Telecommunications Regulatory Authority





General information on Telecom Sector in Oman

The Sultanate of Oman is among the Region's most progressive countries in the telecom sector in terms of liberalization and promotion of competition.

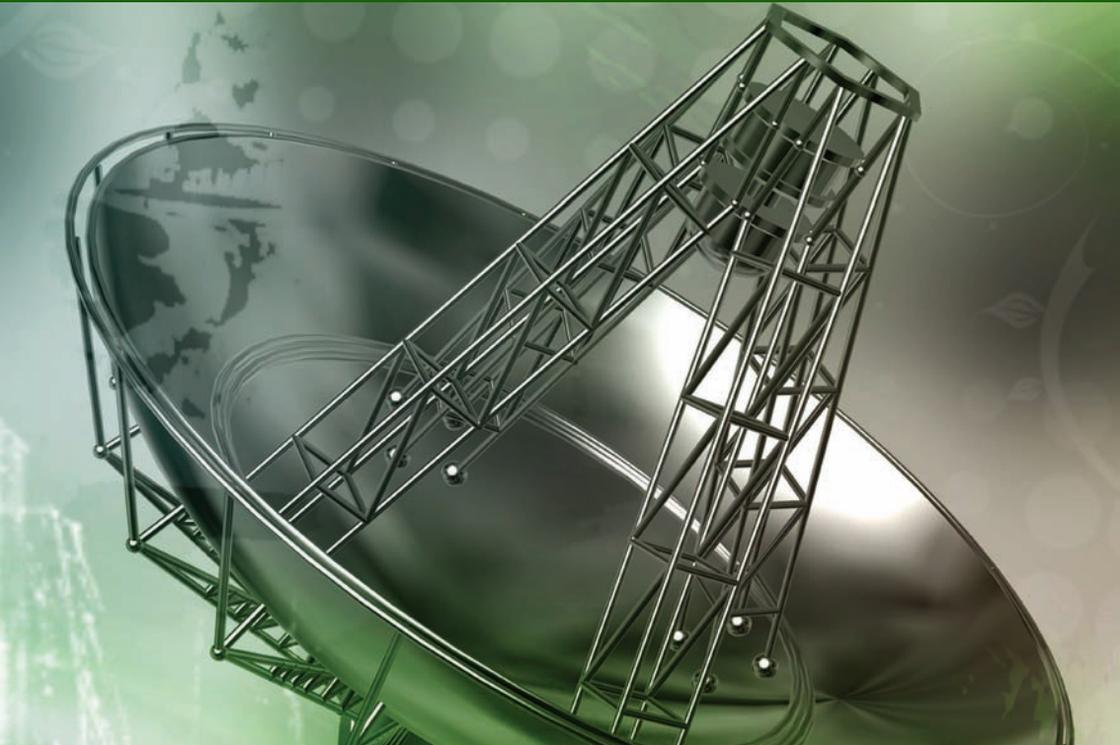
The Telecom operators/service providers in Oman offer consumers a wide range of telecommunications services based on state of the art technology.

The sector has made great progress in the liberalization process in line with the Government's strategy and Vision 2020, which aims at liberalizing the Omani telecommunications sector by enlisting private sector investments for the economic and social development of the Sultanate and turning the telecommunications sector into an attractive and competitive sector.





Communication without borders



Telecom Act of the Sultanate of Oman

The principal legislation governing the telecommunications sector in Oman is the Telecommunications Regulatory Act which was issued in March 2002 under Royal Decree No. 30/2002. The Act was amended twice in 2008. To view the latest version of the Act, please visit TRA's website at www.tra.gov.om

Transparency

In line with the Act, the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority is committed to implement transparency through a number of measures including:

1. Publishing public consultations in which stakeholders' views are requested on new initiatives by the Authority on multi-operator multi-service competitive services, policy decisions, regulations, new licensing issues and quality of service.
2. Telecom operators/service providers are required to disclose their tariff mechanism to the public on their respective web-sites.
3. The dominant telecom operator/service provider is required to disclose its Reference Interconnection Offers and Reference Access Offers.
4. Requiring the telecom operators/service providers to provide a mechanism to address consumer complaints.
5. Requiring the telecom operators/service providers to submit their customer service agreements for TRA review to ensure that consumer interests are protected.
6. Requiring the telecom operators/service providers to publish a public notice in local newspapers in case technical issues prevent them from issuing 10% or more of the invoices in time to their consumers.
7. Requiring the telecom operators/service providers to publish in local newspapers their network performance results on key quality of service parameters.

