IAMAI Submission on TRAI Pre-Consultation Paper on Inputs for Formulation of "National Broadcasting Policy"

Established in 2004, the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) is a not-for-profit industry body representing the digital services industry with over 550 Indian and multinational corporations as its members, which include established companies in diverse sectors of the digital ecosystem as well as start-ups. We firmly believe that India's digital industry is going to be a major driving force in the economic and social development of the country which includes job creation, innovation, contribution to the GDP, inclusion and empowerment of our citizens, etc.

At the outset, we would like to thank the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) for giving stakeholders the opportunity to comment on its Pre-Consultation Paper on Inputs for Formulation of "National Broadcasting Policy". Broadcasting is the key constituent of India's dynamic Media & Entertainment (M&E) sector and holds immense potential for growth. There are 898 registered TV channels, and 386 private radio channels catering to 165 million TV households and over 200 million weekly radio listeners, but around 90 million households in India are yet to own a TV in India – at an ARPU of INR 217.5, this alone translates into INR 23,490 crores of opportunity per annum. An enabling policy framework can provide the needed incentive for the broadcasting industry to capitalise on this potential and position India as a global leader in broadcasting, aligning with the Government's vision of a USD 5 trillion Indian economy. The National Broadcasting Policy (NBP) can be an important tool for this growth, by bringing forth policy principles to guide the development of the sector and increase its contributions to the Indian economy.

Before we outline our recommendations and suggestions for the NBP, we would like to take this opportunity highlight our preliminary observations and certain principles that must be kept in mind while drafting the policy.

1. **Obligations of the Public and Private Sector Must Be Clearly Separated**
   Public broadcasters play a hugely important role in democratic societies, particularly in disseminating news and information. Given India's size and diversity, the growth and development of Prasar Bharati (and its Doordashan and All India Radio services) is critical. India's public broadcaster has been a long-standing presence, operating to serve the objective of public duty. Given Prasar Bharati's strong entrenched position, it is imperative not to impose overlapping mandates on the private sector. The Pre-Consultation Paper, through some of its stated objectives and issues for consideration, appears to push public broadcaster-like obligations on the digital media platforms including intermediaries and publishers of online curated contents.

   For example, the objective of "ensuring affordable and universal reach of Broadcasting" is primarily one that state capacity must address. The cost and connectivity of private sector broadcasting services will be driven by different factors including business growth and diverse consumer demands. Prioritizing 'universal access' through services and infrastructure is the mandate of the public broadcaster.
   a. There are similar concerns with the objective of "Developing state-of-the-art R&D infrastructure for broadcasting sector in India", through the creation of and R&D fund and

Centre for Excellence. The State may take lead in driving innovations and national-level infrastructural developments.

    b. Additionally, the objective of "Capacity Building and Promoting Skill Development" for the sector is something that must be pursued in line with national employment and education policies, though as noted in the paper there is scope for partnerships between the government, industry and academia.

2. The NBP Must Acknowledge the Distinction Between Different Services[1]

While the Background section of the paper states that the "broadcasting sector consists of television and radio services", the suggested framework includes digital media (both intermediaries and publishers of online curated content) and print media as "broadcasting services". Further, one of the issues for consideration is "enabling convergence of IT, telecom and broadcasting". However, it is important to note that these are distinct sectors with differentiated regulation and legislation – with good reason. The IT and Telecom sectors have established objectives and policies, such as the aim to make India a trillion-dollar digital economy and the National Digital Communication Policy of 2018. The NBP is an opportunity to create a similar but unique guideline for the broadcasting sector, with a focus on creativity which is the founding pillar of broadcasting.

