

**Consultation on the draft Standards of Quality of Service and
Consumer Protection (Digital Addressable Systems)
Regulations, 2016**

Stakeholders are requested to furnish their written comments on the draft Standards of Quality of Service and Consumer Protection (Digital Addressable Systems) Regulations, 2016, 25th October, 2016.

The comments may be sent, preferably in electronic form to, Prof. M. Kasim, Advisor (B&CS)-III, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, by Email: mkasim@traf.gov.in or ks.rejimon@nic.in.

For any clarification / information, Advisor (B&CS)-III may be contacted at Tel. No.: +91-11-23237922, Fax: +91-11-23220442.

**TO BE PUBLISHED IN THE GAZETTE OF INDIA
EXTRAORDINARY, PART III, SECTION 4**

**TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA
NOTIFICATION**

(OF 2016)

New Delhi, the

F. No.21-5/2016-B&CS. — In exercise of the powers conferred by section 36, read with sub clauses (i) and (v) of clause (b) of sub-section (1) of section 11 of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997 (24 of 1997), read with notification of the Government of India, in the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Department of Telecommunication) No.39, —

(a) issued, in exercise of the powers conferred upon the Central Government under clause (d) of sub-section (1) of section 11 and proviso to clause (k) of sub section (1) of section 2 of the said Act, and

(b) published under notification No. S.O.44 (E) and 45 (E) dated the 9th January, 2004 in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part III, Section 4, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India hereby makes the following regulations, namely:-

**THE STANDARDS OF QUALITY OF SERVICE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION
(DIGITAL ADDRESSABLE SYSTEMS) REGULATIONS, 2016.**

(OF 2016)

PART I
PRELIMINARY

1. Short title, extent and commencement. —

1. These regulations may be called the Standards of Quality of Service and Consumer Protection (Digital Addressable Systems) Regulations, 2016.
2. These regulations shall be applicable to television broadcasting service, through addressable systems, throughout the territory of India.
3. These regulations shall come into force after one hundred and eighty days from the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.

2. Definitions.- In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires:

- (a) “**Act**” means the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997 (24 of 1997);
- (b) “**active subscriber**” means a subscriber who has been authorized to receive signals of television channels as per the subscriber management system and whose set top box has not been denied to signals;
- (c) “**addressable system**” means an electronic device (which includes hardware and its associated software) or more than one electronic device put in an integrated system through which transmission of programmes including retransmission of any broadcast television signals can be done in encrypted form, which can be decoded by the device or devices at the premises of the subscriber within the limits of the authorization made, on the choice and request of such subscriber, by the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, to the subscriber;
- (d) “**a-la-carte channel**” with reference to offering of a TV channel means offering the channel individually on a standalone basis;
- (e) “**a-la-carte rate** ” with reference to offering of a TV channel individually on a standalone basis means the rate at which such channel is offered to the subscriber by the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator , as the case may be ;

- (f) **“Authority”** means the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India established under sub-section (1) of section 3 of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997 (24 of 1997);
- (g) **“broadcaster”** “broadcaster” means a person or a group of persons, or body corporate, or any organization or body who, after having obtained, in its name, downlinking permission for its channels, from the Central Government, provides programming services;”;
- (h) **“broadcasting services”** means the dissemination of any form of communication such as signs, signals, writing, pictures, images and sounds of all kinds by transmission through space or through cables intended to be received by the subscribers and all its grammatical variations and cognate expressions shall be construed accordingly;
- (i) **“bouquet”** or **“bouquet of channels”** means an assortment of distinct channels offered together as a group or as a bundle and all its grammatical variations and cognate expressions shall be construed accordingly;
- (j) **“bouquet rate”** or **“rate of bouquet”** means the rate at which a bouquet of channels is offered to the subscriber;
- (k) **“Cable service”** means the transmission of programmes including re-transmission of signals of television channels through cables;
- (l) **“Cable television network”** or **“Cable TV network”** means any system consisting of a set of closed transmission paths and associated signal generation, control and distribution equipment, designed to provide cable service for reception by multiple subscribers;
- (m) **“charges”**, with reference to subscribers, means the rates (excluding taxes) payable by subscribers to the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, for the digital addressable TV services received from such distributor of TV channels or local cable operator;
- (n) **“clause”** means the clause of the Standards of Quality of Service and Consumer Protection (Digital Addressable Systems) Regulations, 2016.
- (o) **“compliance officer”** means any person appointed by a distributor of TV channels for the purpose of reporting the information as required under the provisions of these regulations and whose responsibilities include ensuring that the distributor of TV channels does not contravene any provision of these regulations;

- (p) “**Consumer**” means a consumer of a distributor of TV channels or cable operator , as the case may be, to whom these regulations apply and includes its customer and subscriber;
- (q) “**Customer Care Number**” means a telephone number earmarked by the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator , as the case may be, in compliance of sub-regulation (4) of regulation 18 to access his customer care centre ;
- (r) “ **Customer Care Centre** ” means a department or a section or a facility established under sub-regulation (1) of regulation 18 by the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be for addressing service requests, answering queries, recording of complaints, and redressal of consumer grievances by telephone or electronic means or by any other means;
- (s) “**Customer care channel**” means a platform service generated and transmitted by distributor of TV channels to its subscribers for providing consumer education and service related information.
- (t) “**Customer Premises Equipment**” or “**CPE**” means the components and accessories installed at the premises of the subscriber to enable the reception of digital addressable television services and includes Set Top Box, the remote control for set top box and the dish antenna , low noise block converter or any other equipment, as the case may be, necessary to receive digital addressable TV service ;
- (u) “**direct to home operator**” or “**DTH operator**” means any person who has been granted licence by the Central Government to provide direct to home (DTH) broadcasting services;
- (v) “**direct to home service**” means distribution of multi channel TV programmes by using a satellite system by providing TV signals directly to subscriber’s premises without passing through an intermediary such as cable operator or any other distributor of TV channels;
- (w) “**distributor of TV channels**” means any DTH operator, multi-system operator, HITS operator and IPTV operator;
- (x) “**electronic programme guide**” or “**EPG**” means a program guide maintained by the distributors of television channels that lists television channels and programmes, and scheduling and programming information therein and includes any enhanced guide that

allows subscribers to navigate and select such available channels and programs;

(y) **“encrypted”** in respect of a signal of cable television network, means the changing of such signal in a systematic way so that the signal would be unintelligible without use of an addressable system and the expression **“unencrypted”** shall be construed accordingly;

(z) **“free to air channel”** means a channel for which no subscription fee is to be paid by the subscriber to the distributor of TV channels;

(aa) **“head end in the sky operator” or “HITS operator”** means any person permitted by the Central Government to provided head end in the sky (HITS)service;

(bb) **“head end in the sky service” or “HITS service”** means transmission of programmes including re-transmission of signals of television channels---

(i) to intermediaries like local cable operators or multi-system operators by using a satellite system and not directly to subscribers; and

(ii) to the subscribers by using satellite system and its own cable networks.

(cc) **“home channel”** means a platform service generated and transmitted by distributor of TV channels to its subscribers and is displaced by default on television screen whenever the set top box is put on.

(dd) **“internet protocol television operator” or “IPTV operator”** means a person permitted by the Central Government to provide IPTV service;

(ee) **“internet protocol television service” or “IPTV service”** means delivery of multi channel television programmes in addressable mode by using Internet Protocol over a closed network of one or more service providers;

(ff) **“local cable operator” or “LCO”** means a person registered under rule 5 of the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994;

(gg) **“maximum retail price” or “MRP”** with reference to a-la-carte channel or bouquet of channels means the maximum price, excluding taxes, payable by a subscriber for that a-la-carte channel or bouquet of channels, declared by the broadcaster;

(hh) **“multi-system operator” or “MSO”** means a cable operator who has been granted registration under rule 11C of the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994 and who receives a programming service from a broadcaster and re-transmits the same or

transmits his own programming service for simultaneous reception either by multiple subscribers directly or through one or more local cable operators;

(ii) “**Nodal Officer**” means the officer appointed or designated by a distributor of TV channels under sub-regulation (1) of regulation 25 ;

(jj) “**pay channel**” means a channel which is declared as such by the broadcaster and for which subscription fee is to be paid to the broadcaster by the distributor of television channels and for which due authorization needs to be taken from the broadcaster for its retransmission;

(kk) “**Platform services**” are programs generated and transmitted by distributors of TV channels exclusively to their own subscribers and does not include Doordarshan channels and registered TV channels. Platform services shall not include foreign TV channels that are not registered in India.”

(ll) “**premium channel**” is a pay channel which is declared as such by a broadcaster:

(mm) “**programme**” means any television broadcast and includes-

(i) exhibition of films, features, dramas, advertisements and serials,

(ii) any audio or visual or audio-visual live performance or presentation, and the expression “programming service” shall be construed accordingly;

(nn) “**regulations**” means the Standards of Quality of Service and Consumer Protection (Digital Addressable Systems) Regulations, 2016.

