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Information note to the Press (Press release No. 59 /2013)

For Immediate release

TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA

TRAI expresses serious concern over slow progress with respect to the entry of consumer details, along with choice of channels/services in the subscriber management system of multi-system operators providing cable TV services in the Metropolitan area of Kolkata.

Kolkata, 16th August, 2013:- TRAI has set a deadline of 23rd August, 2013 for collection of consumer application forms(CAFs) from the subscribers, complete in all respects, including choice of channels/ services and entry of complete details in the subscriber management system (SMS), by the MSOs providing cable TV services in the Metropolitan area of Kolkata.

In this regard, TRAI today convened a meeting of Multi System Operators (MSOs) to review the progress. It was observed the progress in this regard is dismal.

In this context, to educate and sensitise the subscribers, a number of steps have been taken. A press release dated 19.07.2013 was issued by TRAI intimating all the stakeholders regarding the deadline set by the Authority. The broadcasters and the cable TV service providers have been running scrolls in the TV channels, in the local language as well as in Hindi and English, asking the subscribers to submit the duly filled-in Consumer Application Forms. Through these scrolls the subscribers are also alerted about deactivation of cable TV services, in case of non-submission of the forms. The reason for this is that, in terms of Digital Addressable Cable TV Systems Regulations, 2012, MSOs can transmit digital signals and activate STBs only after receiving the Consumer Application Forms from the consumer with his/ her preference. If there is no form, the MSOs are obliged under law not to transmit the signal and deactivate the cable TV services.

TRAI expressed its serious concern to the fact that even though the deadline of 23rd August 2013 is approaching fast, only around 30% of subscriber's details and their choices are available in the subscriber management systems of MSOs in the metropolitan area of Kolkata. This situation is totally unacceptable and alarming. The MSOs have been directed to take immediate steps to ensure that the CAFs in respect of all their subscribers, complete in all respects including choice of channels/ services are available with them and the complete details are entered into the Subscriber Management System by the set deadline i.e. the 23rd August 2013. In case there is any lapse on the part of Cable Operators/MSO(s) to meet the deadline, penal action may be initiated by the Authority against such Cable Operator(s)/ MSO(s) , as per the provisions of the TRAI Act.

Cable TV subscribers are requested to cooperate and submit the Consumer Application Forms, complete in all respect, to the respective Cable Operator/ MSOs at the earliest, to enjoy the full benefit of digitization. In event of failure to do so, MSOs will have no option but to switch off the signal to those consumers who have not submitted their Consumer Application Forms, otherwise such MSOs would be in breach of the law.

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