Technology Neutrality, Non-discrimination in the provision of services.

1. Based on the Sultanate's belief in the importance of a free telecommunications market and the potential effect of the enhancement of the sector's role in the country's overall development, the Sultanate has adopted a policy of technology neutrality. Once it awards or provides a license, TRA does not obligate or require any particular technology to be used for providing telecom services.
2. TRA has adopted a policy of non-discrimination with regard to the provision of the services that are permitted within the framework of the class licenses provided to telecom operators/service providers. It treats all telecom operators/ service providers equally and fairly.
3. TRA ensures that the licensees strictly avoid any type of discrimination or preferential treatment while providing services to all potential customers.

Segmentation (Available Telecom Services in Oman)

Available Cellular Mobile Services (Personal & Business) are:

Voice

- Pre-paid
- Post-paid

Value Added Services

- MMS
- SMS
- Video call
- Internet
- Voice mail

Fixed Line Services are:

- Voice
- Data
 - *Internet*
 - *Leased Line*

The above services are available as pre-paid or post-paid and can be provided to both residential and business customers (with the exception of leased lines which are postpaid and provided to business customers only).

Technology

- **General Packet Radio Service (GPRS), technology that allows access to data networks.**
- **Enhanced Data rates for GSM Evolution (EDGE).**
- **3G is the third generation tele standards and technology for higher speed access to data networks, including video telephony, video streaming and other enhanced technologies.**



The above services have different tariffs and service features. The respective telecom operators/service providers provide full details on their web sites and customer service centers.

Current Market Scenario:

Class I Licenses have been awarded to the following companies:

Omantel : www.omantel.om

Oman Mobile : www.omanmobile.om

Nawras : www.narwas.om

Class II Licenses (Mobile Resale) have been awarded to the following companies:

Injaz International Telecom LLC : www.injaztelecom.com

Majan Telecom : www.majantel.com

Mazoon Mobile Company : www.mazoonmobile.com

Friendi Mobile Oman : www.friendimobile.com

Samatel : www.samatel.om



For further information on licensing, please refer to the TRA website at www.tra.gov.om.

Consumer Queries

In order to clarify some of the consumers' concerns and in response to their frequently asked questions (FAQs), the following details have been formulated to clear any uncertainty and facilitate the selection process for consumers in deciding the types of services they require.

Consumers seeking new connections may need details on some of the following issues:

- i. Price – Peak, Off Peak, Per Minute or Per Second call-charging features
- ii. Payment Terms
- iii. Other terms and conditions



How do I go about obtaining a connection for a new telecom service?

Identify your needs and after going through relevant form details, standard customer agreements, etc. carefully select the telecom operator/service provider that suits your requirements. For further details consumers are advised to visit operator/service providers' web sites.

General requirements:

For Omanis:

- Fill the application form (completed forms are considered as part of the service agreement)
- Attach documents (copy of ID card)

For Expatriates:

- Fill the application form (completed forms are considered as part of the service agreement)
- Attach documents (copy of Residence Card/other relevant documents, if any, as per the requirements of operator/service provider)

 Please note that with some packages Omanis & expatriates are required to pay a deposit. In some cases, for expatriates, a sponsor's letter may be accepted. For more information, contact your service provider.

02

Do I have to end my contract/disconnect my service if I am leaving Oman for good?