(oo) “**retail price**” with reference to a-la-carte channel or bouquet of channels means the price, excluding taxes, declared by the distributor of television channels payable by a subscriber for that a-la-carte channel or bouquet of channels;

(pp) “**Schedule**” means the Schedule annexed to these regulations;

(qq) “**set top box or “ STB**” means a device, which is connected to or is part of a television and, which enables a subscriber to view TV broadcasting services ;

(rr) “**subscriber**” means a person who is registered on the subscriber management system of the distributor of TV channels for receiving TV broadcasting services provided by a distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, at a place indicated by him without further transmitting it to any other person.

(ss) “**subscriber management system**” means a system or device which stores the subscriber records and details with respect to name, address and other information

regarding the hardware being utilized by the subscriber, channels or bouquets of channels subscribed to by the subscriber, price of such channels or bouquets of channels as defined in the system, the activation or deactivation dates and time for any channel or bouquets of channels, a log of all actions performed on a subscriber's record, invoices raised on each subscriber and the amounts paid or discount allowed to the subscriber for each billing period;

(tt) “**television channel**” means a channel, which has been granted permission by the Government of India under the policy guidelines issued or amended by it from time to time and reference to the term ‘**channel**’ shall be construed as a reference to “television channel;

(uu) all other words and expressions used in these regulations but not defined, and defined in the Act and rules and regulations made there under or the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 (7 of 1995) and the rules and regulations made there under, shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in those Acts or the rules or regulations, as the case may be.

CHAPTER II

SUBSCRIPTION TO TV BROADCASTING SERVICES

3. Provision of TV broadcasting services .— (1) Every distributor of TV channels shall, before providing TV broadcasting services, set up and operationalise subscriber management system for ensuring efficient and error-free services to the subscribers by recording and providing individualized preferences for channels, billing or refunds and such subscriber management system shall comply with the provisions as mentioned in the Regulations and the tariff orders notified by the Authority.

(2) Every distributor of TV channels shall adopt consumer friendly methods employing multiple means such as telephonic call to Customer Care Centre, short messaging services (SMS), e-mail, mobile apps etc. to request for subscription of TV broadcasting services.

(3) Every distributor of TV channels shall provide TV broadcasting services to every person making a request for such services subject to technical and operational feasibility.

(4) Every distributor of TV channels shall offer all a-la-carte channel(s) and bouquet(s) on monthly subscription basis to consumers.

Provided that it shall be open to distributor of TV channels to offer such a-la-carte channels or bouquet(s) for other subscription period(s) as may be considered appropriate.

(5) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, offering TV broadcasting services shall devise a Consumer Application Form for initial subscription for such services:

Provided that it shall be open to the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, to use electronic format for the Consumer Application Form.

(6) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall ensure that the Consumer Application Form referred to in sub-regulation (4) contain the information in accordance with the Schedule I to these regulations.

(7) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, at the time of providing connection for TV broadcasting service to a consumer, shall notify and declare the details of the Customer Premises Equipment schemes, including the price, security deposit, rental charges guarantee /warranty, maintenance provisions, ownership of CPE, as may be applicable.

4. Procedure for connection.— (1) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall ensure that the details of the offer(s) such as the retail price of a-la-carte channel(s) or bouquet(s), monthly rental amount, and customer premises equipment schemes are informed to consumers desirous of availing TV broadcasting services.

(2) The distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall provide TV broadcasting services to the consumer only after obtaining completed Consumer Application Form and provide a copy of the said form to the consumer.

(3) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall enter details of the Consumer Application Form in the subscriber management system.

(4) Subscriber management system shall assign a unique identification number to every subscriber which shall be communicated to the subscriber.

(5) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall provide the TV broadcasting services to the consumer within a period of seven days from the date of receipt of request from the applicant subject to technical and operational feasibility.

(6) It shall be open to a distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, to charge an amount not exceeding rupees three hundred and fifty as one time installation charge.

(7) It shall be open to a distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, to charge an amount not exceeding rupees one hundred as one time initial activation charge.

CHAPTER III

MAINTENANCE OF SERVICE AFTER INITIAL SUBSCRIPTION

5. Changes in subscription of TV broadcasting services. — (1) No distributor of TV channels and local cable operator, without obtaining verifiable request of the subscriber, make any change in the services subscribed by a subscriber.

(2) The records related to the request referred to in sub-regulation (1) shall be retained by the distributor of TV channels for a period of minimum six months from the date of receipt of such request from the subscriber and shall be furnished to the Authority as and when called for.

6. Subscription of additional channel(s) / bouquet(s).— (1) Every distributor of TV channels upon request from a subscriber, shall activate additional a-la-carte channel(s) or bouquet(s) available on its platform within a period of seventy two hours.

7. Removal of channel(s) / bouquet(s) from subscription.— (1) Every distributor of TV channels, upon request from a subscriber, shall deactivate the requested a-la-carte channel(s) and bouquet(s) from the subscription of such subscriber within a period of seventy two hours.

8. Non availability of channels on distributor of TV channels platform.— (1) A distributor of TV channels shall not charge the subscriber for a-la-carte channel(s) or bouquet(s) offered by a broadcaster which become unavailable on its platform.

(2) No distributor of TV channels, on its own, shall substitute the dropped channel(s) from its platform with alternative channel(s) in lieu of the channel dropped.

(3) A distributor of TV channels shall reduce the subscription charges for a bouquet offered by the distributor of TV channels if channel(s) forming part of the bouquet becomes unavailable on its platform and the reduction in subscription charges payable by the subscriber shall be calculated proportionately taking into account the discount offered by the distributor of TV channels on the retail price of bouquet.

Explanation: For the removal of any doubt, it is clarified that any change of composition of the bouquet offered by a distributor of TV channels, when channel(s) forming part of such bouquet are available on its platform, shall be construed as a new bouquet.

(4) No distributor of TV channels shall discontinue distribution of a-la-carte channel(s) and bouquet(s) without giving prior notice of fifteen days to its subscribers and such notice shall be given wide publicity through multiple means such as scrolls on TV screen, e-mail, short messaging service (SMS), Home channel and customer care channels.

Provided that nothing contained in this sub-regulation shall apply in case the discontinuance in the provision of services has been caused by natural calamities.

9. Temporary suspension of TV broadcasting services.— (1) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall, upon request from the subscriber, temporarily suspend the TV broadcasting services:

Provided that such request shall be made by the subscriber at least fifteen days prior to the date of such suspension.

Provided further that such temporary suspension shall be for a minimum period of one month and multiple thereof, but limited to maximum period of three months in a calendar year.

Provided also that the services shall be restored within seventy two hours after expiry of such temporary suspension period subject to validity of subscription and it shall be open

to the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, to charge an amount not exceeding rupees twenty five as restoration fee from the subscriber for resumption of services.

(2) The distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall not charge any amount, except the rental charges for CPE if applicable, from the subscribers during the period of temporary suspension.

(3) In case TV broadcasting services of a subscriber are not restored after temporary suspension, not exceeding three months, the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall deactivate such subscriber from subscriber management system and such subscriber shall cease to be an active subscriber of the distributor of TV channels.

Provided that it shall be open to the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, upon request of the subscriber, to reactivate such subscriber by charging an amount not exceeding rupees one hundred as reactivation fee.

10. Disruption of TV broadcasting services .— (1) In case signals of TV broadcasting services to a subscriber are continuously disrupted for a period exceeding 72 hours, the distributor of TV channels shall not charge such subscriber for the entire period of such disruption.

Provided further that nothing contained in this sub-regulation shall apply in case the disruption is caused due to natural calamities.

11. Shifting of connection .— (1) In case a subscriber requests for shifting of his connection from one location to another, the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall shift the connection within a period of seven days from the date of receipt of such request subject to technical and operational feasibility.

(2) It shall be open to the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be,

to charge shifting and re-installation fee an amount, not exceeding, twice the sum of installation fee and activation fee as referred to in sub-regulation (6) and sub-regulation(7) of regulation 3.

12. Disconnection of TV broadcasting services .— (1) The distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, upon request from the subscriber, shall disconnect TV broadcasting services to such subscriber within seventy two hours from the date of receipt of such request and refund the deposits, if any, due to the subscriber.

13. Price protection to subscribers. — (1) In case the charges for subscription of TV broadcasting services are paid in advance for a specific period by a subscriber, the distributor of TV channels shall continue to provide such services for such period to such subscriber without any increase in the prices.

CHAPTER IV

CUSTOMER CARE AND COMPLAINT REDRESSAL

14. Customer Care Centre. — (1) Every distributor of TV channels shall establish a Customer Care Centre before providing TV broadcasting services to its subscribers for addressing their service requests and redressal of complaints and such centre:

- (a) shall have a toll free “Customer Care Number” having sufficient number of lines or connections ;
- (b) shall be accessible, at least, between 08:00 hrs and 22:00 hrs on all days of the week;
- (c) shall provide the services in the local language of the service area in addition to Hindi and English ;
- (d) shall have an Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) and
- (e) shall have a web based complaint management system

Provided that Customer Care Centre set up under sub-regulation(1) of regulation 3 of Consumers Complaint Redressal (Digital Addressable Cable TV Systems) Regulations,2012 shall continue for the purpose of this sub-regulation and deemed to have been set up under these regulations.

