



# Telecom Regulatory Authority of India



## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)** **on** **Regulatory Framework for** **Broadcasting and Cable Services**

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## Contents

	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
<b>A.</b>	Important Definitions	1
<b>B.</b>	FAQs regarding Regulatory Framework for Broadcasting and Cable TV Services	5
	List of Acronyms	24
	Contact Details of Service Providers	25
	Useful Links	27

## **DISCLAIMER**

This handbook has been published for the assistance, education and information of the consumers and information contained therein is general in nature, condensed from the original broadcasting and cable services tariff orders, directions and regulations. Full text of these broadcasting and cable services tariff orders, directions and regulations are available on TRAI's website [www.trai.gov.in](http://www.trai.gov.in). The users may refer to the TRAI Act, 1997 (24 of 1997), as amended from time to time and to the text of broadcasting and cable services tariff orders, directions and regulations and their amendments, as published in the Gazette of India/TRAI's website before taking any legal recourse. The list of service providers and links provided are only indicative to enable the consumers to study and compare the features and services provided. The list and the links provided therein are by no means exhaustive in nature. If a service provider's name does or does not figure in the list, TRAI does not in any way imply its suitability or unsuitability otherwise in any manner. Consumers are advised to look at all service providers in the market to arrive at a informed decision. Under no circumstances shall the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India be liable for any loss, damage, liability or expense incurred or suffered that is claimed to have resulted from the use of material contained in this handbook, including, without limitation, any error or omission, with respect thereto.

## **A. Important Definitions**

### **1. Who is a broadcaster?**

“Broadcaster” means a person or a group of persons, or body corporate, or any organization or body who, after having obtained, in its name, downlinking permission/authorisation for its channels, from the Central Government, is providing programming services.

### **2. Who is a Distribution Service Provider (DSP) /Distributor Platform Operator (DPO)?**

“Distribution Service Provider” or “DSP” shall mean ‘Distribution Platform Operator (DPO)’ and includes Direct-to-Home (DTH) service provider, Headend-In-The-Sky (HITS) service provider, Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) service provider, Multi-System Operator (MSO) or any other service provider engaged in distribution of programmes/television channels to the users, as notified by the Central Government.

### **3. Who is a Multi-System Operator (MSO)?**

“Multi-system operator” or “MSO” means a cable operator who has been granted registration under rule 11 of the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994 and who receives a programming service from a broadcaster and re-transmits the same or transmits his own programming service (i.e., Platform Services) for simultaneous reception either by multiple subscribers directly or through one or more local cable operators.

### **4. What is an a-la-carte channel?**

“a-la-carte” or “a-la-carte channel” with reference to offering of a television channel means offering the channel individually on a standalone basis.

### **5. What is a bouquet?**

“Bouquet” or “bouquet of channels” means an assortment (collection) of distinct channels offered together as a group or as a bundle and all its grammatical variations and cognate expressions shall be construed accordingly.

**6. What are pay channels?**

“Pay channel” means a channel which is declared as such by the broadcaster and for which a share of maximum retail price is to be paid to the broadcaster by the distributor of television channels and for which due authorisation needs to be obtained from the broadcaster for distribution of such channel to subscribers.

**7. What are free-to-air (FTA) Channels?**

“Free-to-air channel” or “free-to-air television channel” means a channel which is declared as such by the broadcaster and for which no fee is to be paid by the distributor of television channels to the broadcaster for signals of such channel.

**8. What is Distributor Retail Price (DRP)?**

“Distributor retail price” or “DRP” for the purpose of the Tariff Order notified by TRAI, means the price, excluding taxes, declared by a distributor of television channels and payable by a subscriber for a-la-carte pay channel or bouquet of pay channels, as the case may be.

**9. What is Maximum Retail Price (MRP)?**

“Maximum retail price” or “MRP” for the purpose of the Tariff Order notified by TRAI, means the maximum price, excluding taxes, payable by a subscriber, for a-la-carte pay channel or bouquet of pay channels, as the case may be.

**10. What is Electronic Programme Guide (EPG)?**

“Electronic Programme Guide” or “EPG” means a programme guide maintained by the distributors of television channels that lists television channels and programmes, and

scheduling and programming information therein and includes any enhanced guide that allows subscribers to navigate and select such available channels and programmes.