- Yes

03

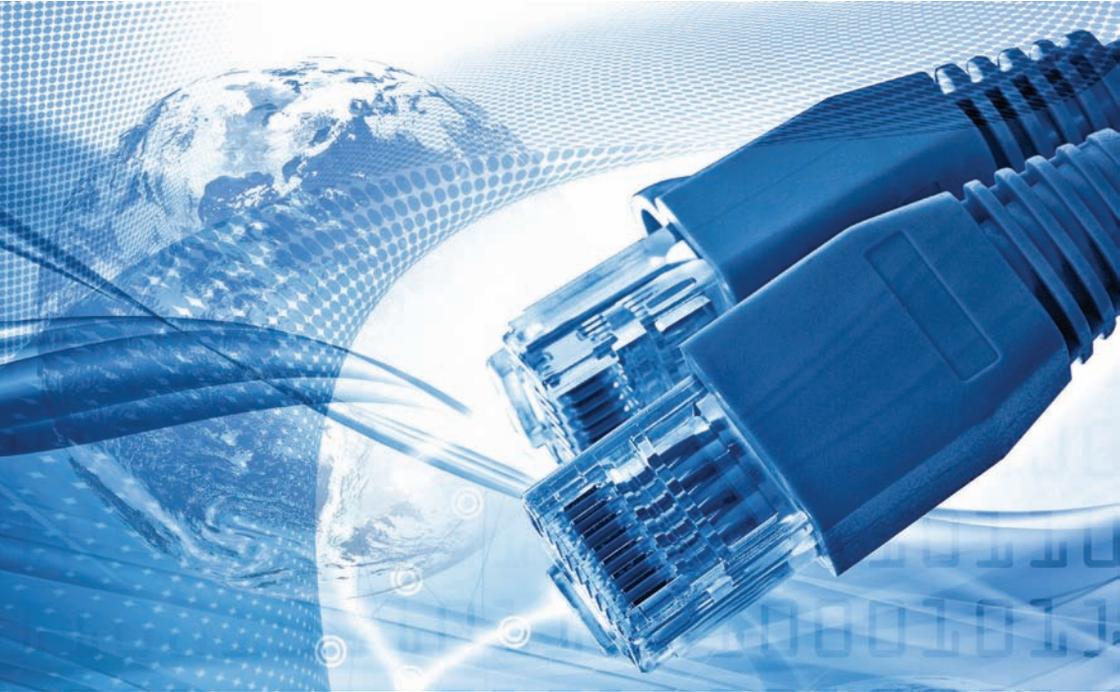
What do I do to end/disconnect a service?

- Fill in your telecom operator/service provider's relevant disconnection form
- Pay all dues including last bill
- Attach a copy of your ID for Omanis or Residence Card for expatriates.

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How soon may I end my contract/disconnect my service for mobile, fixed or internet?

Immediately, upon the settlement of all bills and dues.



Keeping pace with technologies



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Can I freeze/block my land-line connection for a certain period?

You cannot freeze or block your landline connection for a short period, as this service is not available in the Sultanate. However, you have a choice of keeping your land-line active and pay as per the policy or disconnect it and apply for a new connection when you decide to.

06

What happens if I leave without ending my contract/disconnecting my service?

In cases where a deposit has been provided, the service continues until the deposit is exhausted, after which it is disconnected. In cases where there is no deposit made, the service will be disconnected for non-payment within the operator/service provider's billing cycle. This, however, it is not advisable as it will reflect negatively on your service history.



Consumers are advised that any activity related to selling, exchanging or swapping SIM cards is considered illegal in Oman, as per (Decision 200/2007). This is because these numbers are regarded as public property as per Article 44 of the Executive Regulations of the Telecom Act.

For further information please visit TRA's website www.tra.gov.om

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How are my calls charged?

Some telecom operators/service providers may charge per minute, and others may charge per sub-minute (30 second). The consumer, upon joining a operator/service provider, is advised to inquire as to the type of charging mechanism used by their operators/service providers.

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How can I minimize my charges?

You can minimize your charges by selecting a suitable package or plan that most ideally suits your needs and meets your budget. Look up the various plans available with the different operators/service providers and make the appropriate selection.