(2) It shall be open to the distributor of TV channels to engage any agency for establishing and operating “Customer Care Centre” as referred to in sub-regulation(1).

Provided that the responsibility for compliance of the provision of these regulations shall rest with the distributor of TV channels

(3) Every distributor of TV channels shall ensure that an Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) is operated in the following manner,—

(a) the first level of the Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) provides for language selection;

(b) the second level of the Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) provides for options relating to the broad categories of complaints and service requests;

(c) the third level of the Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) provides for a sub-menu under service and complaint requests, separately;

Provided that the sub-menu in the third level shall also contain an option enabling the customer to speak to a customer care agent.

(4) Response time for Customer Care Centre:

(i) Response time for calls made on Toll Free “Consumer Care Number” by the subscriber, shall be ;

(a) Eighty percent of calls to be answered (voice to voice) by a person (other than by electronic means) within sixty seconds;

(b) Ninety per cent of calls to be answered (voice to voice) by a person (other than by electronic means) within ninety seconds

(ii) Response time to the subscriber for calls made on “Customer Care Number” by the subscriber, answered electronically;

(a) Eighty percent of calls to be answered within twenty seconds electronically;

(b) Ninety percent of calls to be answered within forty seconds electronically;

Explanation. — For the purpose of calculating percentage of calls, referred to sub-regulation (1) and (2), the total number of calls made during a month shall be taken into account.

(5) The distributor of TV channels shall publicize the toll free number and the address of the web based complaint management system to its subscribers through multiple means of

communication, such as TV scrolls, home channel, customer care channel, short messaging services (SMS), and through the bills and receipts issued by the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be.

15. Complaints handling by Customer Care Centre .— (1) Every Customer Care Centre shall, immediately on receipt of a complaint from a subscriber, register such complaint and allot a unique number to be called the docket number;

Provided that the Authority may, if deemed necessary, specify a format for docket number.

(2) Every customer care centre shall,—

(i) at the time of registering of the complaint, communicate to the subscriber the docket number, date and time of registration of the complaint and the time within which the complaint is likely to be resolved; and

(ii) on resolution of the complaint , communicate to the subscriber, the details of the action taken on the complaint; and also the name and contact number of the Nodal officer for further redressal of complaint, if not satisfied.

16. Time limit for redressal of complaints .— (1) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall adhere to the following time limits for redressal of complaints of the subscribers :-

(a) all complaints shall be responded to within eight hours of receipt of the complaint:

Provided that complaints received during the night shall be responded by the next working day:

(b) at least ninety percent of all ‘no signal’ complaints received shall be redressed and signal restored within twenty four hours of receipt of such complaint;

(c) all complaints relating to billing shall be redressed within seven days of receipt of the

complaint from the subscriber and refunds, if any, shall be made to such subscriber within thirty days of receipt of the complaint.

(d) at least ninety percent of all other complaints not covered under clause (b) and clause(c) shall be redressed within forty eight hours of receipt of such complaints.

(e) no complaint, except billing related complaints referred to in clause (c),shall remain unresolved beyond seventy two hours.

17. Redressal of complaints by Nodal Officers .— (1) Every distributor of TV channels shall appoint one or more Nodal Officers in every State in which it is providing TV broadcasting services, as may be considered necessary, for the redressal of subscriber complaints.

(2) Every distributor of TV channels shall give wide publicity about details of the Nodal Officers such as name, address, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, facsimile numbers and other means of contacting them through multiple means of communication, such as website, scrolls, home channel, customer care channel, short messaging services (SMS)..

(3) Any change in the details of the Nodal Officers as referred in sub-regulation(2) shall also be intimated to the subscribers in the same manner as specified under sub-regulation(2).

(4) In case a subscriber is not satisfied with the redressal of complaint by the Customer Care Centre, such subscriber may approach the Nodal Officer of the distributor of TV channels for redressal of his complaint:

(5) Every Nodal Officer shall,---

(a) register every complaint lodged by the subscribers;

(b) issue an acknowledgement to the subscriber within two days from date of the receipt of the complaint indicating therein the unique complaint number;

(c) redress such complaints of subscribers within ten days from the date of receipt of the complaint and intimate the decision taken thereon in respect of such complaint to

the subscriber.

18. Complaints referred to the distributor of TV channels by the Authority .— (1) The Authority may, without prejudice to the provisions contained in the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997 (24 of 1997), forward the complaints, received from the subscribers, to the concerned distributor of TV channels for the purpose of redressal,---

- (a) complaints alleging violation of the Act or the regulations made or directions issued or orders made by it under the Act;
- (b) complaints of the subscribers which are generic in nature;
- (c) complaints alleging that the practices adopted by the distributor of TV channels which adversely affects the interest of the subscribers;
- (d) a complaint of such nature that, in the opinion of the Authority, is required to be resolved expeditiously by the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be.

(2) Every distributor of TV channels shall investigate and find out the root cause of all complaints referred by the Authority under clause (a), clause (b) and clause(c) of sub-regulation (1) and redress such complaints, within thirty days from the date of reference of the complaint and result of such complaints shall be informed to the subscriber as well as the Authority within one week from redressal of complaint.

(3) Every distributor of TV channels shall resolve and inform every complaint referred to under clause (d) of sub-regulation (1) to the Authority within fifteen days of the resolution of the complaint.

(4) In case on investigation, the root cause of the complaints referred to under sub-regulation (2) reveal general deficiency or systemic inadequacy in practice or operation adopted by or on the part of the distributor of TV channel, the distributor of TV channels shall take remedial measures in respect of all similarly placed subscribers and intimate the same to the Authority within one month of reference of the complaint.

19. Maintenance of records of complaints.— (1) Every distributor of TV channels shall maintain records of all complaints filed by the subscriber and such records shall include docket number, name and address of complainant, date and time of filing complaint, type of complaint and redressal date and time and verifiable confirmation from the subscriber that the complaint has been redressed.

(2) The records referred to in sub-regulation (1) shall be kept for a minimum period of six months from the date of resolution of a complaint and the distributor of TV channels shall produce the records whenever called upon by the Authority.

CHAPTER V

BILLING AND PAYMENT

20. Billing .— (1) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall offer TV broadcasting services to the subscribers either pre-paid or post-paid or both pre-paid and post-paid payment options.

Explanation: The pre-paid payment option offered to the subscriber shall be an electronic pre-paid mechanism wherein the amount paid by the subscriber is adjusted automatically for the services availed by him.

(2) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, offering services both on pre-paid and post-paid basis, shall allow the subscriber to change payment option from pre paid to post paid and post paid to pre paid, on request made by the subscriber and the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall change the payment option from the next billing cycle.

Provided that no charges shall be payable by subscriber for such change in payment option.

21. Generation of bill (1) Every distributor of TV channels shall be responsible for generation of bills for the subscribers using subscriber management system on the basis of subscription of TV broadcasting service by each subscriber.

Explanation: It shall be open to the distributor of TV channels to generate bills for the subscribers either in its name or in the name of local cable operator based on the interconnection agreement.

22. Billing cycle .— (1) The monthly billing cycle for pre paid payment option shall be thirty days from the date of activation of services and for post paid payment option the billing cycle shall be a calendar month.

23. Details of information in the bill .— (1) The bill shall contain the itemized details of;

- (a) the monthly rental amount for TV broadcasting services ;
- (b) rental changes for CPE, if any
- (c) charges for pay channel(s), and bouquet(s) of pay channels subscribed by subscriber during the period of billing cycle
- (d) Any other charges
- (e) taxes in conformity with applicable laws and
- (f) registration number issued by the taxation authorities.

24. Delivery of Post-paid bills and payment .— (1) Every distributor of TV channels shall, either directly or through its linked local cable operator, as the case may be, give to every post-paid subscriber the bill for charges due and payable by such subscriber for each billing cycle.

Provided that a distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall deliver such bill to each subscriber by hand or post or email, as may be opted by the subscriber;

(2) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall provide at least fifteen days time, from the date of issue of the bill, to every post paid subscriber, for making payment of the bill:

Provided that every distributor of TV channels shall provide online payment option in the subscriber management system for payment of bill by the subscriber.

Provided further that in case a subscriber fails to make payment of the bill by the due date, it shall be open to the distributor of TV channels or the local cable operator, as the case may be, to charge a simple interest at a rate of 2% higher than the base rate notified by State Bank of India from time to time on the amount payable by the subscriber for the period of such delay.

(3) It shall be open to the distributor of TV channels or the local cable operator, as the case may be, to temporarily suspend the services of a subscriber in case of default in payment after the expiry of due date for payment and charge a restoration fee not exceeding rupees twenty five in addition to the outstanding payment due and restore the services to such subscriber within seventy two hours.

Provided that in case such temporary suspension continues for more than a period of three months, the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall, immediately after three months, deactivate such subscriber from the subscriber management system, and it shall be open to the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, to charge an activation fee not exceeding rupees one hundred in addition to the outstanding payment due, towards reactivation of services to such subscriber and restore the services within seventy two hours.

(4) Every distributor of TV channels shall, either directly or through its linked local cable operator, as the case may be, issue a receipt to every post-paid subscriber for every payment made by a subscriber and shall enter the details of the receipt including the date and serial number of the receipt, amount paid by the subscriber in the subscriber management system of the distributor of TV channels against the name of the subscriber, within seven days of the payment made by a subscriber.