The bundling of different services like cable TV and broadband in offerings to consumers has led to the assumption that there is a convergence of technology. However, there are still technical distinctions between telecom, broadcasting, and digital services, including the infrastructure, licensing and mode of transmission, that justify their separate treatment. This is supported by a recent decision of the Telecom Disputes and Settlement Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT) which held that an OTT service is not a TV channel based on several distinctions between the two, and the separate laws that govern either service.[2]

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has administrative jurisdiction over both intermediaries and Online Curated Content Providers (OCCPs) and regulates them under the Information Technology Act, 2000 and the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021. Similarly, the Department of Telecommunications oversees regulation of the telecom sector through the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 and other legislation.

Upcoming laws in the form of the Indian Telecommunication Bill, the Digital India Bill, and the Broadcasting Services Bill will likely draw these distinctions further. The NBP should acknowledge these distinctions rather than attempting to force-fit policy recommendations for three different types of services.

3. The NBP Should Outline Policy Principles and Avoid Prescriptive Measures

We recommend that the NBP should be a high-level policy document, which sets out principles and that regulators and other authorities can later use to develop rules and guidelines to meet their objectives within the NBP goal-framework. This is particularly important as the broadcasting sector

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[1] Our member, Airtel has divergent views from the views expressed under this point.

[2] All India Digital Cable Federation vs. Star India Pvt. Ltd., Broadcasting Petition/217/2023, available at: https://tdsat.gov.in/Delhi/services/daily_order_view.php?filing_no=NDM2MzM=

involves diverse stakeholders operating in a rapidly changing technological environment. Prescriptive measures or strategies will prevent the NBP from being a future-proof policy that can guide the broadcasting sector through 2047 and beyond. For example, specific measures related to grievance redressal mechanisms need not be stipulated in the policy. The NBP should limit itself to outlining the objective behind including grievance redressal as part of a self-regulatory framework aligned with India's constitutional principles.

4. **Goals Incidental to Broadcasting Should Be Excluded**
   Some of the objectives and issues in the Pre-Consultation Paper, while worthwhile goals in and of themselves, are incidental to broadcasting. For example, the reasons for considering "Technology Innovation & Standardization" include meeting "national requirements including security needs and interoperability to avoid e-waste"; the section on "role of broadcasting during disaster" references disaster response and recovery; multiple broad social goals including workplace diversity and promoting certain types of content; and environmental responsibility. We recommend that these goals not be focus areas of a policy dedicated to broadcasting and the growth of the sector, but can be implemented as part of other government or industry initiatives.

IAMAI Submission

Q1. Stakeholders are requested to provide their comments on the possible structure and content for National Broadcasting Policy, clearly outlining the specifics along with the justification. The comments may explicitly include the following titles/heads:

- **Preamble**
- **Vision**
- **Mission**
- **Objectives:**
  - **Goals**
  - **Strategies**

The stakeholders are requested that against each suggested objective, possible goals and the strategies may be explicitly provided.

IAMAI Recommendation

Preamble and Vision
To establish a long-term vision for India's broadcasting industry with a view towards positioning the country as an unmatched, globally recognised and relevant broadcasting hub.

The combined impact of the industry's direct and indirect economic contribution in the form of linkages to the vibrant Indian creative economy, to live events, to brands and to sectors like tourism, as well as its palpable social contribution in terms of dissemination of information, knowledge, and entertainment, is already without parallel.

Therefore, this Policy is envisioned as being a catalyst for strong sectoral growth reflecting the need for broadcasting to truly break-out and unleash its global potential using our talent, our markets, the

adoption of new and emerging technologies, as steppingstones. Combined with potent market forces and well calibrated and agile regulation, the Indian broadcasting is unstoppable.

Mission

This policy intends to:

- Create a vibrant and resilient broadcasting sector anchored by an enabling ecosystem for content creation, that can meet the Indian citizen's diverse content preferences and receive news, reliable information, and high-quality entertainment in various languages;
- Develop a globally competitive and growth-oriented broadcasting sector with enhanced ease of doing business, robust state-of-the-art infrastructure, seamless market entry, world-class distribution technology, enhanced content security, and a cooperative and collaborative ecosystem.

