

Information note to the Press (Press Release No. 16 /2017)

For immediate release

TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA

TRAI release the Telecommunications (Broadcasting and Cable) Services, Standards of Quality of Services and Consumer Protection (Addressable Systems) Regulations 2017.

New Delhi, 3rd March, 2017: The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has today released “Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services, Standards of Quality of Services and Consumer Protection (Addressable System) Regulations 2017”.

2. TRAI has been issuing QoS regulations from time to time to ensure protection of consumers and orderly growth of the broadcasting sector. In today’s digital broadcasting scenario, consumers can access TV channels from multiple platforms such as cable TV, DTH, IPTV, etc. Today a large number of TV channels are available to the consumers, however majority of them still remain unaware and are unable to exercise their choice. They often find difficult to know the price of the channels, bouquets and other terms and conditions for subscription. The consumers need a Set-top-box which is a basic equipment required for receiving TV channels. It should be provided by the service providers to the consumers in a transparent manner clearly specifying the cost, ownership and maintenance provisions etc. It is observed that these terms and conditions are not widely published for information of the consumers, which results in large number of complaints. Further the formats and manner of disseminating the information are not consumer friendly which leads to poor consumer awareness. It is also observed that consumers are charged even though the services remain interrupted and sometimes their service composition are also modified without their specific consent.

3. In order to empower the consumers to make informed decisions regarding subscription of channels and to protect their interests, TRAI has introduced measures using ICTs for improving the QoS. The service providers have been mandated to create a dedicated “consumer corner” and “subscriber corner” links on their websites, which shall contain relevant information for the benefit of consumers in standardized format. It has been made mandatory for the service providers to publicize service related information to consumers through their dedicated consumer care programming service. Further, it is also decided that name and price of all channels available on a service provider’s platform are to be transparently shown in the electronic programme guide to help the consumers to make appropriate choice.

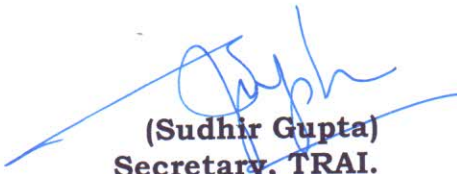
4. To protect the interests of consumers, TRAI has also decided to restrict the service providers from changing the composition of the subscribed services without consent of the subscriber and such consent shall be recorded to resolve any dispute later. The service providers are prohibited from charging the subscribers for the duration of continuous interruption exceeding 72 hours.

5. Salient feature of the regulations are as follows:-

- It is a common framework for standards of QoS and consumer protection across digital addressable platforms viz DTH, Cable TV, IPTV, HITS.
- Choice of subscription to a-la-carte channels and bouquets of channels by subscribers have been simplified.
- Standardization of dissemination of information related to services offered by DPOs through a customer care programming service.
- Publicity of services across DPOs have been standardized by making a provision of creating a designated link on the website of the DPOs called “Consumer Corner”.
- Mandatory offering of all channels and bouquets available on DPO platform on monthly subscription basis.

- Mandatory display of all channels and their MRP, available on the DPO platform in the electronic programme guide for easy navigation and identification by subscribers.
- Simplification of Consumer premises equipment/Set Top Box schemes.
- Simplification of Consumer Application Form (CAF) and encouraging use of electronic CAF.
- Subscribers can get services temporarily suspended for up to three months in a year.
- Mandatory provision for recording the consent of the subscribers for any change in the subscribed packages.
- Protection of consumer interest in case of prolonged and continued disruption in service beyond 72 hrs.
- Use of ICTs for subscription and management of services.

5. Telecommunications (Broadcasting and Cable) Services, Standards of Quality of Service and Consumer Protection (Addressable Systems) Regulations 2017 is available on the TRAI website www.traigov.in. For any clarification / information, Prof. M.Kasim, Advisor (B&CS)-III may be contacted at Tel. No.: +91-11-23237922, Fax: +91-11-23220442.


(Sudhir Gupta)
Secretary, TRAI.