Provided that a distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall deliver such receipt to each subscriber by hand or post or email, as may be opted by the subscriber;

Provided further that every distributor of TV channels or local cable operators, as the case may be, shall sent an electronic acknowledgement to the subscriber for every payment made by such subscriber, on his registered mobile number or the e-mail address.

Explanation: The representative of distributor of TV channels or local cable operators , as the case may be, who collects the payment from the subscriber shall forward the

details of the subscriber and the payment made, in front of subscriber itself, through his mobile phone to the subscriber management system. The subscriber management system on receipt of this information, shall send an automatic acknowledgement of the payment received, to the subscriber either on his registered mobile number or his email address

(5) If any distributor of TV channels contravenes the provisions of sub-regulation (1) or sub-regulation (4), it shall, without prejudice to the terms and conditions of its registration or the provisions of the Act or rules or regulations or orders made, or, directions issued there under, be liable to pay an amount, by way of financial disincentive, not exceeding rupees twenty per subscriber for all such subscribers in respect of whom such contravention is observed, as the Authority may by order direct.

(6) No order for payment of an amount by way of financial disincentive under sub-regulation (5) shall be made by the Authority unless the distributor of TV channels has been given a reasonable opportunity of representing against the contravention of the regulation observed by the Authority.

(7) The amount payable by way of financial disincentive under these regulations shall be remitted to such head of account as may be specified by order by the Authority

25. Pre-paid billing and payment .— (1) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall provide itemized usage details and amount debited to the pre-paid subscriber account at the end of every billing cycle without any extra charges .

CHAPTER VI

CUSTOMER PREMISES EQUIPMENT

26. Supply and installation of the Customer Premises Equipment .— (1) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall provide to subscriber the conforming to relevant Indian Standards set by the Bureau of Indian Standards.

(2) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall offer Customer Premises Equipment to every consumer under the following schemes:

- (i) outright purchase scheme
- (ii) rental scheme

(3) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall specify the retail price of customer premises equipment under outright purchase scheme, and the terms and conditions for guarantee/warranty, and such guarantee/warranty shall not be for a period of less than one year and the subscriber shall not be required to pay any charge towards repair and maintenance of the Customer Premises Equipment during such period of guarantee/ warranty.

Provided that nothing contained in this sub-regulation shall apply if the Customer Premises Equipment has been tampered with or physically damaged by the subscriber

Provided further that distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall also offer annual maintenance scheme for the Customer Premises Equipment provided under such scheme after the expiry of guarantee/warranty period.

Provided also that the ownership of the Customer Premises Equipment in such scheme shall be in the name of the subscriber.

(4) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall specify the monthly rental amount of Customer Premises Equipment under rental scheme, and other terms and conditions, if any.

Provided that it shall be open to a distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, to specify refundable security deposit as may be considered appropriate in such scheme.

Provided also that ownership of the Customer Premises Equipment offered by distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, under such schemes shall remain with distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be.

(5) It shall be open to a distributor of TV channels to offer Customer Premises Equipment, in addition to outright purchase scheme and rental scheme, under any other scheme including bundled scheme and shall specify separately the charges of the Customer Premises Equipment, monthly rental amount for the distribution network, charges for pay channel(s) or bouquet(s) of pay channels bundled with Customer Premises Equipment:

Provided that ownership of the Customer Premises Equipment offered by distributor of TV channels under such schemes shall remain with distributor of TV channels.

(6) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall be responsible for maintenance of Customer Premises Equipment offered under sub regulation (4) and sub regulation (5) for a minimum period of five years and the subscriber shall not be required to pay any charge towards repair and maintenance of the Customer Premises Equipment during such period.

Provided that nothing contained in this sub-regulation shall apply if the Customer Premises Equipment has been tampered with or physically damaged by the subscriber.

(7) Every distributor of TV channels providing direct to home services may charge an amount not exceeding rupees two hundred and fifty as visiting charge per registered complaint requiring visit of a person to subscriber's premises for repair and maintenance:

Provided that no visiting charges will be levied to the subscribers for any complaint relating to set top box.

Provided further that such visiting charge shall not be debited from the pre-paid subscription account of the subscriber.

Provided also that the receipt for payment shall be issued to the subscriber by the DTH operator for such charges.

(8) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall repair set top box within twenty four hours, from the time of registering the complaint relating to malfunctioning of set top box, and charges for such repair shall be regulated under the regulation.

Provided that it shall be open to a distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, to provide maintenance spare set top box in case the malfunctioning set top box cannot be repaired within twenty four hours .

Provided further that nothing contained in this sub-regulation shall apply if the set top box has been tampered with or physically damaged by the subscriber

(9) Every distributor of TV channels, or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall inform the consumers the details of customer premises equipment schemes.

(10) Every distributor of TV channels shall publish on its website the details of all schemes for Customer Premises Equipment along with terms and conditions.

CHAPTER VII

PUBLICITY OF INFORMATION AND CONSUMER AWARENESS

27. Establishment of website. — (1) Every distributor of TV channels shall establish a website.

Provided that it shall be open to a distributor of TV channels to engage any agency for establishing and operating such website.

Provided further that the responsibility for compliance of the provision of the regulations and the tariff orders notified by the Authority shall rest with the distributor of TV channels.

(2) Every distributor of TV channels shall provide a hyperlink for Consumer Corner on the home page of the website which shall be clearly visible and noticeable to visitors without scrolling the page .

(3) The Consumer Corner hyperlink referred to in sub-regulation (2), shall point to another web page where the information in accordance with Schedule II of these regulations shall be available.

(4) The web page referred in sub regulation (3), shall also have provision for login to the subscribers to access information specific to such subscriber in accordance with Schedule III to these regulations.

Provided that a distributor of TV channels shall make provisions for issue of the login name and the password to each subscriber.

28. Consumer care channel .— (1) Every distributor of TV channels, who is offering any kind of platform services , shall designate a channel for the purpose of consumer awareness and the same shall be referred as consumer care channel.

(2) Every distributor of TV channels shall communicate the Linear Channel Number of the consumer care channel to subscribers through multiple means of communication such as scrolls , SMS, and e-mail .

(3) Every distributor of TV channels shall disseminate the information, on regular intervals, in accordance with Schedule II and Schedule III of these regulations to subscribers through consumer care channel in multiple formats such as video, audio, scroll and multimedia graphics.

29. Public awareness campaign .— (1) Every distributor of TV channels and local cable operator shall conduct public awareness campaign about the salient features of the provisions contained in these regulations, and the measures implemented by the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator for consumer education with regard to the services made available to consumers in compliance of these regulations and submit such details to the Authority in such format and periodicity as may be specified by it.

30. Publicly of information by broadcasters .— (1) Every broadcaster shall publicise the MRP of its pay channel(s) and bouquet(s) through multiple means of communication such as website , scrolls in the concerned channels, periodically for wide publicity amongst the consumers and submit details of such measures to the Authority .

CHAPTER VIII

MISCELLANEOUS

31. Technical standards .— (1) Every broadcaster and distributor of TV channels shall maintain technical standards of the signals as per the relevant standards laid down by Digital Video Broadcasting (DVB) / European Telecommunication Standards Institute (ETSI) /International Electrotechnical Commission(IEC)/Indian Standard, if any .

(2) Digital set top box for direct to home services shall comply with Bureau of Indian Standard specification IS-15377 of 2003 or IS-15954 of 2012, as amended from time to time, or any other standard approved by any agency recognised by Central Government.

(3) Set Top Box for cable services shall comply to Bureau of Indian Standard, IS-15245 of 2002 or IS-16128 of 2013, as amended from time to time, or any other standard approved by any agency recognised by the Central Government.

(4) Every distributor of TV channels, while encoding TV channels for re-transmission on its network, shall not discriminate in the compression and other encoding parameters for channels placed in a genre to ensure similar reception quality to subscribers.

(5) The Authority may appoint any agency to conduct technical audit of the systems of broadcasters and distributors of TV channels to assess the quality of signals at the headend of the distributor of TV channels and the quality of signals provided by the distributor of TV channels to local cable operators.

32. Manual of Practice .—(1) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall publish a Manual of Practice, which shall contain information in accordance with Schedule IV to these regulations.

(2) A copy of the Manual of Practice shall be provided by distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, to each subscriber at the time of providing connection to the subscriber.

(3) The distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall also publish Manual of Practice on website.

(4) The distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall provide the Manual of Practice in Hindi or in English or in regional languages as required by the subscribers.

33. Display of channels in EPG. — (1) Every distributor of TV channels shall list all channels available on its platform in the electronic programme guide in the respective genres along with applicable a-la-carte prices.

Provided that in case of pay channels distributor of TV channels shall indicate MRP declared by the broadcaster in the electronic programme Guide and for the free to air channels such prices shall be indicated as zero.

34. Reporting to the Authority .— (1) Every distributor of TV channels shall submit report for ensuring compliance of quality of service specified in these regulations in such format and in such periodicity as may be directed by the Authority from time to time.