Goals and Strategies

The Policy aims to increase the contribution of the broadcasting sector on the Indian economy by 2047 by twofold in terms of revenue (as a share of GDP), employment, and export value as a share of total exports. The following sections briefly outline desired outcomes and strategies to achieve these growth-oriented objectives:

Goal 1: Measuring the Broadcasting Sector's Contribution to the Indian Economy
(*Rationale: This is the first time that a policy is addressing the broadcasting sector independently and there is a need for government to set precise targets. While there are estimates on TV and radio content services, however, there are no estimates for the economic contribution of infrastructure and distribution service providers.*)

Strategies:
1) Commission economic research to estimate the sector's current and potential contribution to the GDP;
2) Quantify intangible contributions of broadcasting to the information and knowledge economy via qualitative methods;
3) Establish future targets for TV and radio, based on current estimates, in consultation with industry stakeholders and experts.

Goal 2: Increasing the Size and Scope of the Broadcasting Value Chain via Investment Promotion
(*Rationale: The need for this policy should be firmly situated in the context of the need for a conducive investment environment, since market-driven growth is the most potent means to achieving the goals stated in the preamble. Moreover, an investment-driven policy is likely to be the least disruptive in terms of subsequent legal-regulatory obligations and is also the need of the hour. In many ways, a similar ethos is visible in the National Policy on Software Products, 2019.*)

Strategies:
1) Create an investor toolkit in which broadcasting supply chains are mapped along with relevant rules and regulations;

2) Develop an enabling framework guided by principles of regulatory forbearance and light-touch intervention, to encourage sectoral investments;

3) Ensure policy and regulatory stability through management of market expectations and transparent public consultations;

4) Establish a liaison cell within the Ministry to handhold investors in broadcasting beyond a predefined threshold;

5) Review sectoral investment laws and thresholds in order to level the playing field for investing in the Indian market;

6) Review public consultation and inter-ministerial coordination guidelines/practices in keeping with global best-practices and fostering greater transparency;

7) Commission market studies to identify potential barriers to market entry and review regulatory effectiveness.

Goal 3: Building Sector-Specific Institutional Capacity to Address Existing and Emerging Concerns[3]

(*Rationale: Institutional capacity to focus on differentiated concerns faced by content services and distribution networks is a must to engender agile and efficacious sectoral regulation.*

Strategies:

1) Develop specialised capacity to address concerns in content services with a focus on generating value through content production and exports;

2) Develop specialised capacity to address concerns in distribution networks with a focus on deepening access and providing high standards of QoS to consumers;

3) Ensure separate principles and treatment of content regulation and carriage regulation;

4) Review the administrative jurisdiction of TV and radio regulation and harmonize sectoral regulation to avoid multiplicity and parallel regulatory regimes;

5) Promote growth potential of new technologies through light-touch regulation;

6) Align and simplify regulatory objectives to promote efficiencies and ensure competitiveness in the sector.

Goal 4: Easing the Business Environment with a Focus on Agile and Light-Touch Regulation[4]

(*Rationale: EODB needs naturally follow from the need to double the footprint of broadcasting in value terms. However, our goal should also be to ensure that this is not an incremental easing, as has been the case many times in the past. Therefore, the pace and pattern of EODB reforms must match against the growth targets established for each broadcasting medium.*)

Strategies:

1) Simplify compliances across all relevant sectoral regulations and transition to light-touch licensing frameworks and automatic authorizations wherever possible to create an enabling framework which supports creative freedom and supports content creation;

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[3] Our member, Airtel has divergent views from the views expressed on point 3 & 5 of the strategies under this Goal.
[4] Our member, Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd. has divergent views from the views expressed on point 5 of the strategies under this Goal.

