

**OPENING REMARKS BY MR KHALID HASANALI, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AT THE LICENSING SEMINAR, BUREAU OF STANDARDS AUDITORIUM, MACOYA INDUSTRIAL ESTATE.**

Members of the Board of the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago

Mr. Cris Seecheran, Acting Executive Director, Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago

Participants

Members of Staff of the Authority

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this the second Licensing Seminar to be hosted by the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago. The First seminar was held in Tobago, on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2006.

The primary objective of these seminars is to provide practical information on issues surrounding the licensing and utilization of radio communications equipment for radio communications license holders, radio operators and individuals and companies who intend to apply for radio communications licenses from the Authority.

You would no doubt be aware ladies and gentlemen, by virtue of the Telecommunications Act 2001, the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago is the body responsible for the

liberalization and regularization of Trinidad and Tobago's telecommunications and broadcasting sectors.

In this regard the Authority possesses a number of responsibilities including the following which pertain to licensing:

1. Granting of licenses and making recommendations to the Minister on the granting of concessions;
2. Planning, supervising, regulating and managing the use of the radio frequency spectrum including:
  - The licensing and registration of radio frequencies and call signs to be used by all stations operating in Trinidad and Tobago or on any ship, aircraft, or other vessel or satellite registered in Trinidad and Tobago;
  - The allocation, assignment and reallocation or reassignment of frequency bands where necessary and
3. Collection of all fees, including concession and license fees and any other charges levied under the Act, or any regulations made hereunder.

Globally, the broadcasting and telecommunications sectors have experienced phenomenal growth rates in the last two decades. This is prompted by a number of factors including liberalization within the sectors and an increased use of information and communications technologies in the areas of research and development and increasingly in the area of entertainment.

Phenomenal growth of the entertainment industry is fuelled by the multiplicity of convergences such as internet protocol convergence, fixed and wireless convergence, multimedia convergence and service provision convergence such as in the provision of triple play (voice, data, television).

In Trinidad and Tobago the entertainment industry is also growing by leaps and bounds. Over the last decade this country has moved from having only four radio stations to thirty-two (32) and from one free to air television station to six (6).

In addition to the entertainment industry, the Authority has been engaged in the processing of applications for licenses in a number of other areas. The Authority has recently recommended the approval of eighteen (18) Amateur Radio station licenses based on the draft Authorization Framework for Amateur Radio Services. In addition, within the last month recommendations were made for the approval of the following:

- Eight (8) land mobile spectrum licenses (seven (7) of which were existing radio communication systems);
- Thirteen (13) maritime station licenses, (twelve (12) of which were existing radio communication systems);
- One (1) point-to-point station license;
- Four (4) Radio STL (Studio-to-Transmission Links) station licenses; two (2) television STL station licenses; and one (1) earth station license.

All of these services ladies and gentlemen whether in the area of entertainment or marine radio communications, require the use of spectrum – a non renewable finite resource. Interestingly, in spite of its scarcity, spectrum has an increasing range of valuable uses. Because spectrum is an essential element in the area of broadcasting, its effective management is therefore necessary particularly in light of the growing use of radio communications equipment.

In accordance with the Authority's draft Authorization Framework for the Telecommunications and Broadcasting Sectors of Trinidad and Tobago, the use of spectrum requires a license.

Prior to the Authority's establishment all telecommunications regulatory functions including the licensing of radiocommunications equipment resided with the Telecommunications Division

which fell within the purview of various ministries throughout its existence. The final abode of that Division, prior to its dissolution and the establishment of the Authority, was the Ministry of Public Administration and Information.

Since its establishment, the Authority has been seeking through various means, to ensure that persons applying for radiocommunications licences are knowledgeable of the application and processing procedures under the current legislation.

In this regard the Authority decided to embark on a series of seminars on the licensing process under the theme “*Licence Holders...Getting it Right the First Time*”.

In addition to reviewing the licensing process the seminar would also provide participants with information regarding the allocation of spectrum, licence fees as well as monitoring and legal enforcement.

The seminar would also provide participants with the opportunity to ask questions and obtain clarifications on information presented. I want to encourage you ask as many questions as you need to, to ensure that you fully understand the licensing process and other related matters.

Your understanding of the information is important as it would assist in reducing the challenges associated with the filling of the various application forms toward the acquisition of a licences. This part of the process is critical as this information provides the evaluation committee with all technical and financial and other information that would allow for an accurate assessment regarding the granting of a licence for the purpose applied.

It is also important that you are aware of the different types of licences and the authorization processes associated with these and well as the various selection processes and the terms and conditions, rights and obligations applicable to licences.

To ensure the orderly use of the spectrum the Authority is constantly engaged in monitoring its use as well as enforcing the powers of the Authority when there is non-compliance. The presenters would provide you with information on the type of equipment used in the monitoring process and give insight into the Authority's spectrum utilization plans.

I hope that all participants would benefit from all the information presented at this seminar. I want to also encourage you visit the Authority's website at [www.tatt.org.tt](http://www.tatt.org.tt) as often as possible to peruse information related to the licensing process.

I thank you.