

Information note to the Press (Press Release No. 89/2023)

For Immediate release

TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA

TRAI releases Recommendations on "Issues related to Low Power Small Range FM Radio Broadcasting"

New Delhi, 21st September 2023 - The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has today released its Recommendations on "Issues related to Low Power Small Range FM Radio Broadcasting".

2. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) vide its reference dated 07.03.2022 has sought recommendations of the Authority, under section 11(1)(a)(i) of the TRAI Act, 1997 on the need and timing for introduction of new service provider for services such as drive-in theatres.

3. To transmit movie audio to the audience within a drive-in theater setting, low power small range FM broadcasting is employed as one of the most efficient techniques. In addition to drive-in theaters, several other use cases of low power small range FM radio broadcasting which may cater to specific locations and reception areas can be identified. Examples include hospital radio services, amusement parks, business premises, closed communities such as residential complexes, small habitations, commentary for local events such as air shows and sports events.

4. In this regard, a consultation paper was issued on 17th April 2023 seeking stakeholders' comments on issues related to Low Power Small Range FM Radio Broadcasting. The last date of submission of comments was 22nd May 2023 and counter-comments was 5th June 2023. TRAI received 6 comments and 1 counter-comment from stakeholders. All comments received

have been posted on the TRAI's website. Subsequently, an Open House Discussion was held through video conferencing mode on 19th July 2023.

5. After considering all comments/counter-comments received from stakeholders during the consultation process and further analysis of the issues, the Authority has finalized its recommendations. The salient features of the recommendations are given below:

- A.** Introduction of a new category of service provider called 'Low Power Small Range FM Radio Broadcasting' for provision of low power small range FM Radio.
- B.** License/registration/authorization to be granted through a simple registration process via an online application portal.
- C.** Approval by Telecom Engineering Centre (TEC) for transmitting equipment for low power small range FM broadcasting.
- D.** Eligible entities to hold license/ registration/ authorization for 'Low Power Small Range FM Broadcasting':

a. Individuals who are citizens of India and above eighteen years of age. Following are not eligible to hold license/ registration/ authorization for 'Low Power Small Range FM Broadcasting':

- i. A person with an unsound mind and stands so declared by a competent court;
- ii. A person who is an un-discharged insolvent
- iii. A person convicted by a court of any offense, whether involving moral turpitude or otherwise.

b. A company registered under the Companies Act 2013 including LLP and partnership firms. Following are not eligible to hold license/ registration/ authorization for 'Low Power Small Range FM Broadcasting':

- i. Political Parties and their affiliate organizations; [including students, women's, trade unions and such other wings affiliated to these parties]
- ii. A company controlled by or associated with a political body;

- iii. A company controlled by or associated with a religious body;
 - iv. A company that has been convicted by a court of any offense, whether involving moral turpitude or otherwise.
- E.** Permission period for 'Low Power Small Range FM Radio Broadcasting' service should be:
- i. up to thirty days
 - ii. up to five years.
- F.** No application/entry fee should be levied.
- G.** License/ Permission/ Authorization Fee of Rs. 1000/- for a permission of up to thirty days and Rs. 10,000/- per annum for a permission of five years.
- H.** WPC should conduct a thorough evaluation and reserve appropriate frequency spots for the specific needs of low-power, small-range FM broadcasting.
- I.** Frequency for low power small range FM broadcasting should be assigned administratively by WPC through online portal within two days of submitting the application.
- J.** License/Registration/Authorization holders for low power small range FM broadcasting should be allowed to deploy any type of transmission technologies (analog/digital/any other).
- K.** The maximum permissible transmission range of 'Low Power Small Range Radio Broadcasting' should be 500 meters.
- L.** The licensed area of frequency assignment in case of low power small range FM be defined as location-specific based on the precise geographical coordinates such as longitude and latitude of the of the intended service location (be it a building, stadium, convention center, expo area etc.).
- M.** Maximum permissible transmission power should be 1 watt for low power small range FM broadcasting.

6. The full text of the Recommendations is available on TRAI's website www.trai.gov.in.

7. For any clarification! information, Shri Anil Kumar Bhardwaj, Director General TRAI CSR and Advisor (B&CS) may be contacted at Tel. No. +91-11- 23237922.



(V. Raghunandan)

Secretary, TRAI