

Information note to the Press
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Telecom Regulatory Authority of India

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TRAI Releases Report of the independent agencies engaged for the Objective Assessment of Quality of Service and Customer Satisfaction Survey of Telecom Services in North East service area .

New Delhi, 15 May, 2009 - TRAI engaged M/s. IMRB International as independent agency for (1) conducting an objective assessment of the Quality of Service provided by basic and cellular mobile telephone service providers and broadband service providers and (2) Subjective customer satisfaction surveys for assessing the customers' perception of the service and to assess the implementation and effectiveness of Telecom Consumers Protection and Redressal of Grievances Regulations, 2007.

2. Key Findings of the independent agency on Quality of Service

Telecom service providers are not meeting Customer satisfaction benchmark. The Authority demands better treatment to the customers particularly in resolving the grievances of customers by the service providers. TRAI carried out a customer satisfaction survey through M/s. IMRB for North East service area during the period from October, 2008-February, 2009. The survey covered 1953 mobile subscribers, 771 fixed line subscribers and 551 broadband subscribers across the various districts/ cities of North East service area spread across various geographies and customer strata.

2.1 Proportion of satisfied customers on various customer service perception parameters

2.1.1 Cellular Mobile Telephone Service: In North East service area the survey of customers satisfaction of service of service providers namely, Bharti-Airtel, BSNL, Aircel (Dishnet) and Reliance Telecom was conducted. The gradation on "Satisfaction" score i.e. scores of "Very Satisfied" and "Satisfied" is given in Table-1 below. The survey results reveal that there is a need to improve the satisfaction level of subscribers on all the parameters across the service providers. The main reasons identified, in respect of dissatisfaction relating to accuracy of billing/charging performance of various service providers, is that the charges not levied as per the subscribed tariff plan, tariff plan changed without information and charges levied on account of the services not made/used/subscribed.

Table-1 {Cellular Mobile Telephone Service – North East Service Area}

Name of Service Providers (Sample Size)	Percentage (%) Customers Satisfied With							
	Provision of service	Billing Performance		Help Services	Network Performance	Maintainability	Supplementary Services	Overall Satisfaction
		Post paid	Prepaid					
Bharti Airtel (399)	93	79	87	65	90	94	90	94
Aircel (397)	94	69	93	76	89	90	70	93
RTL (391)	91	68	92	48	67	68	75	68
BSNL NE I & II (766)	89	78	88	60	79	75	79	88

Note: Shaded areas indicates areas of significant weakness

Source: TRAI survey carried out by M/s IMRB based on sample of 1953 subscribers

2.1.2 Basic Telephone Service (wire line): In North East service area the survey of customer’s satisfaction of service of service provider M/s BSNL was conducted. The gradation on “Satisfaction” score i.e. scores of “Very Satisfied” and “Satisfied” is given in Table-2 below. The survey results reveal that there is a need to improve the satisfaction level of subscribers on most of the parameters.

Table-2 {Basic Telephone Service – North East Service Area}

Name of Service Providers (Sample Size)	Percentage (%) Customers Satisfied With							
	Provision of service	Billing Performance		Help Services	Network Performance	Maintainability	Supplementary Services	Overall Satisfaction
		Post paid	Prepaid					
BSNL (771)	84	71	-	61	80	67	-	89

Note: Shaded areas indicates areas of significant weakness

Source: TRAI survey carried out by M/s IMRB based on sample of 771 subscribers

2.1.3 Broadband Service: In North East service area the survey of customers’ satisfaction of service of service providers, namely, BSNL and Sify was conducted. The gradation on “Satisfaction” score i.e. scores of “Very Satisfied” and “Satisfied” is given in Table-3 below. The survey results reveal that there is a need to improve the satisfaction level of subscribers with respect to provision of services, Help services and Network Performance across the service providers.

Table-3 {Broadband Service–North East service area }

Name of Service Providers (Sample Size)	Percentage (%) Customers Satisfied With							
	Provision of service	Billing Performance		Help Services	Network Performance	Maintain ability	Supple mentary Services	Overall Satisfaction
		Post paid	Prepaid					
BSNL (383)	88	90	-	57	83	95	94	87
Sify (168)	82	85	95	54	84	97	100	97

Note: Shaded areas indicates areas of significant weakness

Source: TRAI survey carried out by M/s IMRB based on sample of 551 subscribers

2.2 Objective Assessment/Audit of Quality of Service performance

2.2.1 Cellular Mobile Telephone Service: In North East service area the audit of quality of service data of service providers, namely, Bharti Airtel, Aircel (Dishnet), BSNL and Reliance Telecom Ltd (RTL) was conducted. The audit for Cellular Mobile Telephone Service Providers was conducted at their respective MSCs in the North East circle. Service Provider’s performance in respect of cellular mobile telephone service based on one month data is given in Annex-‘1’. The areas of concerns i.e. parameters, for which benchmarks is not met by the service providers, are identified based on analysis of one month QoS performance data and live measurement as below:

- Connections with good voice quality
- SDCCH/TCH/Paging Channel Congestion
- Call drop rate

2.2.1.1 Drive Test: The drive tests were conducted in the cities of Dimapur, Shillong and Itanagar to verify parameters like Call Drop Rate, Call Set-up Success Rate, Blocked Call Rate and Connections with Good Voice Quality. The areas of concerns (i.e. parameters) are identified as below:

- Blocked Call Rate
- Call Drop Rate
- Connections with good voice quality

2.2.2 Basic Service (wire line): In North East service area the audit of quality of data of basic service provider, M/s BSNL was conducted. Basic Service (Wire line) audit for North East circle broadly indicates that the service provider is not meeting the benchmarks for some of the Parameters. The performance in respect of basic service (wire line) based on one month data is given in Annex-‘2’. The areas of concerns i.e. parameters, for which benchmarks is not met by the service provider, is identified based on analysis of one month QoS performance data and live measurement as below:

- Provisioning of service
- Fault repair
- Billing complaints

2.2.3. Broadband Service: In North East service area the audit of quality of service data of service providers, namely, BSNL and Sify was conducted by independent agency M/s. IMRB International. The audit for Broadband Service Providers was

conducted at their respective network operating centre/point of presence (POPs) in the North East circle. Service Provider's performance based on one month data is given in Annex - `3'. All the benchmarks are complied with by both the operators in the circle.

3. **Telecom Consumers Protection and Redressal of Grievances score:** The results of the survey reveal that 15% of cellular mobile telephone, 22% of Basic and 29% of Broadband customers claimed to be aware of the Call Centre while the awareness of nodal officer and appellate authority for redressing grievances is negligible. 67.2% of cellular mobile telephone customers, 57% of basic telephone service customers and 44% of Broadband customers who had lodged complaints said that they were satisfied with the system of resolving their complaints by the call centres. Service providers need to take effective steps for bringing awareness about three stage redressal mechanism including contact details of Call Centre, Nodal Officers/ appellate authority to improve customers satisfaction.

4. **Value Added Services:** The Authority had entrusted the survey agency to undertake survey about the provision of value added services without explicit consent by all the service providers. The reports of the survey agency reveal the following position about provision of value added services without explicit consent of the consumers;-

Question: Did the service provider have your explicit consent before providing the chargeable value added service such as ring tone, emails / GPRS, voice mail etc. ?					
Name of Service Provider	Total customer surveyed, who have given specific response	Yes		No	
		Count	%age	Count	%age
Airtel	62	52	83.9	10	16.1
Aircel	53	36	67.9	17	32.1
RTL	41	29	70.7	12	29.3
BSNL	67	52	77.6	15	22.4
Total	223	169	75.8	54	24.2

5. The survey revealed that 24.2% customers were provided value added services without their explicit consent. It is revealed that most of the service providers have considerably higher number of such responses of provisioning of Value added service without explicit consent of the customers, Aircel being the highest with 32.1%.

6. The detailed Report on Quality of Service – Audit/Objective Assessment and Customer Satisfaction Survey, including grievance redressal mechanism, conducted during the period August, 2008 to February, 2009 is placed at TRAI Website (www.trai.gov.in).

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Annexure-1

Service provider performance report based on one month verification:

Cellular Mobile Services

Parameters	Benchmark	Bharti Airtel	Aircel	BSNL GSM	Reliance - GSM
Accumulated downtime for community isolation	< 24 hrs.	0.00	0.00	0.00	17.98
Call Set Up Success Rate (CSSR)	> 95%	95.12%	80.74%	98.01%	98.00%
Service Access Delay*	9 to 20 seconds (< = 15 seconds for 100 calls)	9.00	8.00	14.70	7.60
Blocked Call Rate					
SDCCH /Paging Channel Congestion	<1%	5.01%	8.38%	0.94%	0.88%
TCH Congestion	< 2%	4.88%	8.65%	1.30%	1.59%
Call drop rate	< 3%	3.00%	0.91%	2.38%	2.37%
Percentage connections with good voice quality*	> 95%	81%	93%	66%	93%
Service coverage*					
In door	>-75dbm	Complied	Complied	Complied	Complied
In vehicle	>-85dbm				
Out door - in city	>-95dbm				
POI congestion	< 0.5%	Complied	Complied	Complied	Complied
Calls answered electronically					
Percentage calls answered within 20 seconds	80%	100%	100%	93%	88.48%
Percentage calls answered within 40 seconds	95%	100%	100%	95%	Details Not Provided
Calls Answered by the operator					
Percentage calls answered within 60 seconds	80%	95%	Details Not Provided	82%	Details Not Provided
Percentage calls answered within 90 seconds	95%	95%	Details Not Provided	93%	Details Not Provided
Billing Complaints					
Billing complaints per 100 bills issued	<0.1%	0.11%	0.00%	0.07%	0.01%
Percentage billing complaints resolved within 4 weeks	100%	95%	Not Applicable	100%	100%
Period of refunds/payments due to customers from the date of resolution of complaints	<4 weeks	50%	100%	100%	100%