**11. What is Network Capacity Fee (NCF).**

"Network Capacity Fee" means the amount, excluding taxes, payable by a subscriber to the distributor of television channels for distribution network capacity subscribed by that subscriber to receive the signals of subscribed television channels and it does not include subscription fee for pay channel or bouquet of pay channels, as the case may be.

**12. What is meant by “Multi TV Home”?**

“Multi TV home” means a household having more than one TV connection or set top box in the name of one person.

**13. What is meant by “Platform Service (PS)”?**

“Platform Service (PS)” means programmes transmitted by DSPs/DPOs exclusively to their own subscribers and shall not include Doordarshan channels or any other television channels permitted/authorised by the Central Government. PS shall not include foreign television channels that are not registered in India.

**14. What is “long term subscription”?**

“Long term subscription” means a subscription for a duration of six months or more, for which an advance payment has been made by the subscriber.

**15. What are “Customer Premises Equipment (CPE)”?**

“Customer Premises Equipment” or “CPE” means the components and accessories installed at the premises of the subscriber to enable the reception of broadcasting services related to television provided through addressable systems and includes cable wire, set top box, remote control for set top box, dish antenna, low noise block converter or any

other equipment which may be necessary to receive broadcasting services related to television.

**16. What is a “Set Top Box (STB)”?**

“Set top box” means a device, which is connected to or is part of a television receiver and which enables a subscriber to view subscribed channels.

**17. What is meant by target market?**

Target market is any area within the coverage area of distribution network. A distributor shall declare target markets and publish on its website as mandated in regulations 4(4) of Interconnection Regulations 2017. In case of a multi-system operator or Internet Protocol Television Operator or HITS operator, the target market shall in no case be larger than a State or a Union Territory.

## **B. FAQs on Regulatory Framework for Broadcasting and Cable Services**

### **18. What constitutes the Regulatory Framework?**

The regulatory framework of broadcasting and cable services comprises of the following:

- (1) <sup>1</sup>The Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services (Eighth) (Addressable Systems) Tariff Order, 2017 dated 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2017, and as amended from time to time [‘the Tariff Order’];
- (2) <sup>2</sup>The Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services Interconnection (Addressable Systems) Regulations, 2017 dated 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2017, and as amended from time to time [‘the Interconnection Regulation’];
- (3) <sup>3</sup>The Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services Standards of Quality of Service and Consumer Protection (Addressable Systems) Regulations, 2017 dated 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2017, and as amended from time to time [‘the QoS Regulation’]

### **19. What were the reasons behind framing of this regulatory framework?**

Digitization in the Cable TV sector was started in 2012 and completed by the end of March 2017. The purpose of digitization was to bring in transparency and provide real choice to the consumers. Due to digitization, the regulation required a comprehensive review. The review exercise was carried out through multiple rounds of consultative process. TRAI notified Tariff Order and Regulations for Interconnection and Quality of Service and Consumer Protection on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2017.

### **20. How is the Regulatory Framework beneficial to consumers?**

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<sup>1</sup> Consolidated Tariff Order may be accessed on TRAI's website under the link:  
[https://www.trai.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-09/CR\\_22072024.pdf](https://www.trai.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-09/CR_22072024.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Consolidated Interconnection Regulation may be accessed on TRAI's website under the link:  
[https://www.trai.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-09/CR\\_18072024.pdf](https://www.trai.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-09/CR_18072024.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Consolidated QoS Regulation may be accessed on TRAI's website under the link:  
[https://www.trai.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-11/Consolidated\\_Regulation\\_16082024.pdf](https://www.trai.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-11/Consolidated_Regulation_16082024.pdf)



The Regulatory Framework has improved transparency and enhanced consumer choice. Consumers pay only for the channels they wish to watch. Consumers can choose channels which are available on the platform of the distributors (MSO/ DTH/ HITS/ IPTV), either on a-la-carte basis or in form of bouquet or a combination of both. This freedom of choice allows consumers to have direct control over their subscription bills.

## **21. Who all are Service Providers in broadcasting?**

Service Providers include Broadcasters and DSPs/DPOs which include Direct-to-Home (DTH) Operators, Multi System Operators (MSOs), Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) Operators, Headend-In-The-Sky (HITS) Operators and Local Cable Operators (LCOs).