Please note that there are peak times rates & off-peak time rates. It is recommended that you select the right tariff plan in accordance with your usage needs. For further information check with your telecom operator/service provider.

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Can I use my mobile abroad?

Yes, roaming services are available with both prepaid and post paid services with the existing telecom operators/service providers. However, before your departure you need to access your telecom operator's/ service provider's website or directly contact their Customer Service Center to check on the availability of roaming services at your destination.

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How can I minimize my roaming charges?

To use your mobile services abroad, you need to check your telecom operator's/service provider's website or directly contact their Customer Service Center to select, upon arrival at your destination, the most suitable visited network before travelling. Upon arrival at your destination, you will receive an SMS from your telecom operator/service provider advising you of the charges for receiving a call, making a local call and making a call back to Oman.



Please note that roaming rates are higher than the normal international calls made inside Oman, as a certain percentage is added to the price of international calls. Before your departure you need to access your telecom operator/service provider's website or directly contact their Customer Service Center to check on the roaming rates.

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How can I top-up my prepaid mobile account while roaming?

Before your departure, you must consult your mobile telecom operator/service provider for voice and data roaming services, or visit their website for instructions or directly contact their Customer Service Center.

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How can I change my mobile telecom operator/service provider?

If you wish to retain your current number you may make use of the Mobile Number Portability (MNP) service that allows you to retain your original mobile telephone number while migrating between different telecom operator/service providers within the Sultanate. For further information please contact your mobile service provider.

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Would migrating from one service provider to another require the subscriber to give notice to the telecom operator/service provider?

You don't have to give any notice before migrating to another service provider unless you have entered into a contract which requires that you specifically remain with that service provider/operator for a certain period of time (special packages).

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What are the charges if I opted for Mobile Number Portability (MNP)?

There is no opting in & opting out charge, however, there is a MNP charge of R.O. 3. which is currently being waived by operators as promotional initiative.

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How can I prevent unauthorized disclosure of my private and confidential information?

Operators are required not to disclose private and confidential information as this is prohibited by law. For further information refer to your telecom operator/service provider.

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What kind of personal information does my telecom operator/ service provider collect when using their services?

Your telecom operator/service provider only collects information for identification and billing purposes. It is prohibited by law to disclose the personal information of customers. However, information can only be disclosed for legal purposes and as per the provisions of the Law.

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What do I do if my mobile and/or SIM card is stolen/lost?

Immediately contact your telecom operator/service provider's Customer Service Center to deactivate your stolen/lost SIM card in order to avoid any charges made by whoever has stolen/found your SIM and in order to issue a replacement SIM card. With regards to your handset, report the theft to the nearest Royal Oman Police (ROP) station.

If your SIM card and/or handset is stolen abroad, do the same as above then report the theft/loss to the local police station and follow their procedures.

In addition, consumers are strongly advised to keep:

1. A copy of their handset purchase receipt
2. Note their mobile set serial number

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How can I find out my rights and obligations with respect to my telecom operator/service provider?

Upon signing an agreement for a service, please carefully read your agreement, and save a copy for future reference. Customers are also advised to carefully read “the customer’s standard agreement” to understand their rights and obligations. Enquire with your telecom operator/service provider if you do not understand the implications of any of the provisions.

Please be advised that service application forms are considered as part of the services agreement.

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How can I ensure the accuracy of my billing?

If you are not sure of your bill, request your telecom operator/service provider for an itemized bill which states in details your usage during a specific period

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Is there a charge for requesting an itemized bill?

Some telecom operators/service providers charge for the service and others provide it free of charge.

