

Information note to the Press (Press Release No. 29/ 2009)

For Immediate release

TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA

Tel No.:-011-23233291

Fax:-011-23220442

Email:-traicable@yahoo.co.in

bcs@traai.gov.in

Website:- www.traai.gov.in

Subject: - TRAI's new Interconnection Regulations for broadcasting sector to ensure non-discriminatory access to content

New Delhi: 17th March, 2009 - TRAI today released the Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable Services) Interconnection (Fifth Amendment) Regulations, 2009, which essentially cover regulatory provisions on non-discriminatory access to content, issues relating to interconnection for addressable platforms and issues relating to registration of interconnection agreements.

2. The Authority had issued the Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable Services) Interconnection Regulation 2004 (13 of 2004) on 10th December, 2004. These regulations were issued to cover arrangements among service providers for interconnection and revenue sharing for all Broadcasting and Cable Services. These regulations have been amended from time to time to address various new issues. Due to recent technological developments in the field of broadcasting and cable TV such as voluntary CAS and entry of more DTH operators and also new emerging IPTV operators and HITS operators, new issues relating to interconnection have arisen. The Authority is also committed to Voluntary CAS scheme. In order to address these issues the Authority began a process of consultation by issuing a consultation paper on December 15, 2008 seeking comments of the stakeholders. An Open House

Discussion was also held in Kolkata on February 6, 2009. With a view to ensuring greater and widespread participation, the Authority then placed the draft interconnection regulations on its website on 26th February, 2009 for a second stage consultation. The comments received during the second stage consultation have also been taken into consideration while finalizing the Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable Services) Interconnection (Fifth Amendment) Regulations, 2009.

3. The main amendments made in the Interconnection Regulations are:

- The distributor of TV channels is barred from seeking signals in terms of “must provide” clause of the Interconnect Regulation from a broadcaster for those channels in respect of which carriage fee is being demanded by the distributor of TV channels.
- The distributor of TV channels may however charge a fee for placement of the channel of a broadcaster vis-à-vis channels of other broadcasters on its distribution platform.
- Introduction and roll out of voluntary CAS has been facilitated by making it mandatory for all Broadcasters to have Reference Interconnect Offers for all addressable systems. Further, minimum technical specifications for addressable systems have been specified.
- Terms and conditions which should compulsorily form part of a Reference Interconnect Offer for DTH or any other addressable system, such as Voluntary CAS, IPTV, HITS etc., have been prescribed.
- The distributors of TV channels employing addressable systems have been enabled to provide their services to commercial subscribers.
- It has been made mandatory for all interconnect agreements to be reduced to writing.

4. It is expected that these amendments to the existing Interconnection Regulations will go a long way in facilitating access to content on non-discriminatory terms for distributors of TV channels deploying addressable platforms, which will in turn lead to greater competition between the various pay TV

delivery platforms, bringing considerable benefit to the consumers. The full text of the Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable Services) Interconnection (Fifth Amendment) Regulations, 2009 is available on TRAI's website www.trai.gov.in.

Contact Address in case of any clarification:

**N. Parameswaran,
Principal Advisor (B&CS)**

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India
Mahanagar Doorsanchar Bhawan,
Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg, New Delhi-110 002
Tel. No.011-23233291
Fax No.011-23220442

E-mail: traicable@yahoo.co.in
bcsc@traigov.in

Authorised to issue: Pr. Advisor (B&CS)