2) Streamline clearances under the 'Broadcast Seva' portal, with focus on automating and harmonising interdepartmental and inter- ministerial processes under a single window;

3) Specify timelines for approval of permissions or authorisations at each stage of an application submitted through the Broadcast Seva Portal;

4) Rationalise payments for licence applications and renewals including Bank Guarantees, Earnest Money Deposits, Licence Fees, and Processing Fees to reduce entry barriers in TV and radio broadcasting;

5) Review all pricing and bundling restrictions on broadcast content, to leverage high competitive forces;

6) Provide statutory recognition to content standards applicable to content services and guidelines administered by self-regulation bodies for TV in keeping with Indian constitutional principles;

7) Revisit policy restrictions on genre-specific content restrictions on radio on the basis of consumer demand and national security considerations;

Goal 5: Fostering the Growth of State-of-the-Art Broadcasting Infrastructure across All Relevant Supply Chains
(Rationale: The policy should help crowd-in infra investment, enable upgradation of tech and efficient utilisation of existing infra, unleash public-private partnerships, and provide a fillip to Make in India)

Strategies
1) Provide infrastructure status to broadcasting distribution platforms and services to accelerate infrastructural convergence in consonance with the NDCP 2018;

2) Explore production linked incentives for manufacturing of high-value broadcasting equipment in consonance with the goals of the National Policy on Electronics;

3) Identify underpenetrated areas to expand connectivity and access to broadcast channels, via fiscal support;

4) Engage with research institutions to explore emerging broadcast technology and their use-cases, and encourage research on technologies for better network management and quality of service;

5) Assess future bandwidth requirements in consultation with broadcasting sector stakeholder, in order to ensure orderly spectrum management;

6) Establish Centres of Entrepreneurship (COEs) and technology incubators focusing on AVGC related technology at Software Technology Parks of India (STPI);

7) Enable sandbox testing of emerging broadcast technologies;

Goal 6: Making India the Content Hub for the World
(Rationale: India has designated AV services as a Champion Sector for Export of Services, there is large untapped scope for state-supported growth via incentives, regulatory forbearance and better design, enforcement and upgradation of IP regimes, etc.)

Strategies
1) Explore the prospects of setting up content clusters or content export zones through which fiscal and infrastructural benefits can be passed on to the creative economy;

2) Offer tax subsidies and other incentives to regional, national, and foreign content producers for local production in India;

3) Position tourist spots and locations as ideal locations for production and create linkages between state-level tourism and film policies;

4) Work with state governments to create effective single-window processes for clearance of production related permissions and incentives for content production;

5) Expand the scope of bilateral agreements with foreign countries to facilitate co-production agreements for production and film festivals;

6) Undertake initiatives for combating piracy and provide broadcast-specific deterrent measures in the reforms to the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995;

7) Maintain an "Infringing Websites and Mobile Applications list for administrative takedown and enforcement action against violation of copyright;

8) Support the review and updating process of the National IPR Policy, particularly with a view to identify modernisation requirements for the IP regime to keep pace with technological changes;

9) Support research on technological standards for encryption and reliable communication in collaboration with the BIS and other relevant standard-setting bodies;

10) Develop model enforcement codes / standard operating procedures to address piracy risks across different broadcast platforms and services, and disseminate to law enforcement agencies;

Goal 7: Encouraging Robust Audience Measurement towards Greater Transparency and Hygiene in TV and Radio Broadcasting

1) Establish a process for accrediting or empanelling rating agencies for audience measurement;

2) Develop model governance standards / voluntary codes of practices for rating agencies, to ensure fairness, neutrality and transparency;

3) Prescribe standards for publishing data to ensure it is made available to all value chain stakeholders in a transparent manner and create a mechanism for auditing compliance;

Goal 8: Strengthening Grievance Redressal & Consumer Feedback Loops
(Strategy: Service providers must improve QOS in line with what consumers have come to expect so that TV can continue to compete with new mediums on a solid footing. Greater accountability to consumers can also help ensure sustainability.)