## **22. Can bouquets be formed by Broadcasters and DPOs or only a-la-carte channels can be given by DPOs (MSOs, DTH operators and others)?**

Presently the consumers are being provided a large number of TV channels, some of which may not be watched by consumers at all. This practice utilizes the TV channel carrying capacity of the distribution platform un-necessarily, thereby blocking new TV channels from coming-up on platform. The regulatory framework stipulates that the subscribers will not be pushed with unwanted channels; rather she/ he will have freedom to choose only those TV channels that they want to see and pay accordingly.

As per the regulatory framework, broadcasters have freedom to form and offer bouquets subject to certain provisions. However, every channel is also to be offered on a-la-carte basis to provide choice to the consumers.

Similarly, DPO can also form bouquets by combining various bouquets of broadcasters, or by combining various a-la-carte channels or combination of broadcasters' bouquets and a-la-carte channels. Complete flexibility has been given to DPOs also to form the bouquet.

They can also form bouquets with different channels of broadcasters. While forming bouquet either by Broadcaster or MSOs or others, following precautions have to be taken:

- Free to Air channel and pay channel cannot be part of same bouquet
- SD and HD variant of same channel cannot be in one bouquet
- Any channel having MRP more than Rs 19/- cannot be part of bouquet

Consumers can subscribe to any number of bouquets as per its choice. Any combination of a-la-carte channels and bouquets is also permitted.

**23. Are 'Free to Air' (FTA) channels completely free for consumers?**

Distributors cannot charge for FTA channels from consumers. The MRP of FTA channels displayed in EPG is 'NIL/Free/Rs. 0'. However, the NCF as declared by the distributor of television channels will be applicable, even for the FTA Channels.

**24. Can a DSP/DPO form a bouquet with both PAY and FTA channels?**

No, FTA channels cannot be bundled with pay channels in a bouquet. This is to provide visibility to the consumers on channels which are free and which are pay.

**25. Can a bouquet contain both HD and SD versions of the same channel?**

No, a bouquet cannot include both HD and SD versions of the same channel. This rule ensures consumers receive clearer choices, better quality and avoid burdening the consumers with additional tariffs.

**26. Does a subscriber have flexibility to choose any channel?**

Yes, a consumer can choose channels which are available on the platform of the distributor (MSO/ DTH/ HITS/ IPTV), either on a-la-carte or in form of bouquet or a combination of both.

**27. What is the effect of price changes if annual subscription charges are paid by a subscriber in advance?**

If a subscriber pays in advance for a plan, such as an annual plan, the distributor should continue offering the service at the same price and under the same terms for the entire period. The distributors cannot make any changes that entail any disadvantage to the subscriber in such cases.

**28. Whether any service charge is applicable in addition to monthly charge of a cable connection?**

No, there is no concept of service charge. Only the following charges are permissible:

- i. Network Capacity Fee
- ii. Installation charges
- iii. Activation charges
- iv. Visiting charges for DTH services
- v. Relocation charges
- vi. Temporary suspension charges
- vii. Charges for Pay channel & Bouquet of Pay channel subscribed
- viii. Rental charges of set top boxes (if the STB is taken on rent)
- ix. Applicable GST

**29. How is the Network Capacity Fees (NCF) fixed by the distributor?**

Network Capacity Fees may be declared by the distributor based on number of channels, different regions in its service area, different consumer classes, or any combination thereof. The distributor is free to fix the NCF according to their individual business models. To ensure transparency, all the charges have to be mandatorily published by the service providers in their respective websites and communicated to the consumers besides reporting to TRAI.

**30. Can a distributor set different NCF charges for multiple TV connections in the same household? If so, is there a limit on the NCF charge for additional TV connections?**

The distributor is free to set the NCF charges for each additional TV connection beyond the first one in a multi-TV home. However, NCF for each additional TV connection in the same household cannot exceed the NCF declared for the first TV connection.

**31. Can a consumer choose different channels for each TV in a multi-TV home?**

Yes, every distributor shall allow distinct choices of channels and bouquets of channels for each TV connection or set-top box in a multi-TV home. Consumers can select a different set of channels or bouquet for each TV connection in a multi-TV household.