*Details pertaining to these are obtained through operator assisted drive tests. Results of the drive tests are explained in greater detail in critical findings

** Methodology not in line with QoS

■ Figures provided on All India basis

■ Not meeting the benchmark

B'mark = TRAI Benchmark, DNA = Details not available

**Service provider performance report based on one month verification –
Basic Services (Wireline)**

S.no	Parameters	B'mark	BSNL-NE I	BSNL-NE II
1	Provision of telephone after registration of demand			
1.1	Connections completed within 7 days	100%	55%	42%
2	Fault incidence/clearance statistics			
3	Fault incidences(No. of faults/100 subscribers/month)	<3		
3.1	Faults repaired within 24 hours	>90%	39%	83%
3.2	Faults repaired within three working days	100%	67%	100%
4	Mean time to Repair (MTTR)	<8 hours		
5	Call Completion Rate (CCR)	>55%	62%	61%
6	Metering and billing credibility			
6.1	Billing complaints per 100 bills issued	<0.1%	0.23%	0.03%
6.2	%age of billing complaints resolved within 4 weeks	100%	92%	100%
7	Customer care/helpline promptness			
7.1	<u>Shift requests attended</u>			
	Shift requests attended within 3 days	95%	70%	84%
7.2	<u>Closure request attended</u>			
	Closure within 24 hours	95%	37%	58%
7.3	<u>Supplementary (additional) service requests attended</u>			
	Additional facility provided within 24 hours	95%	100%	100%
8	Response time to customer for assistance			
8.1	% age call answered through IVR in 20 seconds	80%	100%	99%
	% age call answered through IVR in 40 seconds	100%	100%	99%
8.2	% age calls answered by operator in 60 seconds	80%	90%	DNA
	% age calls answered by operator in 90 seconds	95%	100%	DNA
9	Time taken for refund of deposits after closure			
9.1	%age cases where refund received within 60 days	100%	92%	97%

{*Note: For BSNL data pertains to the sample 5% of exchanges audited during the period of to September to November 2008, whereas for rest of the operators figures pertain to all the exchanges present in the circle}

** Methodology not in line with QoS ■ Figures provided on All India basis ■ Not meeting the benchmark B'mark = TRAI Benchmark, DNA = Details not available

**Service provider performance report based on one month Verification –
Broadband Services**

S.No	Parameters	B'mark	BSNL (NE-I)	BSNL (NE-II)	Sify
1	Service provisioning uptime				
1.1	Total connections registered		300	434	66
1.2	Percentage connections provided within 15 days	100%	100%	100%	100%
2	Fault repair restoration time				
2.1	Total number of faults registered/calls made		778	160	5
2.2	Percentage faults repaired by next working days	> 90%	96%	93%	100%
2.3	Percentage faults repaired within three working days	99%	100%	100%	100%
3	Billing performance				
3.1	Total bills generated		6929	4356	Prepaid
3.2	Billing complaints per 100 bills issued	<2%	0.35%	No such cases	
3.3	%age of billing complaints resolved within 4 weeks	100%	100%		
3.4	Time taken for refund of deposits after closure	100%	100%		
4	Customer care/helpline assessment				
4.1	Percentage calls answered within 60 seconds	> 60%	86%	90%	100%
4.2	Percentage calls answered within 90 seconds	>80%	100%	95%	100%
5	Bandwidth utilization/Throughput				
5.1	Total number of intra network links tested		23 BRAS, TI 24, T2624,DSLAM 5960		412
5.2	Total number if intra network links crossing 90%		0		0
	Upstream Bandwidth (ISP Node to NIXI/NAP/IGSP)				
5.3	Total number of upstream links		141		27
5.4	Number of links > 90%		8		0
5.5	Percentage bandwidth utilised on upstream links	<80%	70%		79%
6	Broadband download speed	>80%	Complied		Complied
7	Service availability/uptime	>98%	100.00%		100.00%
8	Packet loss	<1%	0%		0%
9	Network Latency				
9.1	POP/ISP Node to NIXI to IGSP	<120msec	<120		<30
9.2	ISP node to NAP port	<350msec	Complied		<300