Strategies
1) Explore avenues for enhancing Quality of Experience (QoE) for audience/viewers in consultation with a diverse spectrum of stakeholders from industry and civil society, including through data from consumer surveys and other feedback loops;

2) Engender transparency and accountability in co-regulatory mechanisms for content;

3) Conduct consumer awareness programs and highlight QoS regulations, grievance redressal processes, and consultation mechanisms;

4) Review existing levels of access to and discoverability of broadcast content on different broadcast distribution platforms to assess the prominence given to consumer choice;

Goal 9: Reinvigorating the Public Broadcaster and Public Interest Programming
(Rationale: There is a need to stem the propensity of public authorities to pin public interest obligations on private entities. This can be achieved, in part, by strengthening the capacities and capabilities of the public broadcaster -- Prasar Bharati.)

Strategies

1) Enable Doordarshan and All India Radio (AIR) to enhance and expand public interest programming in regional languages and across new mediums;

2) Ensure no overlap between Public Service Broadcasting and Commercial Broadcasting Services;

3) Bolster content production on themes of national importance listed in Section 12 of the Prasar Bharati Act and disseminate through TV and radio;

4) Explore more public-private partnerships and enable new modes of market-based partnership for content sourcing and creation on themes of national importance and engender diversity of views;

5) Further decentralise content production by the public broadcaster to develop engaging programmes in regional languages for local audiences, and review regional content creation performance regularly;

6) Strengthen transmission and reception infrastructure at the border and remote areas;

7) Explore the prospects of new monetisation models including via content development funds, subscription fees for niche programming and other such methods, via a high-level committee;

8) Create a Standard Operating Procedure for commissioning and acquiring content for broadcasters to engender greater certainty in commercial processes and give primacy to intellectual property of creators;

9) Continue to expand international outreach through agreements with national broadcasters in other countries;

10) Enable CRS to source news and current affairs from AIR and translate and transmit in local languages and dialects;

Goal 10: Reimagining the Role of the Private Sector in Broadcasting

(Rationale: While there is a need to pare down the public interest obligations on the private sector, there is a simultaneous need for the private sector to be driven towards stakeholder responsibility that follows from the immense and perhaps incomparable societal impact of the broadcast medium)

Strategies

1) Enable accessibility for persons with disabilities on all broadcast mediums, in consonance with available technologies, industry best-practices, and phased and proportionate obligations;

2) Collaborate and consult with industry stakeholders to foster activity-based regulation for new-age technologies / mediums to pre-empt risks and mitigate societal harm;

3) Strengthen transparency mechanisms like audits and voluntary reporting across the broadcasting value chain, to enhance consumer welfare and market competitiveness;

Goal 11: Skill Development & Capacity Building in Keeping with Market Forces and New-Age Technological Needs

(Rationale: State supported skill development has faltered along the way from being industry agnostic to becoming oriented towards industries that only generate high volumes of employment. There is a need to bring attention and state capacities back to high-value sectors with high-growth potential, where volumetric demand may be lower but the need for skilled labour is considerably higher. This is also in keeping with public data/ trends that indicate an unsustainably level of unemployment of skilled professionals in the workforce.)

Strategies

1) Engage with relevant skill councils to continually encourage the addition and review of Qualification Packs (QPs) and National Occupational Standards (NOS), and aim to harmonise these with international standards in areas such as digital skilling in keeping with the New Delhi Declaration of the G20;

2) Establish upskilling programmes with reputed educational and vocational institutions and help establish National Centres for excellence in AV technologies and production techniques in such institutions;

3) Identify public institutes like the SRFTI and FTII and partner with private institutes to set up specialized courses for training professionals working in emerging areas in the TV, distribution, and radio industries.