**32. Will additional TV connection in a house be costlier?**

In an addressable system, each connection is counted separately, with charges applied based on the number of set-top-boxes, similar to billing of mobile connections. In a family, each member can have her own SIM card, with different plan and value-added services. A similar approach is used in digital addressable systems, where each connection is treated individually. However, distributors may offer discounted network capacity fees for second or subsequent connections, depending on their business models. The charges may also vary based on the specific channels selected for each connection within a household.

**33. Are STBs provided without quality control?**

Set Top Box provided by the distributors must conform to the relevant Indian Standards set by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).

**34. How does a broadcaster offer its channels to the distributors?**

Every broadcaster must offer all its channels on an a-la-carte basis to all distributors in a fair and non-discriminatory manner. Additionally, they are required to clearly declare the nature of each channel as either FTA or a Pay channel.

**35. Do broadcasters have the right to fix the price of their a-la-carte pay channels?**

Yes, broadcasters are given complete flexibility to decide the prices of their a-la-carte pay channels. This means there is full forbearance on the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) of pay channels.

**36. Can broadcasters offer pay channels as part of a bouquet?**

Yes, broadcasters are allowed to offer their pay channels in the form of bouquet(s) and declare the MRP of such bouquet(s) payable by a subscriber. However, the bouquet cannot contain any pay channel for which the MRP is more than Rs 19/-.

**37. Whether there is a capping on discount while forming the bouquets by broadcaster?**

Under the regulatory framework, broadcasters are permitted to offer a maximum discount of 45% on the total price of a-la-carte channels when fixing bouquet prices. Consequently, the MRP of a bouquet of pay channels should not be less than 55% of the sum of MRP of a-la-carte pay channels forming part of that bouquet.

**38. Is there a limit on the number of pay channel bouquets a broadcaster can offer?**

Yes, the number of pay channels in a bouquet offered by a broadcaster at any given time cannot exceed the number of pay channels it offers on an a-la-carte basis.

**39. Will the MRP declared by broadcasters be the same on all distribution platforms?**

Yes, the MRP fixed by broadcasters will be uniform across all distribution platforms like cable, DTH, HITS, IPTV. Uniform MRP ensures fairness and prevents price discrimination across different distribution platforms

**40. Whether there is a capping on discount while forming the bouquets by distributor?**

Yes, distributors are permitted to offer a maximum 45% discount on the total prices of a-la-carte channels when assembling their own bouquets. This would enable flexibility for them in forming bouquets and offer attractive deals to the consumers.

**41. Can MRP of a pay channel exceed MRP of its bouquet?**

No, MRP of a pay channel cannot be more than MRP of the bouquet containing that pay channel. This ensures that consumers are not charged more for individual channels, offering them a more cost-effective option for accessing multiple channels.

**42. Where can consumers access platform service channels? Do they have the option of activating or deactivating such channels?**

The service providers are obligated to place the platform service channels under the genre "Platform Services" in the EPG. Yes, consumers have the option to activate or deactivate any platform service channel as desired.

**43. How to make choice of channels?**

Consumers can contact customer care of their respective DPOs or visit their website to select channels.

**44. Can DPOs give discounts on MRP of channel?**

Yes, DPOs (such as MSOs, DTH operators, and others) can declare a Distributor Retail Price (DRP) by offering a discount on MRP of a channel as fixed by the broadcaster. Further, DRP of any channel cannot be more than MRP declared by the broadcaster for that channel.

**45. Are distributors required to declare MRP for their platform services?**

Every distributor shall declare MRP for each platform service channels. Consumers can access complete information about the tariff for platform services offered by the distributor through the distributor's official website and on EPG as well. This transparency helps consumers make informed decisions about their subscriptions and ensures that they understand the costs of the platform services they choose.

**46. What benefits do long-term subscriptions offer?**

Long-term subscriptions provide a stable rate for the entire duration and may offer discounts or promotional benefits, depending on the distributor's business plan.

**47. What information will the distributor provide for long-term subscriptions?**

Distributors shall declare discount on NCF, DRP for each a-la-carte channel or bouquet or package and duration of the subscription for each long-term subscription plan.

**48. Do the regulatory framework permit service providers to offer promotional schemes on a-la-carte channels?**

The regulatory framework allows the service providers i.e., the broadcasters as well as the distributors to offer promotional schemes on a-la-carte pay channels that they offer. The rate of an a-la-carte pay channel offered under a promotional scheme is considered

as the effective rate of the channel during the promotional period (maximum 90 days at a time).

