

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India

Press Release No. 01 /2006

January 2, 2006

**Consultation Paper on Convergence and Competition in
Broadcasting and Telecommunications**

TRAI today released a Consultation Paper on Convergence and Competition. This Consultation Paper is based on previous work done by TRAI in its individual recommendations on various issues. It also includes issues for Consultation based on the report of a Committee that had been set up by TRAI to examine the issues relating to Broadband and Telephony over cable TV networks.

This Consultation Paper focuses on the need to bring about convergence in all aspects of regulation of the telecommunications and broadcasting industries. Convergence is already a reality. The technological developments which are bringing about the break down of the boundaries created by service specific licenses are simultaneously also enabling the consumers at the edge of the networks to be empowered for creation of totally new services. Convergence is a powerful force in bringing about greater competition. A well-designed scheme of regulation that helps convergence can vastly increase the competitiveness and hence the efficiency of the Indian economy. This is all the more important in an era of growing importance of information and communications

The Consultation Paper begins with an introduction to the issues of Convergence and Competition. It goes on to introduce the idea of convergence and alternative definitions of convergence as well as approaches to convergence.

The paper next looks at the impact that convergence has on markets and regulations as well as the impact on consumers.

The paper also brings out the developments that are taking place in the rest of the world on bringing about convergence in regulation.

It then deals with the kinds of problems that are being faced in India today as a result of lack of converged regulation. In this Section the gist of the recommendations of the Committee on Broadband and Telephony over cable TV networks.

Finally at the end issues for consultation are listed which essentially are:-

- need for a comprehensive legal framework for promoting convergence.
- approach to unified licensing.
- technology and service neutral spectrum licensing.
- issues on which suggestions have been made by the Committee on Broadband and Telephony over cable TV networks such as rationalisation of differential customs duty regime, restriction on use of protocols, license fees, right of way.

3. The full text of the Consultation Paper is available on TRAI's website (www.traigov.in) Written comments on the issues raised may please be furnished to Secretary, TRAI by 30th January, 2006. For any further clarification on the matter Secretary TRAI may be contacted on rstrai@gmail.com (Telephone No.011-26167448) or Advisor (B&CS) on rkacker@traigov.in (Telephone No.011-26713291). The Fax number of TRAI is 011-26713442.