



IAMAI Submission on the Draft Telecom Consumers Protection (Thirteenth Amendment) Regulations, 2026

On 7 April 2026, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) published the Draft Telecom Consumer Protection (Thirteenth Amendment) Regulations, 2026 (“Draft Amendments”) for public consultation.

At the outset, we thank the TRAI for allowing us the opportunity to submit our feedback on the Draft Amendments. We would also like to reiterate our commitment to supporting the objective of furthering fair choice and protection for consumers.

However, we believe the Draft Amendments raise several concerns. We have taken feedback from our members and outlined some of these concerns in our submission below.

IAMAI Submission

1. Departure from Tariff Forbearance

The Draft Amendments require a ‘largely proportional’ price reduction for Special Tariff Vouchers (STVs) – exclusively for Voice and SMS – as well as for every bundled plan a Voice + SMS-only STV counterpart of corresponding validity.

The Draft Amendments thus effectively amount to de-facto retail price control and component-wise pricing. This is a departure from TRAI’s long-standing approach of tariff forbearance that has long delivered both low prices and continuous innovation.

2. Need for a Flexible Approach

The fact that Data, Voice and SMS rates in India are already amongst the very lowest in the world are largely the result of competition under tariff forbearance, as opposed to prescriptive price controls.

Yet, the Draft Amendments cut against this proven tariff forbearance framework, moving away from the flexible approach that has consistently delivered more consumer value than formula-based controls.

IAMAI Recommendations

We recommend TRAI keep tariff forbearance and pricing flexibility central to tariff regulation rather than micro-designing tariff components or internal price relationships.

Additionally, we would also like to highlight that today telecom remains one of the most heavily regulated and highly taxed sectors in the country, leading to extremely high compliance costs. We therefore recommend that TRAI take measures to ensure the ease of doing-business in the telecom sector by reducing compliance costs and the tax burden on the industry.



About IAMAI

Established in 2004, the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) is a not-for-profit industry body representing India's digital industry with more than 750 members, including Indian and multinational corporations, as well as start-ups. We advocate for free and fair competition, and progressive and enabling laws for businesses as well as for consumers. Our overarching objective is to ensure the progress of the internet and the digital economy. Our major areas of activity are public policy and advocacy, business-to-business conferences, research, promotion of start-ups, and fostering consumer trust and safety.