

Information Note to the Press [Press Release No. 6/2019]

For Immediate Release

TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA

Direction to Service Providers regarding Implementation of New Regulatory Framework for Broadcasting & Cable Services

New Delhi, 24th January, 2019: Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), in March, 2017, notified the new regulatory framework for Broadcasting and Cable services, comprising of the (i) Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services (Eighth)(Addressable Systems) Tariff Order, 2017, (ii) Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services Interconnection (Addressable Systems) Regulations, 2017 and (iii) Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services Standards of Quality of Service and Subscriber Protection (Addressable Systems) Regulations, 2017. The framework was duly notified vide press release no. 71/2018 dated 3rd July 2018 prescribing implementation schedule. Accordingly, all the timelines in the above-mentioned framework commenced from 3rd July 2018. As per the implementation schedule, all the service providers were required to complete all activities for migration to new framework by December 28, 2018. However, to ensure a smooth migration and consumer convenience in exercising their options, the Authority provided time until 31st January 2019 vide its press release no. 127/2018 dated 28/12/2018.

2. The Authority has been monitoring the progress in regards to preparedness of the service providers in capturing the options exercised by the consumers. The Authority has noted with satisfaction that most of the service providers have provided the consumer care channel on TV Channel Number 999, consumer corner on their website, started Call Centre, released mobile apps and updated EPG displaying the MRP of each channel.

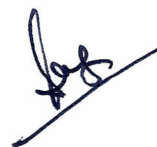


They have also made arrangements to receive options of subscribers using various methods which include (i) Call Centre, (ii) Mobile Apps, (iii) website, (iv) Personal contacts, (v) SMS blast response, (vi) Cable TV Operators, etc.

3. TRAI has launched web portal <https://channeltariff.trai.gov.in/> containing 'Frequently Asked Questions', rates of all the pay TV channels on a-la-carte and the bouquets of pay channels offered by the broadcasters, etc. It has also launched a web portal <https://channel.trai.gov.in/> to help consumers to select the channels of their choice and estimate their monthly bill. Facility has also been provided to take a print out of the TV Channels selected or download the file so that the same can be sent to the TV Service Provider to facilitate exercising of the subscriber option. These online portals have received quite a positive feedback with more than 3.5 Crore hits, as on date.

4. The Authority has noted that the work related to obtaining the choice of consumers has been progressing quite well. Approx 40% of the consumers have already exercised their options. The service providers have also given their assurances that work relating to seeking the options of the subscribers is in full swing and that they will take all the steps to obtain options of all their subscribers by 31st January, 2019.

5. It has also been brought to the attention of the Authority, that certain rumours and misleading information is still being circulated contending that further extension of the time period for obtaining consumer choices is under consideration. The Authority reiterates that there is no reason to consider any extension in view of the significant momentum in obtaining the choices and the assurances of all the service providers. The subscribers who exercise their option within the prescribed time, will be migrated from 1st February, 2019. All subscribers are requested to exercise their option immediately without waiting for last minute. Subscribers may visit the website of their TV services provider or make a call to their call centre. They




can also use mobile apps or contact their local cable TV operator for exercising their option.

6. Incidences have also been brought to the notice of the Authority that some Multi Systems Operators (MSOs) in far-flung areas and smaller towns are not implementing the new regulatory framework in letter and spirit. The Authority reiterates that every Distribution Platform Owner (DPO) and the Broadcaster must implement the regulatory framework as per the press release dated 3rd July, 2018. The Authority has issued an appropriate direction to all the DPOs (MSO/DTH/HITS/IPTV operators) and Broadcasters to this effect today i.e. on 24th January 2019.

7. Authority has been receiving hundreds of complaints intimating that one of the DTH (Direct to home) service provider is not providing options to its subscribers to exercise their choices and providing misleading information in regard to implementation of new framework. The Authority has taken up the matter. The said DTH operator has assured in writing that they will be complying with the new regulatory framework and will make the options available for obtaining the consumers choice. The Authority assures all the subscribers that all efforts are being made to ensure that there is no inconvenience or any disruption of TV services due to the migration to the new regulatory regime.

8. In case you need any more clarifications or the details of the new framework, please feel free to contact following officers of Broadcasting and Cable Services Division of the Authority:

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(S.K. GUPTA)
24/1/2019
Secretary (TRAI)