35. Appointment of compliance officer and his obligations.—(1) Every distributor of TV channels shall, within thirty days from the date of commencement of these regulations, appoint a compliance officer:

Provided that nothing contained in this sub-regulation shall apply to a distributor of television channels having average subscribers base, over the immediately preceding calendar quarter, less than two lakh or such other number of subscribers which may be prescribed by the Authority through direction from time to time:

(2) Every distributor of TV channels which is a company shall, within ten days from the date of appointment of the compliance officer under sub-regulation (1), furnish to the Authority the name, full address, contact number and e-mail address of the compliance officer along with authenticated copy of the board's resolution authorizing the appointment of such compliance officer.

***Explanation:** For the purpose of this regulation, the definition of “company” shall be the same as assigned to it in the Companies Act, 2013(18 of 2013).*

(3) Every distributor of TV channels which is not a company shall, within ten days from the date of appointment of the compliance officer under sub-regulation (1), furnish to the Authority the name, full address, contact number and e-mail address of the compliance officer along with authenticated copy of the authorization letter authorizing the appointment of such compliance officer.

(4) In the event of any change in the name of the compliance officer so appointed under sub-regulation (1), the same shall be reported to the Authority by the every distributor of TV channels within ten days from the date of occurrence of such change along with authenticated copy of board’s resolution or authorization letter, as the case may be.

(5) In the event of any change in the address or contact number or email address of the compliance officer, the same shall be reported to the Authority by the every distributor of TV channels within ten days from the date of occurrence of such change.

(6) The compliance officer shall be responsible for-

- (a) ensuring conformity with the provisions of these regulations applicable to the distributor of TV channels
- (b) reporting to the Authority, with respect to compliance with these regulations and other directions of the Authority issued under these regulations.
- (c) ensuring that proper procedures have been established and followed by the every distributor of TV channels that would result in the correctness, authenticity and completeness of the information, statements and reports filed by the every distributor of TV channels under these regulations.

36. Identification of personnel .— (1) Every distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall ensure that its representatives carry proper identification along with a photograph duly certified by such distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, and exhibit the same as proof of identity to the subscriber.

37. Intervention by Authority.— (1) The Authority may, by order or direction, from time to time, intervene, for the purpose of protecting the interest of the subscribers or monitoring the performance of quality of service standards of the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be, for ensuring compliance of the provisions of these regulations.

38. Application of other laws not barred .— (1) The provisions of these regulations shall be in addition to, and not in derogation of, any other law for the time being in force.

39. Repeal and Saving.—(1) The Direct to Home Broadcasting Services (Standards of Quality of Service and Redressal of Grievances) Regulations, 2007, Standards of Quality of Service (Digital Addressable Cable TV Systems) Regulations, 2012, and Consumers Complaint Redressal (Digital Addressable Cable TV Systems) Regulations,2012, along with all their amendments and directions issued there under are hereby repealed.

Provided that such repeal shall not affect-

(a) the previous operation of the repealed regulation(s) or anything done or any action taken under the repealed regulation(s); or

(b) any right, privilege, obligation or liability acquired, accrued or incurred under the regulation(s) so repealed; or

(c) any penalty, forfeiture or punishment incurred in respect of any offence committed against the regulation(s) so repealed; or,

(d) any investigation, legal proceeding or remedy in respect of any such right, privilege , obligation, liability, penalty, forfeiture or punishment as aforesaid and any such investigation, legal proceeding or remedy may be instituted, continued or enforced, and any such penalty, forfeiture and punishment may be imposed, as if the aforesaid regulations had not been repealed.

(Sudhir Gupta)

Secretary

Note.-----The Explanatory Memorandum explains the objects and reasons of the Standards of Quality of Service and Consumer Protection (Digital Addressable Systems) Regulations, 2016 of 2016).

SCHEDULE – I

(Reference sub-regulation (5) of regulation 3)

Consumer Application Form

The application form shall be printed in Hindi, English and the regional language of the area of operation of the distributor of TV channels or local cable operator, as the case may be , and shall contain the following information.

Part A : Consumer information

1. Name
2. Address
3. Contact Numbers (Mobile/telephone)
4. E-mail
5. Aadhaar Number (Optional)

Part B : Service Subscription related information

6. Details of service subscribed (name of a-la- carte pay channel(s)/bouquet(s) of pay channels)
7. Mode of payment (pre-paid or post paid)
8. Subscription amount to be paid (monthly/half yearly/yearly/etc.)

Part C: CPE related information

9. Type of set top box (SD/HD/MPEG2/MPEG4) and part number
10. VC number
11. Scheme opted (Outright purchase/ rental/other schemes)
12. Guarantee/Warranty/AMC details

Part D: Customer care centre related information

13. Toll free customer care centre number
14. Any other customer care centre number(s)
15. Customer care centre E-mail

Part E: distributor of TV channel/Local Cable Operator related information

16. Nature of Service provider (distributor of TV channels/ LCO)
17. Name of the distributor of TV channels/ LCO
18. Address
19. Contact numbers
20. Website

Part F: Details of payment made

21. Amount paid :
22. Break up of payment made (set to box price/ STB security deposit/ activation charges/ installation charge etc)

Part D, Part E and Part F may be provided in the form of detachable acknowledgement receipt

SCHEDULE – II

(Reference sub-regulation (2) of regulation 27)

CONSUMER CORNER

The consumer Corner web page shall contain the following information including but not limited to:

- 1 Toll Free Number of Customer Care Centre and other contact details
- 2 List of all channels available on distributor of TV channels platform : name of a-la- carte pay channel(s)/bouquet(s) of pay channels and their a-la-carte prices
- 3 List of pay channel bouquet(s) : Name, channel composition, price
- 4 Information on subscription process on a-la-carte basis
- 5 CPE Schemes : Scheme type, CPE price, and other terms and conditions
 - a) Outright purchase scheme
 - Guarantee/ Warranty terms
 - Maintenance provisions of CPE, AMC etc.
 - b) Rental scheme
 - Rental amount
 - c) Other Schemes
 - Guarantee/ Warranty terms
 - Maintenance provisions of CPE, AMC etc.
- 6 Consumer Agreement Form (CAF)
- 7 Manual of Practice
- 8 Procedure for obtaining a new service connection
- 9 Provisions for temporary discontinuation/shifting of service connection
- 10 Customer Care Centre contact details
- 11 Complaint redressal process:
 - a) Through customer care centre
 - b) Through Web based management System

c) Through Nodal Officer

12 Regulatory provisions for consumer protection

13 Subscriber obligations and Service providers obligations

14 Details of service area

SCHEDULE – III
(Reference sub-regulation (4) of regulation 27)

SUBSCRIBER CORNER

The subscriber Corner shall contain the following features and information not limited to:

- 1 Toll Free Number of Customer Care Centre and other contact details
- 2 Login access to the subscriber
- 3 Details of subscribed services, validity, etc.
- 4 Details of selected CPE scheme
- 5 Details of AMC scheme selected, if any
- 6 Billing details / Account balance/ Dues
- 7 Usage details for last six months/billing cycle/ provision for printing
- 8 Payment guidelines/ Payment details for last six months
- 9 Complaint redressal process
- 10 Completed CAF access/reprint
- 11 Subscriber info: Name, Address, registered phone, email, Aadhar no. etc.
- 12 Any other relevant information

SCHEDULE – IV

(Reference sub-regulation (1) of regulation 32)

MANUAL OF PRACTICE

Manual of Practice should contain the following:-

1. Name and address of the distributors of TV channel;
2. Name of name of a-la- carte pay channel(s)/bouquet(s) of pay channels and price available with the distributor of TV channel
3. Terms and conditions of service offered by the distributor of TV channel;
4. Name, designation and e-mail, contact telephone number, facsimile number and address of the Nodal Officer;
5. Procedure and benchmark for complaint redressal ;
6. Details of consumer protection provisions as specified in these regulations.
 - Customer Care Center
 - Nodal Officer
 - Web based complaint management system

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. The Broadcasting and Cable Services came under the regulatory ambit of TRAI on 1.9.2004. TRAI is vested with the responsibility of ensuring orderly growth of the broadcasting sector while protecting the interests of the consumers at large. The Authority has undertaken several measures to protect the interest of consumers while facilitating the availability of TV broadcasting services at affordable and competitive prices. In order to enhance the delivery of services to the consumers and also to protect their interests, TRAI has in the past issued Quality of service regulations for different delivery platforms such as Cable TV, DTH, etc. The first Quality of Service (QoS) regulations for distribution of TV channels was issued on 23rd August, 2006 to regulate the quality of service of cable television services in the CAS areas. Subsequently, QoS regulations for DTH services were issued in 2007. Similar regulations were issued for cable TV services in non-CAS areas in 2009 followed by the issue of QoS regulations for digital addressable Cable TV service in 2012. A separate regulation for consumer redressal mechanism for digital addressable cable TV system was also issued in 2012. In addition, some QoS issues were also addressed through tariff orders, interconnection regulations and directions issued by the Authority from time to time.
2. QoS measures for different delivery platforms in broadcasting sector were initiated by the Authority from time to time. These provisions have variations in the prescribed QoS norms. The basic QoS provisions and performance parameters in today's digital broadcasting scenario are largely similar across the platforms. Subscription of services, complaint redressal and even the consumption of services have become platform agnostic. The broadcasting sector has now achieved significant level of digitization and it is expected to be completed by the end of 2016. Thereafter, broadcasting services will be delivered to the consumers through only digital addressable systems (DAS). In such scenario, there is need for having uniformity in the basic QoS provisions for different delivery platforms.