**49. What is the maximum duration allowed for a promotional scheme?**

The duration of any such scheme shall not exceed 90 days at a time, and a service provider may not offer such a scheme more than twice in a calendar year.

**50. How will the new NCF be communicated to subscribers?**

The DPOs, before making any change in the NCF, shall inform the Authority as well as to the subscribers by running a scroll on the channel. Simultaneously DPO shall publish the details of NCF on its website and may publish in Consumer Care Channel number and in the Customer Application Form.

**51. What charges have been prescribed in the regulatory framework with respect to services like installation, activation, visiting, relocation, and temporary suspension?**

Consumer charges for availing services like installation of dish/STB, activation of services, visiting charges for DTH service, relocation and temporary suspension charges which were previously regulated, have now been kept under forbearance i.e. distributor of television channels shall be free to declare the said charges. These charges may be different for different regions in its service area, different consumer classes, or any combination thereof. However, amount charged by distributor of television channel should be transparent, and non-discriminatory for all the subscribers who meet the same criteria of region or area and class, as declared by the distribution platform operator and the same is published on its website and in the consumer application form to ensure that complete information on costs/ applicable charges is made available to the consumers upfront.

**52. How is the duration or validity of all prepaid subscriptions mentioned?**



The DPOs are required to mention duration or validity of all prepaid subscriptions in number of days only to make it easier for consumers to understand.

**53. Is DRP uniform across all DPOs?**

No, DRP for pay channels may not be uniform across all distribution platforms. The DRP of a pay channel often varies across different platforms operated by DPOs who are allowed to offer discounts on MRP set by broadcasters.

**54. I want to subscribe only 10 pay channels. Whether I would be required to pay NCF in addition to price of Pay Channels?**

Yes. In addition to NCF, the consumer has to pay charges for pay channel(s) as per MRP declared by the broadcaster. However, distributors of television channels have freedom to fix the DRP of a-la-carte pay channels for their customers by offering discount on the MRP of pay channels declared by the broadcasters. The DRP cannot exceed the MRP in any case.

**55. Where can one see EPG?**

Consumer can access an EPG on their TV by pressing the Guide or EPG button on their remote control. This will open a grid-like interface on the screen that shows the available channels, their MRP and program schedules.

**56. How will the consumers come to know about the price of the channel?**

Consumers will get to know the price of the channel through the EPG and also through the service provider's website/app

**57. Whether the prices shown in the EPG are in rupees per month?**

As per the Tariff Order, the MRP of a channel declared by a Broadcaster of pay channel is in the form of "price per month". Therefore, the price shown by the distributor in the EPG is in rupees per month.

Further, FTA channel will be shown as "Free" in the EPG.

**58. What are the provisions for obtaining new Cable Service /DTH service connection?**

Mandatory provisions applicable for DPOs while providing new service connection are:

- (1) Every distributor of television channels or its linked local cable operator, at the time of providing connection to a consumer, shall inform complete details of services, including but not limited to, MRP per month and DRP per month of a-la-carte channels or bouquets, NCF per month and the price of CPE, security deposit, rental amount, guarantee/warranty, maintenance provisions and ownership of customer premises equipment, as may be applicable.
- (2) Every distributor of television channels or its linked local cable operator, shall provide broadcasting services related to television to the consumer upon obtaining duly filled Consumer Application Form as prescribed in Schedule I of the QoS regulations, of TRAI and provide a copy of the same to the consumer.
- (3) Every distributor of television channels or its linked local cable operator, shall, by using the subscriber management system, assign a unique identification number to every subscriber which shall be communicated to the subscriber through SMS on the registered mobile number of the subscriber and other means of communication such as email, monthly bill or payment receipt as may be deemed appropriate.

**59. Is there any Consumer Application Form (CAF) prescribed by TRAI?**

Yes. The distributor of television channels or its linked local cable operator, as the case may be, shall activate broadcasting services related to television channels to the subscriber only after the details of Consumer Application Form (CAF) of such subscriber have been entered into the Subscriber Management System (SMS) of the DPO subject to payment of applicable charges. Such charges for broadcasting services related to television shall be payable by the subscriber from the date of activation of such services.