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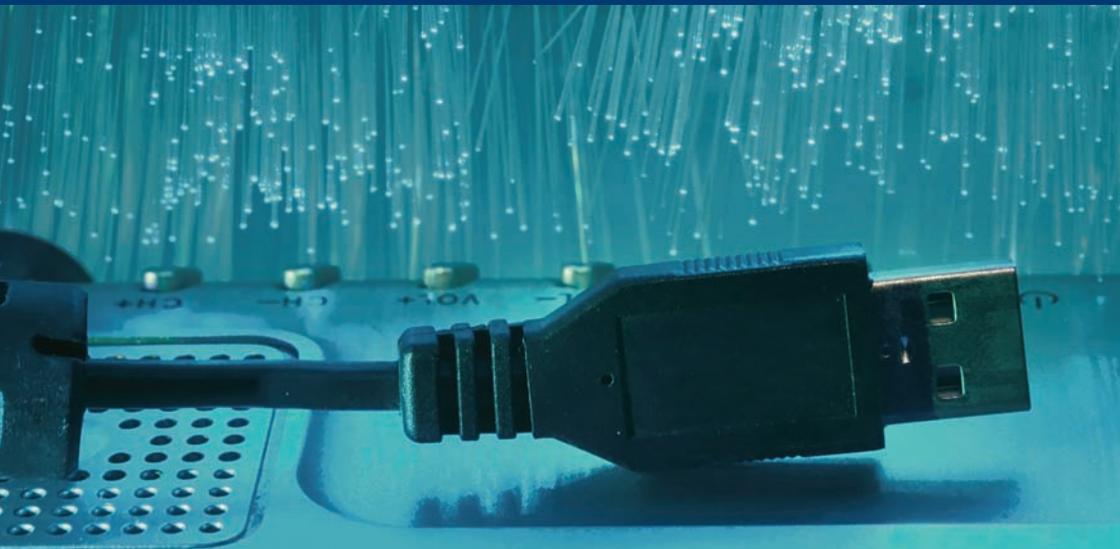
Can a telecom operator/service provider issue a post-dated invoice for calls/services made more than a month ago?

Yes, telecom operators/service providers may issue a post-dated invoice up to a maximum period of six (6) months, as per TRA Decision (69/2007) which was issued in order to protect the public’s interest; telecom operators/service providers are prohibited from issuing any bill after six months have passed since the date when such service was provided.

For further details of TRA Decision (69/2007) please visit: www.tra.gov.om



Providing technologies for future generations



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Can I bring telecom equipment to Oman?

No, you are not authorised to bring telecom equipment to Oman, except telecommunication subscriber terminal equipment for personal use on condition that it has been type approved by TRA, besides you are not allowed to bring any other telecom radio equipment to Oman even for your personal use without holding a valid radio licensing from TRA.

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Why is Type Approval Necessary?

1. To ensure that the telecom terminal equipment comply with international standards for health and safety to protect users of such telecom equipments from possible side effect of this equipment that don't comply with such standards.
2. To ensure that a subscriber terminal equipment can be used with local public telecommunication network without causing damage to the quality of service approved by the local public telecommunication network that you are subscribing to.
3. To ensure that subscriber terminal equipment doesn't cause harmful radio interference to the telecommunication network in the Sultanate in particular the radio terminals that are utilizing frequency spectrum.



You are advised, for your own interest, to purchase such terminal equipment from registered dealer with TRA in the local market.

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Who can apply for type approval of telecommunication terminal equipment that enables consumers' access to make calls through public or private telecom network?

Only TRA registered dealers may apply for type approval. Liability for the import or sale of telecom equipment to consumers in the local market which have not been type approved by TRA shall be borne solely by the said importer/dealer.

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How would I know that terminal equipment have been type approved?

Please visit TRA website for list of type approved subscriber's terminal equipment.



It is encouraged to report to TRA any local dealer selling non type approved terminal equipment, for the public interest.

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When should I approach TRA if I have a complaint and how do I go about doing so?

As a consumer (individual or business) you should, in the first instance, approach your telecom operator/service provider to resolve the complaint. The means of communications and methods of approach are detailed in the websites of the telecom operators/service providers as well as disclosed in the contract documents. You may approach TRA with your complaint, if your telecom operator/service provider, has failed to remedy your registered complaint within (15) days.

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What type of issues may TRA investigate?