3. In an era of increased availability of digital technologies, use of ICTs can be effective tool in enhancing the quality of services. Further, electronic payment, web enabled online complaint redressal mechanism, electronic CAF, etc can also be used for offering improved quality of services.
4. In digital environment, consumer awareness about the service offerings, ease in subscription, service management and redressal of consumer complaints by the service providers in a time bound manner are vital areas of concern to ensure good quality of service to consumers.
5. Therefore, there is a need to provide comprehensive uniform QoS regulation for different delivery platforms in digital addressable systems while creating provisions for protection of rights of consumers. Such measures will go a long way in facilitating healthy competition, transparency and growth with provision of good quality of services to the consumers.
6. Sub-clause (v) of clause (b) of sub-section (1) of Section 11 of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997 provides for the Authority to lay down the standards of quality of service to be met by the service providers so as to protect the interests of consumers. Accordingly, the Authority decided to go in for a consultation process before laying down benchmarks for quality of service standards for digital addressable systems.
7. A consultation paper on the issues related to Quality of Service in digital addressable systems and Consumer Protection was issued 18th May 2016 inviting comments from the stakeholders. A total of 29 comments & 2 counter comments were received. An open house discussion was held on the 28th July 2016 at New Delhi with representatives of stakeholders to further deliberate the various issues raised in the consultation paper. The paragraphs hereunder briefly summarize the issue-wise comments received from various stakeholders and set out the basis and rationale for the Standards of Quality of Service and Consumer Protection for Digital Addressable Broadcasting Platforms Regulations, 2016.

8. The Authority had sought the comments of stakeholders as to what could be the appropriate regulatory framework for QoS in the present evolving broadcasting scenario in the country where digitization has achieved significant level. Majority of the Distribution Platform Operators (DPOs) have stated that Self Regulatory QoS Framework would be ideal in the present broadcasting scenario since competition between the multiple DPOs will ensure effective QoS. Broadcasters have suggested for Regulated QoS Framework. One broadcaster has recommended for 'Regulated QoS Framework' in short term and 'Self Regulated QoS Framework' in the long term.
9. India is a large country wherein a large number of DPOs are providing services across the entire length and breadth of its geography. In several parts of the country, only single DPO is providing services catering to a small subscriber base. In the absence of effective competition, self regulatory mechanism to ensure QoS may not be effective. In the present scenario, an oversight mechanism by regulator would enable DPOs to create and standardized infrastructure for providing better quality of services to the consumers. Therefore, Authority is of the view that regulated framework shall be the appropriate model for ensuring QoS standards and consumer protection in broadcasting sector.
10. Comments of stakeholders were sought regarding formulating a uniform QoS regulatory framework for all addressable systems viz. Cable TV, DTH, IPTV and HITS. Majority of stakeholders are in favour of putting in place a uniform regulatory framework for all addressable systems. However, some DPOs are of the view that there cannot be uniform regulatory framework as various DPOs work on different business models.
11. The Authority has issued various regulations, tariff orders, directions etc. for ensuring quality of service and consumer protection. A close examination of the present regulatory framework clearly demonstrates that the existing provisions cater to specific distribution platforms and were aimed to address prevalent issues at that time. This has created complexities in ensuring QoS by various DPOs. Multiple platform specific QoS regulations make it difficult to create awareness amongst consumers. In digital

addressable systems, TV services are delivered and managed by different platform operators in vastly similar manner with minor variations. From a consumer's point of view, uniformity in the QoS provisions is user friendly. Since all DPOs will disseminate information relating to common QoS framework, this would lead to improved consumer awareness. In view of this, Authority is of the view that a uniform regulatory framework for QoS shall be adopted with some platform specific provisions, as may be, required keeping in view the nature of platform such as technical standards for transmission etc.

12. Authority has consulted with the stakeholders various aspects of subscription of services such as new connection, provision of Consumer Application form, adoption of Electronic CAF, publication of Manual of Practice (MoP) etc. These issues are analyzed in the following paragraphs.
13. The process of providing a new connection involves several distinct steps. At present different timelines have been prescribed in the existing regulatory framework depending on the type of platform. A few DPOs have stated that it should be left to their discretion to devise their own timelines for providing a new connection. Majority of DPOs have suggested timelines between 48 to 72 hrs for processing the services request and 5-15 days for providing new connection. The Broadcasters have suggested that TRAI should formulate timelines for various stages for providing a new connection.
14. Authority has examined the issue and the comments of stakeholders. It is of the view that a time line needs to be prescribed by the DPOs for providing a new connection and it should be informed to the consumers. However, it is observed that such timeline may vary depending upon the area where the connection is to be provided. While in cities and urban areas it may be feasible for DPOs to provide connection quickly, in case of remote areas it may take several days. Providing a new connection at the earliest is also related to the business concerns of DPOs. The existing regulation has provision for 4 days in cable and 5 days in DTH for providing a new connection. It has been noted that earlier QoS parameter for the digital addressable systems were applicable only in metros and big cities. However, with the completion of digitization by the end of 2016, it will be applicable to across the country .Taking a holistic view, Authority is of the view that

DPOs should provide a new connection within a period of 7 days from the date of receipt of request for new connection from the consumer. All activities related to providing new connection including activation of service should be completed within this period of 7 days. The DPOs are free to offer better performance parameters by declaring shorter timeline of less than 7 days which may be informed transparently to the consumers through DPOs websites and various other modes of communication.

15. Shifting of connection from one location to another involves dismantling of CPE from the subscribers premises and installs the same to new location. Logically, process involved in shifting of connection to another location is similar to providing a new connection. Subscriber details are to be updated in the SMS and thereafter the services are to be activated. Therefore DPOs incur costs for shifting of connection. The Authority is of the view that DPOs may charge shifting and re-installation fee i.e twice the sum of installation fee and activation fee from the subscribers for shifting of connection.
16. Comments of stakeholders were sought on minimum essential information to be included in the CAF for standardization and use of electronic CAF. Stakeholders were agreed with these suggestions. The Authority is of the view that use of e-CAF by DPOs needs to be encouraged. Authority has noted that storage and maintenance of e-CAF will be eco-friendly and CAF forms can easily be retrieved based on the need.
17. As part of the consultation process, Authority sought comments of stakeholders whether MoP should be mandated and also on what essential information needs to be included in the MoP. While agreeing that MoP should be made available to the subscriber, stakeholders suggested that the same may be provided in electronic form, via e-mail and through various In-channel means. They have also stated that minimum information to be included in the MoP needs to be mandated so as to maintain uniformity across the service providers. Accordingly, Authority has prescribed a format for MoP containing minimum essential information which needs to be included by DPOs in the MoP .

18. As per existing regulations, a DPO in cable TV sector is also mandated to publish a Consumer's charter. The information contained in the MoP and Consumer's charter is almost similar in nature. Therefore, Authority is of the view that provision of Consumer's charter is not required as it will lead to duplication of dissemination of similar information by DPOs.

19. The existing provision for providing six months protection for consumers with regard to price and composition of the package subscribed by them was also consulted with stakeholders. The stakeholders have pointed out that it is not feasible to continue with 6 months provision of tariff and package protection in the Digital Addressable System. The provision as made in the earlier tariff regime where the retail prices were under forbearance. The new tariff regime is based on MRP of channels to be declared by the broadcasters. The retail tariff therefore may not vary significantly and hence the price protection to the consumers is in built in to the regulatory framework. It is important to note that price of the channel consisting a consumer package is decided by the broadcaster. As such, DPOs have no protection in variation of such prices. Therefore, any artificial protection in consumer package will only distort the market and may result in more disputes. Further, in digital addressable system, the consumers can subscribe, modify or change their packages as per their requirements and the DPOs can also offer channels, packages with different subscription period options e.g. on pay per view, daily, monthly, yearly basis etc. In such a scenario, the provision of 6 months protection of package composition to the subscribers does not appear justified. The Authority is therefore of the view that in the new MRP based tariff framework six month's package protection is not required. However, the price protection will continue during the period for which advance payment either pre-paid or post paid. In the new regime, the DPOs shall offer all channels and packages on monthly subscription basis in addition to other subscription schemes as may be decided by the DPOs. Further in the new tariff regime it has been prescribed that DPOs shall not increase the monthly distribution network rental amount for at least six months.

