

**TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA**  
**.Mahanagar Doorsanchar Bhavan,**  
**Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg, New Delhi – 110 002**

.....

Dated 4th May, 2007

**DIRECTION**

**Subject: Direction under section 13, 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, on information to be included in the Telephone Bills issued to the consumers by the service providers**

F.No.303-4/2007-QOS.-----Whereas the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India(hereinafter referred to as the Authority ) established under the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997 (24 of 1997) [hereinafter referred to as the said Act] has been conferred power under sub-clauses (i) and (v) of clause (b) of sub-section (1) of section 11 of the said Act to discharge certain functions specified in said clause (b), which *inter alia*, include to ensure the compliance of the terms and conditions of the licence and lay-down the standards of quality of service to be provided by the service providers and ensure the quality of service and conduct the periodical survey of such service provided by the service providers so as to protect interest of the consumers of telecommunications service;

2. And whereas the terms and conditions of the licence of the service providers relating to billing, *inter alia*, provide that the billing system of the service providers should generate the billing information to ensure satisfaction to the customer about the genuineness of the bill, and, the directions of Authority from time to time, in this regard shall apply, and all complaints of the customers in this regard will be addressed and handled as per the guidelines, orders or regulations or directives issued by the Authority from time to time;

3. And whereas, the Authority had received a large number of complaints and representations from the consumers, consumer's organisations and non-government organisations, complaining that the telephone bills issued by the service providers to the consumers are neither transparent nor easily comprehensible;

4. And whereas, the Authority, after examining the samples of the telephone bills issued to the consumers by all the service providers, *inter alia*, found certain deficiencies in the telephone billing such as (a) the format of the telephone bills issued to the consumers by all the service

providers varied; (b) the telephone bills did not contain adequate information in respect of the amount billed therein and other matters related thereto (including the information relating to the manner of redressal of grievances for matters related to telephone bills of the consumers); and (c) the formats of the telephone bills are cumbersome to be easily understood by the consumers;

5. And whereas, the Authority, after examining the samples of the telephone bills issued to the consumers by the service providers and for the reasons specified in the preceding paragraph and for removing the deficiencies in the telephone billing by the service providers had consultation with the concerned stakeholders vide F.No. 14-14/2006-F.A dated the 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2006 on certain issues connected with transparency/ disclosure of information in the telephone bills to the customers specified therein;

6. And whereas, the comments of the stakeholders were sought on various issues related to billing information, and, the Authority, after examining the comments of all the concerned stakeholders, is of the opinion that making available by the service providers only on their website certain information, such as name and address of their Nodal Officers, pulse rate, tariff plan etc., of the telephone service provided by them was not adequate; and denied information to those subscribers who do not have Internet facility to access the website, and, therefore, the dissemination of necessary information relating to the telephone service (including rates of service and actual charges thereof) through telephone bills would be a cost effective and convenient mode;

7. Now, therefore, the Authority, in exercise of the powers conferred upon it under section 13, 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), for the reasons mentioned in paragraphs 3, 4 and 6 above and to ensure compliance of terms and conditions of licence and to protect the interest of consumers, hereby directs that the following information, in easily readable font size, shall also be included in the telephone bills issued, on and after the 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2007, to the consumers by the service providers, namely:-

(a) the name of applicable Tariff Plan;

(b) methodology applied for calculations of amount mentioned in the telephone bills, details of pulse rates and charges, particularly mentioning local, subscriber trunk dialling, International subscriber trunk dialling, short messages service (also referred to in the telephone bills as STD, ISD and SMS respectively) charges and monthly fixed charges;

(c) applicable credit limit;

(d) the amount of security deposit made by the customer to be shown separately in the first bill and whenever it is adjusted, subsequently, in the bill;

(e) mode and procedure for making payment of telephone bills;

(f) details of set up of public grievance mechanism;

(g) information system for change of billing address;

(h) details of late payment charges;

(i) acknowledgement of last payment made; and

(j) customer information box, which shall indicate, inter alia, the following information, namely:-.

(A) no migration fee is chargeable for migrating to any tariff plan;

(B) no increase permissible in any item of tariff for a period of six months from date of enrolment of a subscriber under a tariff plan;

(C) no charge to be levied for any service without explicit consent of the consumer;

(D) refund of security deposit for providing telephone service to be made, within sixty days of closure of telephone connection, otherwise eligible for interest at the rate of ten per cent;

(E) website address (URL of the website) where model calculation of financial implication of tariff plans are available;

(F) “toll free number” or “consumer care number” or “help line number” of its Call Centres;

(G) address, telephone number, e-mail address, facsimile number of the Nodal Officer of the service provider and other modes of contacting him; and

(H) address, telephone number, e-mail address, facsimile number of the appellate authority of the service provider.

**(M.C. Chaube)**  
**Advisor (QOS)**

**To**

**All Access Service Providers (including Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd.)**