

Annexure A

**No.3105/3/2008-BC-III
Government of India
Ministry of Information & Broadcasting**

'A' Wing, Shastri Bhawan
New Delhi, dated the 17th January, 2008

To

The Chairman
Telecom Regulatory Authority of India
Mahanagar Doorsanchar Bhavan
Jawaharlal Nehru Marg (Old Minto Road)
NEW DELHI

Subject:- Formation of Policy Guidelines for Television Audience Measurement (TAM) /
Television Rating Points (TRP)

Sir,

You would be perhaps aware that TV viewership ratings have generated immense interest among the people who are the actual stakeholders. So far ratings were supposed to be pertinent only to the business interests of advertisers and TV channels. Today, it is everybody's case that the rating of TV viewership should preferably be done by independent agencies and that the process should be transparent. It has been seen that TRP ratings have a direct impact on the scope and schedules of the content of channels and therefore the perspective of larger public interest cannot be ignored.

2. The existing system of TAM/TRP Ratings in India being adopted by the two key players, viz TAM and a-Map has following deficiencies :-

- i) The ratings originally came into being to guide advertisers in optimizing their spend. Instead of being confined to such an internal exercise, ratings have become a benchmark for setting the priorities of TV and programmes of channels in the country as if what interests a small sample of viewers momentarily and what is the "interest of the people" at large are the same.
- ii) It is said that these ratings have inhibited original Indian creative genius and plurality in different regions of the country as channels are made to "fall in line" and become uniform in programming.
- iii) The system is stated to be more advantageous to big channels.
- iv) The benchmark yardstick for the country is urban and does not cover rural India.
- v) Rating does not reflect all sections of the society as it works by getting the cooperation of a few active households belonging to certain sections of the society.

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3. In the above scenario, the recommendations of TRAI are solicited on the system of TRP Ratings and the policy guidelines to be adopted for Rating Agencies. The following points may kindly be considered while formulating your recommendations:

- Registration System (if any) to be followed
- The Guidelines for such registration should provide for the norms which may include;
 - i) Minimum sample size;
 - ii) Type of equipment to be used;
 - iii) Whether technology adopted should be real time system for generation of reports;
 - iv) Minimum coverage required over different platforms including terrestrial, cable and satellite, coverage of rural as well as urban, coverage of all states including North-East and J&K, coverage of Prasar Bharati channels;
 - v) Ensuring secrecy of sampled families and simultaneously transparency and reliability of data so generated.
 - vi) Powers of the regulator to seek any information from the rating agency such as where people meters have been placed.
 - vii) Other issues such as – whether the rating agency should take steps to educate listeners and viewers about the methodology so adopted, net-worth, FDI and so on.

4. TRAI may also like to study the international practices on the issue before making its recommendations.

Yours faithfully,


(ASHA SWARUP)
Secretary to the Govt. of India