20. The existing framework for dropping of a channel due to its non availability on DPOs platform was also consulted with the stakeholders. Majority of the stakeholders have agreed that there should be a provision for offering rebate to the subscriber in case of channel subscribed by him is withdrawn by DPOs due to its non availability on DPO platform. Although the present regulatory framework provided in the digital addressable Cable TV system is sufficient to deal with the issue of non availability of channels on all digital addressable systems platforms, it has been observed that the provision regarding substitution of similar genre channel has been misused. DPOs sometime push through the channel that is not wanted by the subscribers. Also sometimes a channel though available on the DPO platform is withdrawn from the bouquet by the DPO due to business concerns and the benefit of rebate is not passed to the subscribers.
21. Therefore, Authority is of the view that the channels and packages subscribed by a subscriber shall not be modified or changed by the DPO on its own. If any channel is dropped from the platform of DPO it shall not be substituted by the DPOs and the subscriber shall not be charged for such dropped channel. If the channel formed part of any bouquet then the DPO shall reduce the subscription charges for a bouquet offered by and the reduction in subscription charges payable by the subscriber shall be calculated proportionately taking into account the discount offered by the distributor of TV channels on the retail price of bouquet. Further, a DPO is not permitted to modify the bouquet of a subscriber by dropping or replacing channels which continue to be available on its platform. Any change in composition of the bouquet in such situation shall be construed as a formation of new bouquet i.e. in case a channel is dropped from a bouquet, it shall construe as creation of new bouquet without the dropped channel and discontinuation of the earlier bouquet. The subscriber shall be informed with 15 days prior notice regarding discontinuation such bouquet.
22. Consultations were also held on the issue of disruption in services and how the interest of subscribers can be protected if there is a continued disruption in services. The existing regulatory framework provides that all complaints related to “No Signal” are to be resolved within 3 days. This provision is being complied with by the DPOs. Authority is of the view that in case any disruption continues beyond 72 hours, the subscriber shall not be charged for the entire duration of such continued disruption and that the period of

such disruption shall be counted from the time a complaint to this effect is registered by the subscriber for individual fault and from the occurrence of fault if bulk customers are affected. The adjustment to the subscribers can be provided in terms of equivalent additional subscription days or by providing proportionate credit to subscriber's account as the case may be. In case of likely disruption due to any planned maintenance, DPOs should give a 15 days of advance notice to the subscribers.

23. The stakeholders were consulted for extending the existing provision relating to temporary suspension of service upon the request of subscribers to all digital addressable platforms. DPOs are of the view that they should be permitted to charge re-activation charge varying from Rs.50 to Rs.100 on each occasion and such suspension may be allowed twice in year limited up to total 4 months period.
24. Authority is of the view that subscribers should be empowered to suspend their services temporarily and that the existing regulatory framework should be extended to other platforms also. However, as the DPOs incur certain costs towards processing the request and temporarily suspending the subscribers from the SMS, they may charge a notional fee. As the work to be done in restoration of a temporary suspended connection is much lower than the work involved in activation of new connection, a restoration fee of Rs. 25/- i.e. one fourth of the activation fee (which is Rs 100/-) is justified. The DPOs may therefore charge a restoration fee not exceeding Rs. 25/- on each such occasion. The maximum period of continued temporary suspension shall not be more than three months. If it continues for more than three months, DPOs shall de-activate subscriber from SMS. Thereafter reactivation of service in such a case will attract an activation fee (Presently ceiling for activation fee is Rs 100/-).
25. Temporary suspension of service also happens due to default in payment. In most of the other utility services, late payment fee is charged from the subscribers for such defaults. As the DPOs have to make payments to the broadcasters, irrespective of default at consumer level; timely payments are important for the seamless revenue transactions along the value chain. Payment default by consumers also results in additional work to

be done by the DPOs towards temporarily suspending the services from the SMS which is similar to the work done when a subscriber requests for temporary suspension of his services. Authority is therefore of the view that the interest of DPOs also needs to be balanced in cases where the subscriber defaults on payment and services have to be temporarily suspended due to default in payment. In such case also the DPOs may charge a restoration fee not exceeding Rs. 25/- per occasion. If temporary suspension due to default in payment continues for more than three months, DPOs shall de-activate such subscriber from the SMS and may charge a fee equal to activation fee for resumption of services. In addition to activation fee, DPOs will also be entitled to recover the outstanding dues along with the interest 2% higher than the prevailing prime lending rate by RBI. No other charges, except those mentioned above, shall be payable by the subscriber during the period of temporary suspension, as no service is provided during the said period. The DPOs shall inform the charge, if any, prescribed by them for restoration of temporary suspension of service to the consumers through websites and other In-Channel communication means.

26. In order to protect the interest of consumers, Authority has consulted with the stakeholder for developing a consumer friendly common framework of CPE/STB schemes in digital addressable systems. At present three CPE schemes viz. outright purchase, hire-purchase and rental schemes have been prescribed by the Authority for providing CPE to the consumers. This apart, DPOs have also been permitted to offer other schemes where they generally bundle CPE with the service subscription. A large number of such bundled schemes are offered by DPOs. It has been observed that uptake of prescribed schemes is very poor while the bundled schemes are marketed aggressively by the DPOs. While details of the three prescribed schemes are well elaborated by the Authority, complete details of all other schemes are not made available to the subscribers. This results into disputes as ownership of CPE and issues related to maintenance are not clearly spelt out.
27. Stakeholders have stated that schemes offered by DPOs are cost effective and beneficial to the consumers whereas the mandated schemes are unviable. Some DPOs have

suggested that CPE schemes may be left under forbearance while the broadcasters are of the view that uniform framework for CPE schemes may be developed. There is a consensus among the stakeholders that essential information about CPE, namely, price, guarantee /warranty, AMC, provision for return and other charges associated with CPE must be transparently informed to the consumers while offering such schemes.

28. Authority has analysed issues and comments of stakeholders on CPE/STB. From a consumer's perspective, it is of utmost importance that a simplified and common CPE framework is developed for different platforms in order to make the consumers well aware of the provisions. Authority earlier recommended three schemes of CPE viz. hire purchase, outright purchase and rental. At that time the cost of STB was very high. DPOs from time to time complains that provision of CPE on hire purchase and rental runs into the risk as subscriber may not return the CPE while shifting /leaving the premises. This results in losses to DPOs. Further, the cost of STB has reduced considerably and has become affordable. DPOs are also coming up with very lucrative schemes for STBs to encourage digitization. The Authority has also noted that digitization for the first three phases have been completed to great extent. Considering the present market scenario, the Authority is of the view that two schemes, namely, outright purchase scheme and rental scheme, are sufficient to cater to the interests of the consumers. In order to address the concerns of DPOs on rental scheme, the Authority is of the view that DPOs may charge refundable security deposit from the subscribers. Further, rental scheme would provide an option to consumers who cannot afford CPE on outright purchase.
29. DPO or local cable operator, as the case may be, shall offer outright purchase with minimum one year guarantee/warranty for the CPE and reasonable Annual Maintenance Scheme thereafter. DPOs are free to form other schemes as per their business requirement; however the ownership of CPE in other schemes, including rental schemes, shall remain with DPO or local cable operator. DPO or local cable operator shall also be responsible for providing maintenance of CPE all other schemes, except outright purchase scheme, for a minimum period of five years. Since the ownership of the CPE in case of rental scheme and other schemes of DPO rest with the DPO, it is the

responsibility of the DPOs for its repair and maintenance. Therefore, Authority is of the view that no charges shall be payable by subscribers towards repair and maintenance of CPE during the period of these five years. The terms and conditions for maintenance along with details of charges payable by the subscribers for the various components of other CPE schemes shall be transparently informed to the subscribers. DPOs shall also widely publish this information on website and through other communication means as prescribed under consumer awareness section.

30. The existing regulatory framework provides for levying of installation charge and activation charge from the consumers at the time of providing new connection. These provisions were made in view of the costs towards manpower required for the installation of the CPE at the consumer premises. After installation of CPE, the details of the consumers are also to be fed to the SMS of the distributor of TV channels and provisions need to be made in the addressable system for activating the services to the subscribers. The DPOs were permitted to charge an amount upto Rs.350/towards the installation cages and Rs.100/- towards the activation of services .These provisions of the existing regulations are therefore to be retained and applied uniformly across all platforms

31. As per the existing regulatory framework for DTH service, there is a provision of levying visit charges after guarantee/warranty period in connection with visits for servicing of CPE at consumer premises. The DTH operator are permitted to charge an amount not exceeding rupees two hundred and fifty as visitation charge per complaint. There is no such provision in cable TV services. The issue of levying visit charges after guarantee/warranty period in connection with visits for servicing of CPE at consumer premises was consulted. Most of the DPOs are for levying visit charges from the subscribers for visits related to maintenance activity to be undertaken at consumer end. A few DPOs have also suggested that it may be left to market forces to formulate AMC scheme for maintenance of CPE at nominal annual fee basis and visit charges may be left the DPOs.

This issue has been examined by the Authority. In the Cable TV sector, DPOs or the local cable operator provide localized services for maintenance to the subscribers. In

case of cable TV service, only indoor equipment (STB) is provided at the subscriber premises which may encounter lesser faults. The CPE in case of DTH services also includes outdoor equipment which may be a major cause of faults and require specialized personnel for maintenance activities. It may be noted here that many a time such faults are due to exterior reasons totally unconnected with either equipment or its installation faults. The DTH operators also provide pan India services including in the far flung areas of the country. Therefore while maintenance support is available locally for MSO/Cable Operators, in the case of DTH it may not be so. Therefore the Authority is of the view that DPO providing direct to home services may charge an amount not exceeding rupees two hundred and fifty as visit charges for registered complaints requiring visit of a person to subscriber's premises for repair and maintenance provided that no visiting charges shall be levied for complaints relating to STB. Such visiting charge shall not be debited from the pre-paid subscription account of the subscriber and receipt for payment shall be issued to the subscriber by the DTH operator for such charges.