**60. Is there any amount to be paid upfront for getting a new connection?**

Yes, the consumer is required to pay the upfront charges like making payment for the CPE scheme opted by the consumer. A distributor of television channels or its linked local cable operator, as the case may be, shall declare one-time installation charge for installation and one-time activation charge for activating a new connection for providing the broadcasting services related to television.

**61. What amount we have to pay for CPE to the DTH Operators/Cable Operators?**

Every distributor or its linked local cable operator shall provide to every subscriber the set top box.

The Distributor or its linked local cable operator, as the case may be, shall not compel any subscriber to buy or take on rent the set top box from him alone.

Every Distributor of television channels or its linked local cable operator, as the case may be, shall offer customer premises equipment (STB, Dish etc) to every consumer under the following schemes:

- (i) outright purchase scheme, and
- (ii) rental scheme:

It shall also be permissible for the distributor or its linked local cable operator, as the case may be, to offer customer premises equipment under any other scheme including bundled scheme.

**62. Who owns the CPE provided by distributors?**

- (1) In case of outright purchase scheme, the distributor of television channels or its linked local cable operator, as the case may be, shall specify the retail price of customer premises equipment along with guarantee/warranty period. The guarantee/warranty period in respect of such customer premises equipment shall be for at least one year. The ownership of such customer premises equipment shall rest with subscriber.
- (2) In case of rental scheme, the distributor of television channels or its linked local cable operator, as the case may be, shall specify the monthly rental amount for customer

premises equipment and other terms and conditions, if any. The ownership of such customer premises equipment shall rest with distributor or its linked local cable operator.

- (3) In case of all other schemes which may include bundled scheme, the distributor of television channels or its linked local cable operator, as the case may be, shall specify separately, the retail price of the customer premises equipment, network capacity fee, charges for pay channels or bouquet of pay channels, bundled with customer premises equipment and other terms and conditions, if any. The ownership of such customer premises equipment shall rest with distributor or its linked local cable operator.

### **63. What is the procedure for maintenance of CPE?**

For Set Top Box, the distributor of television channels is responsible for maintaining the Set Top Box provided under rental scheme or bundled scheme of STB, in a good working condition to ensure uninterrupted services to a subscriber for a minimum period of 3 years.

Further it shall be permissible to DTH operator to charge an amount as specified as a visiting charge per registered complaint requiring visit of a person to subscriber premises for carrying out repair and maintenance services.

The distributors of television channels are required to provide list of all applicable charges on its website so that consumers are aware of the charges upfront.

### **64. What are provisions for change in subscription plans of broadcasting services for TV channels?**

The distributor of television channels shall not change subscription plans unless requested by the subscriber. Further distributor or its linked cable operator as the case may be, shall keep the record of such changes for at least 3 months from the date of receipt of such request from the subscriber.

**65. What can I do if my DPO (DTH/ MSO/HITS/ IPTV) does not provide me channels on a-la carte rate and force me to subscribe to bouquet(s)?**

The Interconnection Regulations mandate broadcasters to offer a-la-carte rates to all DPOs. Therefore, DPOs are required to provide channels on a-la-carte basis to the subscribers. Any violation of the provisions of regulations will be dealt with as per the provisions of TRAI Act.

**66. What are the billing and payment options available for consumers?**

The regulation provides flexibility to service providers. The distributors can adopt prepaid or post-paid or both as per their business model. Every distributor or cable operator offering services both on pre-paid and postpaid basis, shall change payment mechanism from prepaid to post-paid or vice versa, as the case may be, on the specific request made by the subscriber, applicable from the next billing cycle. The distributor shall not charge any amount from the subscriber for such change in payment mechanism.

**67. What are the provisions of temporary disconnection or suspension of service?**

The subscriber (at least 15 days before the desired suspension date) should make a request to its DPO for disconnection or suspension of service. The temporary disconnection or suspension of service shall be for a minimum period of 1 month or multiples thereof.

**68. Can a DPO (DTH/ MSO/ HITS/ IPTV) change the channels or bouquet of channels in a package?**

As per the QoS Regulations, no distributor of television channels can make any change in the services subscribed by a subscriber without receiving a specific request from the subscriber. Also, no distributor of television channels can modify the composition of any existing bouquet available on its platform if all the channels forming part of the bouquet continue to be available on its platform. Further, the DPO cannot discontinue any bouquet or channels in a bouquet by a subscriber during lock-in period or during the

period for which advance is paid by the subscriber if all the channels forming part of the bouquet is available on its platform.

