

For immediate release

TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA

TRAI releases recommendations on "Sharing of Infrastructure in Television Broadcasting Distribution Sector"

New Delhi, 29th March 2017:- The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has today released its Recommendations on **"Sharing of Infrastructure in Television Broadcasting Distribution Sector"**.

2. The Television (TV) broadcasting sector has witnessed tremendous growth in the last decade. There has been an exponential increase in the number of satellite TV channels. In India, the satellite TV channels are predominantly distributed using Cable TV, Direct to Home (DTH), and Head-End in the Sky (HITS) networks to subscribers. At present, there are 7 DTH operators, more than 1200 Multi System Operators (MSOs), and 2 HITS operators in the country.

3. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) had sent a reference dated 29th April 2016 requesting TRAI to examine the issue of the infrastructure sharing by MSOs, LCOs and HITS operators and provide its recommendation to the Government. MIB had also sought recommendation of the Authority on the amendment that may be required in the Cable TV Networks (Regulation) Act 1995 and Rules made there under to facilitate the infrastructure sharing.

4. The Authority examined the issues in sharing of infrastructure in TV broadcasting distribution sector comprehensively for all types of predominant TV broadcasting distribution networks. In this connection, TRAI undertook a comprehensive consultation with the stakeholders by issuing pre-consultation paper, consultation paper, and conducting open house discussion with them. After considering the comments, counter-comments, and views expressed by the stakeholders during the consultation process, the Authority has finalized its recommendations on "Sharing of Infrastructure in Television Broadcasting Distribution Sector".

5. The objectives of these recommendations are to ease up policy environment for facilitating sharing of infrastructure in TV broadcasting distribution sector, on voluntary basis. The sharing of the infrastructure in TV broadcasting distribution sector would not only help in enhancing available distribution network capacities but also would result in reduced Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) and Operative Expenditure (OPEX) for the service providers thereby bringing down the price of broadcasting services to subscribers. In addition, it would lower the entry barriers for new service providers and provide more



space on broadcasting distribution networks for niche channels - necessary for satisfying the diverse needs of general public - to reach targeted customers. Lowering of entry barriers in the distribution space could propel competition in the market and more choices to consumers due to presence of multiple operators in single territory.

6. The salient features of these recommendations are as follows:-

- (i) The Central Government should encourage sharing of infrastructure, wherever technically feasible, in TV broadcasting distribution network services, on voluntary basis.
- (ii) On voluntary basis, sharing of head-end used for cable TV services & transport streams transmitting signals of TV channels, among MSOs, should be permitted.
- (iii) To enable sharing of head-end used for cable TV services, the MSO registration condition regarding 'having an independent digital head-end of his own and provide digital addressable cable services from his head-end' should be suitably amended so as to allow sharing of head-end.
- (iv) The HITS operator and MSOs should be allowed to share the HITS platform, on voluntary basis, in flexible ways, for distribution of TV channels. The sharing of transport streams transmitted by HITS platform, between HITS operators and MSOs, should be permitted.
- (v) To ensure efficient use of scarce satellite resources, the DTH operators, willing to share DTH platform and transport stream of TV channels, on voluntary basis, should be allowed to do so with prior written intimation to MIB and TRAI.
- (vi) The distributors of TV channels should be permitted to share the common hardware for their Subscriber Management Systems applications and Conditional Access Systems applications.
- (vii) While sharing the infrastructure with another distributor of TV channels, the responsibility of compliance to the relevant Acts/ rules/ regulations/ license/ orders/ directions/ guidelines would continue to be of each distributor of TV channels independently.

7. The recommendations are available on TRAI's website www.traigov.in. For any clarification/ information, Sh. Sunil Kumar Singhal, Advisor (B&CS) may be contacted at Tel. No.: +91-11-23221509, Fax: +91-11-23220442.


(Sudhir Gupta)
Secretary TRAI