32. Comments of stakeholders were sought on the technical parameters for various addressable systems. Majority of the stakeholders are of the view that existing technical parameters and standards for transmission are sufficient and there is no requirement to modify the same. The Authority has already prescribed technical standards for digital addressable cable TV systems and DTH services. Authority is of the view that the standards prescribed shall be complied with by DPOs of the respective platform operators.
33. Consultation was held with the stakeholders on various methods that can be useful for increasing the consumer awareness. Stakeholders have suggested that awareness can be done through various means such as scrolls, SMS, websites, landing channel, advertisements across mass media, etc. Dissemination of TV broadcasting service related information through channels can be an effective communication method. Therefore, the Authority is of the view that DPOs who are operating platform services

should designate one of their platform services as consumer care channel and disseminate service related information to their subscribers.

34. At present, the consumer awareness related information is being provided by DPOs in different format and manner which is not easy to access and understood by consumers. Authority is of the view that if this information is standardised and it is provided to the consumers in a uniform manner, it will result in better publicity and improved education of consumers. As per existing regulating provisions, the DPOs are mandated to set up their websites which can be effectively used for dissemination of this standardized information. Accordingly, in the consultation paper, the Authority had suggested for having a dedicated “Consumer Corner” link on the home page of DPO website. The essential information to be displayed on the consumer corner page was also put up for comments of stakeholders; DPOs have welcomed and shown agreement towards the suggested measures. Authority therefore recommends that DPOs should provide a “Consumer Corner” link on the Home page of their websites which contain complete details of the services offered by DPO. The page shall also contain login provisions for existing subscribers who may be provided access to additional information specifically related to the subscribers. However, alternate methods of publicity through utilisation of “In channel” means such as Broadcast Mail, Scrolls, Short advertisements on Home Channel or Landing channel or consumer care channel, etc may also be required. Authority is therefore of the view that DPOs may make use of these in channel communication means.
35. The Authority sought comments whether outsourcing of various web based infrastructure by the DPOs can be permitted. Stakeholders have commented in favour of outsourcing of web based infrastructure by other agencies. Therefore, the Authority is of the view that DPOs may also outsource website infrastructure to other agency. However, DPOs shall be responsible for the overall compliance of QoS norms prescribed by the Authority.
36. Comments were sought on the issue of recording of subscribers consent for subscriber driven action related to their subscription. Stakeholders have favoured such provisions in

the QoS with recording of the communication for period of several months. The Authority is of the view that services once subscribed by the subscriber should not be modified without specific consent of the subscriber to do so and such consent related communication should be duly preserved for a period of at least six months. Different methods such as registered mobile number with SMS, OTP or registered email, bmail for repudiation, call centre, IVR, etc. may be used for obtaining such consent and confirmation from the subscribers.

37. The issues relating to billing method and billing cycle were consulted with the stakeholders. Majority of the DPOs were of the view that pre-paid model may be encouraged, however choice of implementing pre-paid and post paid method may be left to them. With regard to billing cycle for pre paid or post paid system, a few DPOs have suggested that billing cycles for pre paid may be 30 days from the date of activation of services while for post paid the billing cycle may be a calendar month. Some DPOs have suggested that it should be left them to decide. The Authority is of the view that the DPOs (or in case of cable sector local cable operator, as the case may be) may offer their services either on pre paid or post paid or both pre-paid & post paid as per their business requirements. The billing cycle for pre paid shall be 30 days from the date of activation of services while for post paid the billing cycles shall be a calendar month. In case of pre-paid model, DPOs or local cable operators, as the case may be, shall make available usage details and amount debited to the subscriber at the end of every billing cycle through electronic means. In case of post paid billing, a proper bill conforming to the provisions of applicable laws with details of usage shall be provided to the subscribers. The post paid bill can be provided in print form. Electronic form can also be used to provide bill if the same has been opted by the customer.
38. Comments of stakeholders were sought on how to improve customer care services, consumer complaint and redressal in the digital addressable systems and if the call centre infrastructure can be outsourced to another agency keeping in view the constraints faced by smaller DPOs. Stakeholders have suggested that DPOs should widely publicise their consumer care numbers, toll free number and call centre details through various

modes such as advertisement, scrolls, website, SMS, b-mail, Home channel, and customer care channel etc. DPOs also favoured outsourcing of Call Centre.

39. On the issue of accessibility of call centres to consumers, DPOs suggested varying period such as 24 hrs, 8.00 to 00.00 hrs, 7.00 hrs to 23.00 hrs, 8.00 hrs to 23.00 hrs. etc. Stakeholders generally were of the view that IVR services and customer care call centre may provide the option of regional language in addition to English and Hindi language. One MSO was the view that the existing provisions regarding response time for answering IVR and voice to voice call are sufficient for implementation. It was also submitted that the call volume traffic gets heavily skewed towards the prime time viewership hours, that is, during 7.00 pm to 10.00 pm and nearly 25% of the entire day's call volume is received during these three hours. Therefore it is not sustainable to build capacity on the basis of these three hours prime time peak as for the rest of the day the resources would remain idle. Accordingly, stakeholders have requested for review of the bench mark of response time for voice to voice response and suggested the said benchmark should either be 90% in 90 sec or 95% in 150 sec.
40. The Authority is of the view that the existing regulatory provisions regarding consumer care provisions and call centre are to be made applicable uniformly across all platforms. Authority finds merit in the proposed reduction of operational hours for call centre to a duration of 8.00 to 22.00 hrs as this period covers normal business hours and prime time for television viewing. DPO may however extend accessibility hours beyond this period depending on their business requirements. The IVR response for electronically answered calls shall be 90% calls to be answered within 40 seconds and for voice assisted calls 90% calls to be answered within 90 seconds. Keeping in view the agreement shown by the DPOs for the suggestion to allow outsourcing of call centre functions to third party, the Authority is of the view that the same may be permitted to take care of the concerns of smaller DPOs and to bring operational efficiency and uniformity in the offered QoS.
41. The issue of mandatory development of web based complaint portal was consulted with the stakeholders, who have agreed that such a web based management system for registering and monitoring of complaints may be useful and effective in improving QoS.

DPOs suggested that small DPOs may face problems in implementation and therefore web monitoring and complaint management system may also be permitted to be used from outsourced agency. The Authority is of the view that the web based complaint registration and management systems may also be used from outsourced agencies by DPOs. However, the responsibility for all regulatory compliance will rest with the DPOs who will be solely responsible.

42. Stakeholders agreed with digitization of various compliance reports to be filed with the Authority and for carrying out audit of DPOs for verifying QoS compliance and for conducting surveys towards assessment of QoS perception of the consumers.
43. Consultations were held with the stakeholders as to whether any financial disincentives for QoS non compliance are to be imposed for violation of QoS. On this issue, most of the DPOs submitted that any such measures should be considered only after the industry is settled and complete digitization has been achieved. Authority has made provisions for imposing financial disincentives on service providers in the telecommunication sector for non-compliance with the QoS benchmarks, false reporting of compliance with the benchmarks and also for failure to submit compliance reports. In broadcasting sector, the Authority has not yet prescribed any major financial disincentive except for cable operators where the MSOs/LCOs are imposed financial disincentive for not issuing proper bills and receipt to the consumers and also for non compliance of prescribed timeline in regard to change payment mode (from pre-paid to post paid and vice versa). As per the existing regulatory framework, if MSO/LCO does not provide bill and receipt to the subscriber, they are liable to pay an amount not exceeding rupees twenty per subscriber per month to the Authority as financial disincentive. The Authority is of the view that financial disincentive prescribed in digital addressable cable TV services should continue for the time being and the Authority will continue to monitor the behaviour of the sector and if required, review the matter at appropriate stage.
44. Comments of the stakeholders were sought whether all channels carried on the platform of a DPO should be included and shown in the EPG. Majority of the stakeholders agreed with the suggestion. Authority is of the view that all channels available on the

delivery platform should be listed on the website and shown in the EPG also with channel names and price when the LCN is selected. This will bring in greater visibility and transparency in informing the subscribers about all channels that are available on the platform so that he could exercise his choices for subscribing any channel. It will also encourage the subscribers to subscribe to more number of channels. Further, the Authority has decided that broadcaster can also declare a separate category of channels called premium channels where MRP such channels shall be under forbearance. DPOs shall take appropriate measures to distinguish such channels in the EPG from the other channels for easy information of the consumers.

45. In order to ensure good quality of TV broadcasting services to the subscribers, it is of paramount importance that the provisions of QoS regulation are complied with in letter and spirit by the DPOs and the local cable operators. Therefore, Authority is of the view that each DPO should appoint a compliance officer who shall be responsible for ensuring compliance of various provisions of QoS regulations.