The TRA can investigate complaints/disputes between telecom operators/service providers and its subscribers related to all telecom services, such as:

- Billing (including incorrect plans and charges, late billing, etc.)
- Problems with mobile subscription text message services (being unable to stop them)
- Faults and quality of service
- Delays in the provision of connections
- False claims and/or promises
- Payment collection activities (including difficulties with payment plans and credit defaults)
- Contracts (including unfair or unclear terms)
- Any other complaints with regards to telecom service provision

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What type of issues can't TRA investigate ?

TRA cannot investigate complaints/disputes between telecom operators/service providers and its subscribers related to mobile, fixed line and internet services related to:

- Privately owned telecommunications equipment (including mobile handsets and/or computers) which are purchased locally and have not been type approved by TRA.

- The content of services delivered through telecom infrastructure such as mobile subscription ringtones or website content
- The prices that companies charge for their services and products (being high, low etc.) once they are clearly presented and disclosed by the telecom operator/service provider
- Issues that have been (or are scheduled to go before) court
- Issues related to disturbance from other telecom subscribers



When can a consumer register a complaint with the TRA?

Consumers are asked to contact the TRA as a last resort in resolving their telecom-related complaint.

In order to file a telecoms complaint with TRA, kindly ensure that you have completed the following prior to filing a complaint with TRA:

1. Contact your telecom operator/service provider by filing a written complaint. Your telecom operator/service provider has (15) days to resolve your complaint.
2. Within (15) days, if your complaint has not been resolved or you are not satisfied with the resolution provided by your telecom operator/service provider as per the procedures prescribed in their licenses, you may contact the TRA to resolve the complaint.

Written complaints may be sent to any of the following:

1	Email	consumer@tra.gov.om
2	Postal	Telecommunications Regulatory Authority P.O. Box 579 Ruwi, Postal Code 112, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman
3	Fax	+968 24563193
4	TRA Offices	Muscat, Al-Qurum, Oman Oil Company Building 2nd Floor



Promoting fair competition

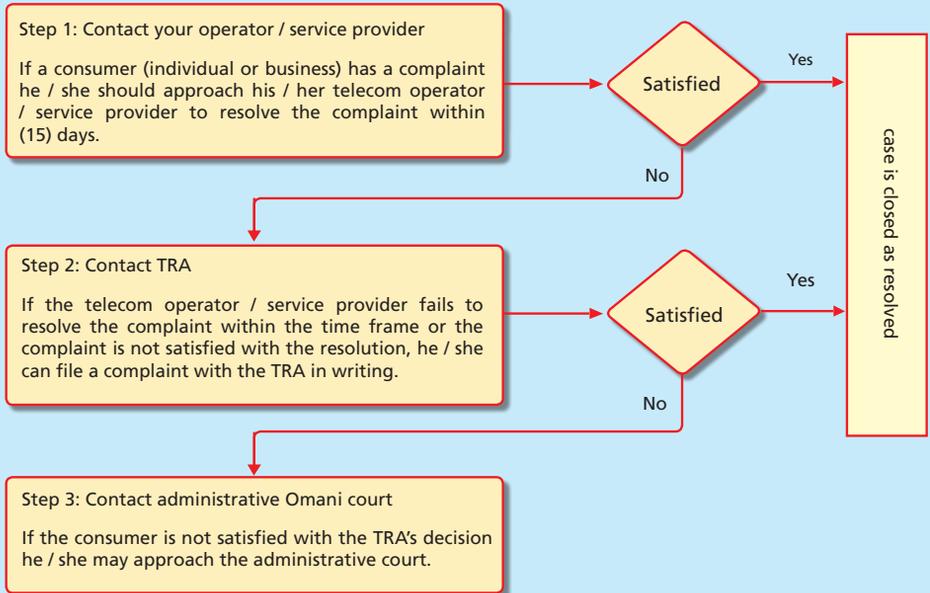
What will the TRA do when it receives my complaint?

Received complaints are registered and numbered. If TRA receives a complaint that does not fall within TRA's jurisdiction, the consumer will be directed, in writing, to approach the concerned party.

