

Information Note to the Press [Press Release No. 69/2023]

For Immediate Release

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India

TRAI releases Consultation Paper on “Review of Regulatory Framework for Broadcasting and Cable services

New Delhi, 8th August 2023: Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) today issued Consultation Paper on “Review of Regulatory Framework for Broadcasting and Cable services”.

2. In consonance with the complete digitization of the cable TV sector, TRAI on 3rd March 2017 notified the Regulatory Framework for Broadcasting and Cable services. After passing legal scrutiny in Hon’ble Madras High Court and Hon’ble Supreme Court, the framework came into effect from 29th December 2018.

3. To address certain issues that arose after implementation of regulatory framework 2017, after a due consultation process with stakeholders, TRAI on 1st January 2020 notified the amended Framework 2020 consisting of Tariff Amendment Order 2020, Interconnection Amendment Regulations 2020 and QoS Amendment Regulations 2020.

4. Some stakeholders challenged provisions of Tariff Amendment Order 2020, Interconnection Amendment Regulations 2020 and QoS Amendment Regulations 2020 in various High Courts including in the Hon’ble High Court of Bombay and Kerala. Hon’ble High Courts upheld the validity of the amended Framework 2020 except for a couple of provisions.

5. The provisions related to Network Capacity Fee (NCF), multi-TV homes and long-term subscriptions of the amended framework 2020, were implemented.

6. However, after new tariffs were announced by the broadcasters, TRAI received representations from Distribution Platform Operators (DPOs), Associations of Local Cable Operators (LCOs) and Consumer Organizations. Stakeholders highlighted difficulties likely to be faced by them in implementing new rates in their IT systems and migrating the consumers in bulk to the new tariff regime through the informed exercise of options, impacting almost all bouquets, due to upward revision in the rates of pay channels and bouquets declared by broadcasters.

7. To deliberate on the various issues related to implementation of the amended framework 2020 and suggest a way forward, a committee consisting of members from Indian Broadcasting & Digital Foundation (IBDF), All India Digital Cable Federation (AIDCF) & DTH Association was constituted under the aegis of TRAI.

8. The Committee listed several issues related to the amended framework 2020 for consideration. The stakeholders, however, requested TRAI to immediately address critical issues which could create impediments for smooth implementation of the amended framework 2020.

9. In order to address the issues as identified by the stakeholders' committee; TRAI issued the consultation paper on "Issues related to New Regulatory Framework for Broadcasting and Cable services" on 7th May 2022 for seeking stakeholders' comments on issues which were pending for full implementation of the amended framework 2020.


10. After due consultation process, TRAI, on 22nd November 2022, notified the Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services (Eighth) (Addressable Systems) Tariff (Third Amendment) Order, 2022 and the Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services Interconnection (Addressable Systems) (Fourth Amendment) Regulations, 2022 which covered the following issues:

- a) Continuance of forbearance on MRP of TV channels
- b) ceiling of Rs. 19/- on MRP of a TV Channel price for inclusion in bouquet
- c) Discount of 45% on sum of the price of individual channels while forming Bouquet
- d) Additional Incentives of 15% by broadcaster to be permitted on Bouquets also.

11. The Stakeholders' Committee also listed several other issues for subsequent consideration by TRAI. In addition, the Authority held multiple meetings with representatives of broadcasters, MSOs, DTH operators and LCOs. Several issues were put forward during these meetings. TRAI has considered some relevant suggestions given by various stakeholders.

12. In order to address the remaining issues pertaining to Tariff, Interconnection and Quality of Service of Broadcasting and Cable services, as identified by the stakeholders' committee and suggested by other stakeholders, the Authority is issuing this consultation paper for seeking stakeholders' comments. Written comments on the consultation paper are invited from the stakeholders by 5th September 2023. Counter comments, if any, may be submitted by 19th September 2023. The comments and counter-comments may be sent, preferably in electronic form on the email ID advbcs-2@traigov.in and jtadvbcs-1@traigov.in

13. For any clarification/ information, Shri Anil Kumar Bhardwaj, Advisor (B&CS) may be contacted at Tel. No. +91-11-23237922.


(V. Raghunandan)
Secretary, TRAI