

TRA Observations on the GSMA statement arising out of Covid-19 situation

GSMA recommendation	TRA Oman observation
Temporary relaxation (or forbearance) of the regulatory obligations on mobile operators	On a case to case basis, based on justification, TRA Oman supports this recommendation of temporary relaxation
The immediate temporary granting of available additional spectrum for a limited period of time granted by National Regulatory Authorities to the licensed operators	TRA is already engaged with the licensed operators in regard to making available required resources including spectrum for a limited period of time
Enabling rapid approval processes for new sites or installation of additional capacity on existing network sites	Site approval process in Oman is already streamlines and this recommendation is fully supported
Expediting customs processes to enable telecommunications equipment to be brought into the country without delay; to enable mobile operators to continue to offer the best QoS/QoE and avoid mobile internet services congestion	The spirit of this recommendation is appreciated and the TRA would coordinate with the government stakeholders to expedite the clearance process following the due process
In order to ensure continuity of service for all, allowing the implementation of Fair Use Policies especially in the case where customers on unlimited plans are using a disproportionately large amount of data	The licensed operators are aware of the issues and their proposals in this regard are favourably considered and implemented during the crisis period
Employees of communication services providers and their sub-contractors must also be granted essential services status and exempted from national restrictions	The telecommunications services are already treated as essential and as such the required authorisations are provided to the licensed operators
GSMA also advocates that governments facilitate a dematerialisation and digitisation approach to permits, authorisations and subscription to services and review regulations that may impede the use of digital channels	These are already under consideration and based on the requests of the licensed operators authorisations are accorded in an expeditious manner
GSMA advocates that governments allow any compatible, non-interfering technology to be used in mobile frequency bands to the benefit of consumers and society	Such requirements based on requests from the licensed operators are already satisfied
GSMA advocates that, in order to meet the varying and growing needs in mobile data of consumers, mobile operators need the ability to actively manage network traffic; any regulation that limits mobile operators' flexibility to manage the end-to-end quality of service or limit their commercial flexibility to offer special tariffs and zero-rated access to specific services	Operators have the flexibility to manage the traffic without any undue burden

and so provide consumers with a satisfactory experience is inherently counterproductive and should be relaxed	
Financial sustainability of mobile operators	Recommendations made in this regard require a careful consideration by the government who are already stretched financially on account of the current crisis. All required support would be granted by the government and the regulator to ensure the continuity of services including the licensees themselves in these difficult times.
NRAs are encouraged to suspend all pending consultation deadlines, sundry information requests and non-critical routine reporting	As recommended only critical and essential data requests are requested from the licensed operators.