

**TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA**

**TRAI streamlines distribution of TV channels from broadcasters to distribution platform operators.**

**New Delhi 10<sup>th</sup> February 2014:-** TRAI has today notified amendments to the existing regulatory framework with regard to distribution of TV channels from broadcasters to Distribution Platform Operators (DPOs) viz. Cable, DTH, HITS and IPTV operators. This has been done to address the market distortions caused because of the present role assumed by the authorised agents (aggregators) of the broadcasters, which were also amply reflected during the Phase I and Phase II of digitisation of cable TV sector. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) had also sent a reference to TRAI in this regard, requesting for review of the regulatory framework with regard to the aggregators. These amendments will also contribute to the orderly growth and overall development of the sector by streamlining the distribution of TV channels from broadcasters to DPOs.

2. The salient provisions in these amendments are:

- i. Broadcaster is defined as an entity having the necessary Government permissions in its name.
- ii. Only the broadcaster shall publish the Reference Interconnect Offers (RIOs) and enter into interconnection agreements with DPOs. However, in case a broadcaster, in discharge of its regulatory obligations, is using the services of an agent, such authorised agent can only act in the name of and on behalf of the broadcaster.
- iii. The broadcaster shall ensure that its authorised agent, while providing channels/bouquets to the DPOs, does not alter the bouquets as offered in the RIO of the broadcaster.



- iv. In case an agent acts as an authorised agent of multiple broadcasters, the individual broadcasters shall ensure that such agent does not bundle its channels or bouquets with that of other broadcasters. However, broadcaster companies belonging to the same group can bundle their channels.
3. To give effect to these amendments, a time frame of six months has been prescribed for the broadcasters to amend their RIOs, enter into new interconnection agreements and file the amended RIOs and the interconnection agreements with the Authority.
4. The regulatory framework has been reviewed to bring clarity in the roles and responsibilities of the broadcasters and their authorised agents. In this regard, a Consultation Paper, in the form of draft amendments to the existing interconnection regulations, tariff orders and the register for interconnect regulations, were uploaded on the website of TRAI on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2013, seeking comments/views of stakeholders. Subsequently, Open House Discussions (OHD) were also held in Delhi on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2013. In the OHD, further time of one week was given to the stakeholders to put forth their views in writing. Taking into account the views/comments of the stakeholders received following the exhaustive consultation process and analysis of the issues involved these amendments have been notified.
5. The full text of the amendments to the regulations and tariff orders are available on TRAI's website ([www.trai.gov.in](http://www.trai.gov.in)).



**Sudhir Gupta**  
Secretary, TRAI