

PRESS RELEASE

PR 09/15

Contact: Telecommunications Regulatory Commission

Telephone: 468-4165

E-mail: dstoutt@trc.vg

TRC regulates International Connectivity

19 November, 2015 – The Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (“TRC”) has published a Directive regulating the provision of international connectivity services in the BVI. The Directive regulates the provision of wholesale landing station services by LIME in the BVI in order to make the supply of international connectivity services more competitive.

Following an extended consultation period with licensed public suppliers, the Commission has arrived at an innovative form of price regulation which addresses the key bottleneck at the cable landing station. International connectivity services, which are delivered to the BVI through submarine cables, enable the BVI to be connected to the internet, to make and receive international calls and to send and receive all types of data, including financial transactions. In the Commission’s 2013 Report on the Consultation, the Commission concluded that there was a lack of real competition in the market for international connectivity services and that regulation was necessary. The Commission declared LIME dominant in the provision of international connectivity services and opened further consultation on the appropriate form of regulation. The Directive and all reports on the Consultation are available at www.trc.vg.

The final Regulation set out in the Directive regulates the price of colocation and remote hands services provided at LIME’s cable landing stations in the BVI. This Regulation will create the necessary conditions to empower public suppliers without ownership in submarine cables connected to the Virgin Islands to bargain more effectively for the supply of the relevant international connectivity services by being able to interconnect directly with a larger pool of suppliers who own capacity in the submarine cables connected to the VI. The purpose of this Regulation is to facilitate competition in the supply of international connectivity services so that licensed BVI public suppliers may offer a more competitive voice and data product. A key concern for the Commission is to enable lower broadband prices for consumers and higher bandwidth availability. The Commission will monitor the price of international connectivity resulting from this regulation to ensure that this regulation achieves its desired effect.

Mr Guy L. Malone Chief Executive Officer of the Commission said, “We are very pleased to finally introduce this Regulation which will create greater competition in the provision of international connectivity services to the BVI. We see this as a very important step ultimately leading to lower prices for broadband internet and international calls for all BVI consumers. We will be carefully monitoring the effect of this Regulation to ensure it achieves the price reductions we expect.”

###

Note to Editors:

The Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC) is a statutory body responsible for regulating the telecommunications sector of the Virgin Islands, protecting interests of users of telecommunications services, ensuring fair competition among operators of telecommunications networks and providers of telecommunications services, promoting the development of telecommunications throughout the Virgin Islands and advising the Minister of Communications and Works on telecommunications policies.