



**NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS
REGULATORY COMMISSION**
ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES

Ref No.: COR/ITU

May 27, 2025

Dr Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava
Director
Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT)
International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
Place des Nations
1211 Geneva 20 Switzerland

Dear Dr Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava

**RE: Consultation for the Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR-25) Best Practice Guidelines
on “What does it take for regulators to become digital ecosystem builders?”**

Reference is made to your email dated May 8, 2025, on the above subject.

Please find below the NTRC's responses to the following questions provided:

1. Fostering innovation in regulatory approaches:

a. *How can regulators cultivate an innovation-driven culture in regulatory work and decision-making?*

Some of the initiatives that we have used in our organization to create an innovation driven culture over the years includes the following:

- Require each member of staff to read a book and prepare a one-page report each quarter.
- Require each department as part of the process in preparing their proposed annual work plan to list three things we currently do that should be changed or stopped. They are also required to propose three new ideas of how we can be more productive or efficient. All proposals are discussed at our annual planning meeting where decisions are made on what proposals to implement.
- All staff partake in our annual and quarterly workplan meetings.
- We have a policy of facilitating staff attendance at events/training opportunities (online and in person) that exposes them to the latest technologies and products in



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the ICT sector so that we can be better prepared to handle their implications and opportunities.

- Our main regulatory decisions are made via our commissioners’ monthly meetings or tribunal hearings that can occur at any time. With an aim of reducing cost as well as ensuring meetings are not delayed or cancelled, we have moved to fully paperless meetings over a decade ago. All documents are curated via an online cloud app (Convene). Further participants both inside and outside of our organization can attend these meetings or tribunal hearings from any location using our preferred meeting app (Zoom).

b. What new skillsets and mindsets do they need today?

- Main new skill set needed is a good understanding of AI and how AI tools can be used to perform our regulatory tasks more efficiently or do new regulatory tasks that were not possible previously. To this end we have had all staff take various AI short courses (mainly on Coursera) in 2024. The strategy behind this was to provide them with the knowledge that they can then use to incorporate changes in their respective departments using AI in 2025. Currently we are trialing many different AI initiatives within our 2025 workplan. At the end of 2025, we will review their impact and which we can keep going forward.
- On the mindset side we must be open to the disruptions that are coming not just to us as a regulatory organization but to our stakeholders within the economy and our regulated space. At present we see two huge disrupters to our regulatory space. One is AI and the other are services that are being made available via Leo satellite constellations.

2. Adapting and enhancing regulatory capacity:

a. How should regulatory mandates, capacity and decision-making evolve to balance market innovation with digital inclusion and support the achievement of broader social and economic policy goals?

b. What institutional mechanisms can enhance regulatory responsiveness to emerging digital business models and evolving risks?

- We see two categories as the main drivers impacting (positive and negative) our citizens, these are access/connectivity and content. As we review the market over the last decade, we have seen a shift where these two categories are no longer distinct. For context our current telecom act (25 years old) makes it very clear that we have no regulatory mandate on content. However, as we have been seeing, content creation/curation globally is being dominated by a few players who are also pursuing entry into the access market. If we look ahead a bit and keeping the status quo as is, it

is not hard to envision a market very soon where a company will control the access device, access and delivery network and content on that network where the consumer can be easily marginalized from that ecosystem with little redress thereby having both social and economic impact on our citizens, our countries and regions. Here is where we need to evolve in our mandates, capacity and decision making. Considering the size of these global companies, Small Island Developing States (SIDS) such as us must have a different strategy than our larger neighbors. Such a strategy needs to provide us with the scale and flexibility needed but also keeping in mind our political status of independent states. Bureaucratic top-down structures will not suffice. It must be a model of collaboration and consensus building but in sync with the ability to implement decisions on the local level. We see this being possible with regional regulatory assemblies that also can make regulations that are enforceable at the local level. Substantive legislation will still be the ambit of the parliament, however the regulations under such acts that are usually made by the Minister can be delegated to the Regulators. Such a framework will allow for a faster response to the innovations that will continue to occur but at a rate faster than hitherto.

In summary regulators in SIDS need to have a mandate that covers access as well as content, be part of regional regulatory assemblies under a clear framework for developing consensus and then be able to have these decisions implemented easily within regulations that are either new or updated. Such new framework will provide a much-needed balance between the objectives of these few large global players and our citizens who will have limited choices of partaking in an AI driven digital economy with all its positives but also its negatives of cybercrime, cyber bullying, data privacy, job replacement etc.

3. Harnessing transformative technologies for regulatory excellence:

- a. *How can regulators better leverage Artificial Intelligence, big data, Internet of Things, blockchain and other digital technologies to enhance decision-making, compliance monitoring and regulatory agility?*

We will address this issue from a practical example. Under our Universal Service Fund (USF) we provide free Wi Fi service at all schools, police stations and hospitals /clinics in our country. This is done via thousands of Access Points (APs) and hundreds of broadband connections. While we have a dashboard that can alert us when an AP is offline, we have seen from experience that there are many cases where an AP is showing online, but no internet service is accessible by users or level of service could be poor. We are currently looking at developing a product using big data (usage history of APs along with some AI tools) that will be able to alert us when service at an AP is not its expected level. This can save us a lot of time in identifying faulty APs and provide a better level of service to users of the service.

Additionally, we have started using in 2025 a third-party AI tool (V0) to assist with faster development of our in-house software applications. The tool reduces the amount of time spend on coding. This is of great help noting our human resource limitations.

b. What technology tools and applications can regulators use to strengthen transparency, stakeholder engagement and public trust in regulatory processes?

We currently use online registries on our website to provide certain regulatory information and decisions that may be of interest to existing or potential licensees and other stakeholders. We use online tools such as survey monkey and tableau to conduct ICT surveys providing reduced cost as well as faster processing of the data collected. To provide information to our stakeholders efficiently whether in real-time or by email we use applications such as restream and Mailchimp.

4. Cross-border cooperation for building national, regional and global digital ecosystems:

a. How can regulators leverage regional and international cooperation to foster harmonized regulatory approaches, knowledge exchange and capacity-building?



This is an area where our sub region has recognized as a critical area for SIDS and which we have a formalized regional regulatory system since March 2000 via the ECTEL Treaty that covers 5 independent countries within the Caribbean region. The five countries have both harmonized primary and secondary telecommunications legislation. We are currently trying to build on this across the wider Caribbean space with assistance from the ITU and the CTU and are in the final stages of building consensus among ICT regulators within the Caribbean Community (Caricom) to create a wider regional regulatory body involving Caribbean regulators with the aim of having more harmonized regulatory frameworks as well as better use of our limited human resources in a more collaborative manner to address the common regulatory challenges facing our region.

Over the years our institution has leverage the opportunities offered by the USTTI to build much relevant and needed capacity. This was complemented with knowledge sharing opportunities with many regional organizations such as the CTU, Canto and OCCUR. In recent years we have also taken advantage of the very affordable but high value capacity building programs offered by the ITU academy.

Sincerely yours,


Apollo Knights
Secretary / Director



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