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Sat, 09 May 2026 2:05:54 PM +0530

To "advbcs-2"<advbcs-2@traf.gov.in>,"jtadvisor-bcs"<jtadvisor-bcs@traf.gov.in>

Dear Sir,

Due to the inability to access your website despite several attempts, I am sending my views via email.

At present, consumers using ALTD platforms may face several issues such as interruption of services, malfunctioning applications, non-availability of channels, errors in programme guides, misleading advertisements, billing disputes and difficulty in accessing customer support. In many situations, consumers may not clearly know whether the responsibility lies with the smart TV manufacturer, application provider, content aggregator or any other intermediary associated with the service. Therefore, a clear consumer protection and grievance redressal framework is necessary for authorised entities providing ALTD services.

Firstly, all authorised ALTD service providers should establish an effective and easily accessible grievance redressal mechanism. Consumers should be able to raise complaints through telephone support, email, websites and in-application complaint systems. A designated nodal officer and appellate authority should also be appointed to ensure accountability and timely resolution of complaints.

Secondly, there should be a time-bound system for addressing grievances. Complaints should be acknowledged within a reasonable period and resolved within a prescribed timeframe so that consumers are not left without support for extended periods.

Thirdly, transparency in service offerings is essential. Consumers should clearly know the subscription charges, channel availability, package details, cancellation policies, refund conditions and compatibility requirements before subscribing to any ALTD service. Any changes in pricing or channel availability should be informed to consumers in advance.

Further, minimum quality standards should be maintained for ALTD services. Service providers should ensure continuity of service, proper functioning of applications and programme guides and timely restoration of interrupted services. Consumers should also be informed about internet speed requirements and technical limitations that may affect service quality.

Data privacy and consumer protection should also be given due importance. Service providers should collect consumer data only with proper consent and ensure protection of personal information, payment details and viewing preferences. Consumers should have the right to manage their privacy settings and understand how their data is being used.

In addition, suitable safeguards should be introduced against misleading advertisements, hidden charges and unfair subscription practices. Promotional content and sponsored advertisements should be clearly disclosed to consumers.

It is also important to make ALTD services more inclusive by encouraging accessibility features such as subtitles, audio assistance and user-friendly interfaces for elderly persons and persons with disabilities. Parental control mechanisms and content classification systems should also be made available to help families regulate access to age-sensitive content.

At the same time, the regulatory framework should remain balanced and technology-neutral. While consumer interests must be protected, the framework should not create unnecessary compliance burdens that may hinder innovation and growth in the digital broadcasting sector.

Overall, introducing a proper consumer protection and grievance redressal framework for ALTD services will help build consumer confidence, ensure accountability among service providers and support the healthy growth of India's digital broadcasting ecosystem.

With kind regards

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