1. If TRA determines that it has the jurisdiction to investigate your complaint then:
 - TRA would request the consumer to provide written documentation of having registered a complaint with the telecom operator/service provider and the telecom operator/service provider's acknowledgement of said complaint.
 - In the event that the telecom operator/service provider has attempted to resolve the issue but was not successful in doing so to the consumer's satisfaction, TRA would request clarifications as to why the consumer is dissatisfied with the telecom operator/service provider's attempt to resolve the complaint.
 - TRA would request the consumer to provide copies of all responses provided by the telecom operator/service provider relating to the complaint
 - TRA will advise the consumer not to contact the telecom operator/service provider with regards to the same complaint while it is being reviewed by TRA.
2. TRA will request, in writing, clarification on the complaint received from the telecom operator/service provider.
3. TRA will examine the response received from the telecom operator/service provider and make a determination on the issue within the allocated period, TRA may still make a determination on the complaint.
4. TRA will advise the consumer and the telecom operator/service provider, in writing, of the determination made.
5. TRA's determination is binding on the telecom operator/service provider as per the provisions of the Telecom Act.



CONSUMER COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCESS



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How does the TRA decide whether an outcome is fair and reasonable?

TRA believes that what is fair and reasonable will depend on the circumstances of your particular complaint.

To guide us in our investigation and decision-making TRA takes into account the Telecommunications Act, previous TRA determinations and relevant prevailing laws in Oman.

This explains our approach to investigating and resolving various types of complaints.

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What if I am still not satisfied at the end of the process?

TRA requests that consumers let us know in the event that they are not satisfied with the resolution proposed by their telecom operator/service provider as mediated by TRA. We will consider your point of view and information, and reconsider whether the proposed resolution is fair and reasonable. However, the ultimate decision as to whether the proposed resolution is fair and reasonable remains under our discretion.



If you disagree with the decision made by the TRA with regard to handling your complaint, please see article 50 of the Telecom Act, seek legal advice or help from another organization.

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What does the TRA expect from my telecom operator/service provider while resolving a complaint?

The TRA expects your telecom operator/service provider to meet its consumer obligations in a courteous manner and be willing to;

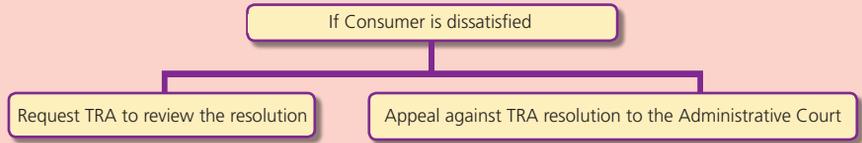
- Discuss your complaint with you and the TRA Consumer Affairs Department
- Explain the situation to you with proper references and examples
- Provide TRA with the requested information in a timely manner
- Provide its records of the incident along with evidence supporting its point of view
- Propose a fair and reasonable resolution to the complaint, based on all available information and discussions with all parties involved
- Be willing to compromise where it seems reasonable.

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Beyond TRA, where to go?

If the consumer is not satisfied with TRA's resolution he/she may:

1. Request TRA to review the resolution. if at the onset of your complaint you would like to appeal against TRA resolution you may;
2. Approach the Administrative Court.



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What is TRA's role in raising consumer awareness?

In line with the Telecommunications Act, TRA conducts a number of awareness campaigns to increase and enhance the consumer's awareness of the available telecom services in the Sultanate and their rights and obligations with respect to these telecom services. These campaigns are highlighted through the TRA website, news media and participation in various public events and exhibitions.

CONTACTING THE TRA

Principal Place of Business

Oman Oil Company Building,
2nd Floor, Qurum, Muscat.

Registered Address

Telecommunications Regulatory Authority,
PO Box 579, PC 112 Ruwi,
Muscat, Sultanate of Oman.

Email: consumer@tra.gov.om

Telephone: +968-2457 4300

Fax: +968-2456 3193

Working Days/Hours

Saturday to Wednesday

7.00am – 1.00pm & 1.45pm – 3.45pm (GMT +4)

www.tra.gov.om