Q2: Stakeholders may provide specific comments and suggestions for identifying objectives, goals and strategies for National Broadcasting Policy including the following aspects:

   ii. Policy and Regulation

       e. Digital Media

   vi. Convergence

   vii. Specific Regulatory Authority for Broadcasting

   viii. Robust grievance redressal mechanism

   ix. Role of Broadcasting during Disaster

   xiii. Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics (AVGC) segment

IAMAI Recommendation

e) Digital Media[5]

The IT Rules, 2021 and 2022 amendments provide for a robust framework for the Publishers of online curated content and the Intermediaries. Creation of a separate mechanism would lead to complicated overlaps and needless friction.

In view of the self-sufficient existing mechanism to regulate Digital Media platforms, there is no requirement to bring them under the contours of 'broadcasting system'. The robust self-regulatory mechanism governing OTT service providers, and overseen by the MIB, has not only been effective, but also efficient in addressing and redressing grievances, ensuring optimal and reasonable compliance, and creating an environment of voluntary superintendence. the benefits and advantages of self-regulation are now well known and recorded not only in India but the world over. It leads to increased voluntary compliance, increased transparency, increased consumer confidence in self-regulated companies, reduces scope for jurisdictional overlaps or clashes, etc.

The Consultation Paper emphasizes upon the need for common approach for licenses, oversight, and compliances in the light of emerging technologies. This indicates that TRAI is proposing to extend

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[5] Our member, Airtel has divergent views from the views expressed under this point.

similar licensing regime and compliances to digital media platforms as applicable to the broadcasting industry without stating any underlying legal or economic rationale warranting introduction of licensing regime to Digital Media platforms. OTT platforms and TSPs cannot and ought not to be equated, and hence laws cannot be brought in that regulate the two similarly. There will have to be a separate, independent study, accounting for international practices and framework, as well as the practical and economic effects of such a regulation, in order to determine the feasibility of bringing in a law to regulate OTT platforms. In the absence of such preliminary exercises, any further consideration would be redundant and impractical.

vi. Convergence[6]

There is no need for having a comprehensive/converged legal framework (separate Comprehensive Code) for carriage of broadcasting services and telecommunication services. The present legal and regulatory frameworks that exist adequately cover the field to ensure that all stakeholders are suitably regulated, and therefore, that all consumers of telecom and digital services are suitably protected.

Further, as mentioned above, telecom services and broadcasting services are distinct services and hence the laws to deal with the carriage of broadcasting services must be kept separate from laws that govern the carriage of telecommunication services.

At statutory level, there are already the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885, the Indian Wireless Telegraphy Act (IWT Act), Information Technology Act (IT Act 2000), the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 (CTNR Act), the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act, 1990, and on the regulation side, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997 (as amended) (TRAI Act) that separately govern telecommunication and broadcast carriage services. There are other rules that govern content.

MIB has mentioned that broadcasting is an important sector, which, owing to its sensitivity and impact, is a strategic sector that needs to be regulated. As such, multiple agencies, including the Ministry of Home Affairs, and the Department for the Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, are involved in regulation. The MIB also mentioned that the regulatory harmonization happening in the broadcasting sector was being achieved by creating a single platform in the form of 'Broadcast Seva Portal' on which all the stakeholders / ministries / departments are integrated as a single window for all licensing / permissions / reporting requirements etc.

vii. Specific Regulatory Authority for Broadcasting

A Specific Regulatory Authority for Broadcasting will require overhauling the legal, regulatory, licensing, administrative and institutional setup for both telecommunication and broadcasting services. This will disrupt the current equilibrium and could severely impact the growth of the broadcasting sectors. Multiple regulatory changes have reduced the thriving pay TV ecosystem, both in terms of the number of pay TV subscribers and the number of TV channels available per household and hampered its competitiveness with emerging platforms.

