

Information note to the Press (Press Release No. 55/2014)

For Immediate release

TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA

TRAI releases 'Recommendations on Issues related to Community Radio Stations'

New Delhi, 29 August, 2014 - The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has today released the Recommendations on Issues related to Community Radio Stations (CRS).

2. Community Radio Stations are low powered radio stations for which the Government does not charge any fees. They assist clearly identified communities by dissemination and exchange of information; ideas; and knowledge. They give voice to people from those sections of society who do not have adequate space in the mainstream media. CRSs often are the repository of local culture, traditions, language and traditional knowledge.

3. As on 01 July 2014, 200 agreements granting permission to operate CRSs have been signed. Of these 170 CRSs are operational - 101 CRSs are run by educational institutes & universities, 6 by Krishi Vigyan Kendras and the rest 63 by civil society organisations. Currently, CRSs in rural and remote areas are generally being run by NGOs and campus CRSs by educational institutions mostly in urban and semi-urban areas.

4. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) had sent a reference on 8 January 2014, to the Authority, seeking recommendations of TRAI on extension of permission of Community Radio Stations (CRS). TRAI issued a consultation paper on "Issues related to Community Radio

Stations” on 21 May 2014 seeking comments from the stakeholders. Open House Discussion was held at New Delhi on 03 July 2014. Taking into account the comments received during the consultation process and analysis of the issues, the Authority has finalised its recommendations. The salient features of the recommendations are:

- (i) Initial permission for operating a CRS to be five (5) years;
- (ii) Extension of permission for five (5) years at a time, to be allowed following performance evaluation;
- (iii) CRS to be allowed to broadcast locally relevant news and current affairs content, sourced exclusively from AIR, in its original form or translated into the local language/ dialect.
- (iv) National Disaster Management Authority to draw up detailed guidelines, in consultation with the MIB and the Wireless Planning and Coordination Wing of the DoT, for fully utilizing CRSs in disaster mitigation and relief work.
- (v) MIB to set-up an online ‘single window’ system, integrating the entire application/ approval process for establishing a community radio station. The online system is to be based on a seamless e-governance platform integrating the different government departments involved in the approval process.

5. The full text of the recommendations is available on TRAI’s website www.traigov.in.


Sudhir Gupta,
Secretary, TRAI

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