The regulatory framework for content (within the confines of Article 19(2) of the Constitution of India) should be distinct and separate from the regulatory framework for carriage. For clarity, the regulatory framework for carriage should not result in impinging of rights under Articles 19(1)(a) and 19(1)(g) of

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[6] Our member, Airtel has divergent views from the views expressed under this point.

the Constitution of India. In fact, TRAI in its 2006 recommendations on "Issues Relating to Convergence and Competition in Broadcasting and Telecommunications" acknowledges this distinction and recommended that the "Regulation of carriage and content should be separated, as the skill sets required for the two are significantly different. Regulation of carriage is more or less concerned with technical and economic aspects/ repercussions of policies. Content regulation has to take into account the impact of content on sensibilities, morals and value system of the society. Artistic and creative persons from the fields of fine arts, drama, films etc. may be more suited for content regulation than technocrats or economists." The MIB adopts a similar view in its response to the DoT and TRAI on the issue; its letter dated 4th October 2022 echoes the TRAI's 2006 recommendations. The Ministry also says that existing mechanisms for content regulation are effective, and there is no need to disturb established practices or re-engineer business processes.

The premise for such distinction and separation of the regulatory frameworks for content and carriage still holds in today's digitalised carriage eco-system. Moreover, the principles for regulating content across different platforms are different for theatres, TV, OTT and intermediaries because of fundamental differences in how content is consumed via these platforms. For example, content shown in theatres is being publicly exhibited, viewed by a wide range of viewers at the same time, and hence is governed by the Cinematograph Act and Rules. Television, by comparison, is relatively private and characterised co-viewing with schedule programs (push content) and hence governed by the Cable Television Networks Regulation Act and Rules. OTT on the other hand, is a characterised with private viewing in India with consumers making informed choice (pull content) about every content that they watch, and hence content on OTT is governed by Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (IT Rules).

The viewer's ability to exercise choice in how they view the content, or indeed whether they view it at all, factors into the potential risks of providing content via a particular platform.

Therefore, a converged or "one size fits all" framework for content regulation cannot be applied for all platforms.

viii. Robust grievance redressal mechanism

There exist several robust grievance redressal mechanisms for content across different platforms. For television, there are self-regulatory bodies like the News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA) and the Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC), while the Digital Publisher Content Grievances Council (DPCGC) and the Digital Media Content Regulatory Council (DMCRC) exist for OTT platforms in line with the 2021 IT Rules. The 2022 amendments to the IT Rules have also led to the formation of a Grievance Appellate Committee for intermediaries.

The introduction of the self-regulation mechanism for Digital Media platforms has resulted in the efficient and effective resolution of consumer grievances. As a consequence, a significant number of cases are now being resolved at level I of the Self-Regulation Stage, without the need for any further escalations. This has also been acknowledged by the MIB, in its Press Release issued in April 2023, wherein it has been stated that the self-regulatory mechanism is 'going quite well' and very few complaints were received at the ministry level.[7]

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[7] https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1916218

In view of the self-sufficient existing mechanism to regulate Digital Media platforms, there is no requirement to bring them under the contours of 'broadcasting system'. The robust self-regulatory mechanism governing OTT service providers, and overseen by the MIB, has not only been effective, but also efficient in addressing and redressing grievances, ensuring optimal and reasonable compliance, and creating an environment of voluntary superintendence. The benefits and advantages of self-regulation are now well known and recorded not only in India but the world over. It leads to increased voluntary compliance, increased transparency, increased consumer confidence in self-regulated companies, reduces scope for jurisdictional overlaps or clashes, etc.

ix. Role of Broadcasting during Disaster

- Establish a standard operating protocol for production and dissemination of content by during natural disaster emergencies;
- Create a roadmap for expansion of CRS in collaboration with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and a standard operating protocol for use of CRS during emergency situations;
- Create a roadmap for disaster resilience and environmental sustainability of terrestrial and satellite communications infrastructure used for public-sector broadcasting.

xxiii. Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics (AVGC) segment

- Set up a dedicated National Centre of Excellence for AVGC-XR to generate employment, IP, and enhance the potential of AVGC-XR;
- Review co-production treaties with other countries and other film production incentives to include AVGC-XR production.