**69. What if my DPO discontinues the channels subscribed and paid in advance by me?**

No distributor of television channels discontinue any channel available on its platform without giving a prior notice of at least fifteen days to its subscribers by running scrolls in the concerned channel on television screen. In case the channel is discontinued, the subscription charges of that bouquet should be reduced by an amount equivalent to discounted Distributor Retail Price of that channel. The Distributor should not substitute any channel in lieu of discontinued channels on its own.

**70. What are the provisions for closure of subscription of services?**

A subscriber can request for service disconnection at least 15 days in advance to the DPO (DTH/ MSO/ HITS/ IPTV). The DPO shall disconnect the connection and refund the deposit within 7 days subject to fulfilment of terms and conditions of services.

**71. Is it mandatory for a distributor to have its own website?**

Yes, every distributor shall establish and maintain a website for the purpose of publicity of information related to television broadcasting services offered by the distributor and for consumer awareness. The website should provide details of its offerings and all the applicable charges with provision for Consumer Corner, Subscriber Corner and Manual of Practice. However, it shall be optional for a distributor of television channels having total active subscriber base of less than thirty thousand to have the website.

**72. Has TRAI provided any regulations for complaint redressal?**

Yes, TRAI has prescribed regulations for complaint redressal. As per the regulations, for redressal of complaints, the distributor shall establish a customer care centre which shall have a customer care number with sufficient number of phone lines or connections and human resources to efficiently service the subscriber base of the distributor. The details

of customer care centre shall be published on its website and made available through different means such as SMS, TV, scrolls, printing in bills etc for publicity.

**73. What are the time limits specified for redressal of complaint raised by consumers?**

The Time limits specified for redressal of consumer complaints in the QoS Regulation 2017 are summarised below:

- (1) all complaints shall be responded to within eight hours of receipt of the complaint;
- (2) provided that complaints received after the office working hours shall be responded by the next working day;
- (3) at least ninety percent of all ‘no signal’ complaints received shall be redressed and signal restored within twenty four hours of receipt of such complaint;
- (4) all complaints relating to billing shall be redressed within seven days of receipt of the complaint from the subscriber and refunds, if any, shall be made to such subscriber within thirty days of receipt of the complaint;
- (5) at least ninety percent of all other complaints not covered (2) and (3) shall be redressed within forty eight hours of receipt of such complaints;
- (6) no complaint, except billing related complaints referred in (3), shall remain unresolved beyond seventy two hours.

**74. What is the role of the Nodal Officer in the redressal of the complaint of the subscriber?**

In case a subscriber is not satisfied with the redressal of the complaint by the customer care centre, such subscriber may approach the Nodal Officer of the distributor of television channels for redressal of his complaint. The Nodal Officer designated under respective regulations is responsible for-

- (1) Register every complaint lodged by the subscriber;

- (2) Issue an acknowledgement to the subscriber within two days from the date of the receipt of the complaint indicating there in the unique complaint number;
- (3) Redress such complaints of subscriber within ten days from the date of the receipt of the complaint and intimate the decision taken thereon in respect of such complaint to the subscriber.

The distributor of television channel is mandated to provide the details of Nodal Officer for every state on its website as well as on customer care programming service and also report to TRAI.

**75. Is compliance officer of a service provider i.e. both broadcaster & distributor also authorized to resolve subscriber's grievances?**

Redressal of complaints of subscribers is explained in answers to the questions 72-74 above, wherein every distributor is required to establish customer care centres and appoint state wise nodal officers. The duties of compliance officer are related to ensuring compliance of TRAI Regulations by the entity as given below:

- (1) Responsible for generating awareness for ensuring compliance with the provisions of TRAI regulations.
- (2) Reporting to the Authority, with respect to compliance with TRAI regulations and directions of the Authority issued under its regulations.
- (3) Ensuring that proper procedures have been established and are being followed for compliance of TRAI regulations.

So, compliance officer is not authorized to resolve individual subscriber's grievances.

**76. To what extent my personal information/data shared with distributors/Local Cable Operators are safe?**

As per TRAI Regulations, every distributor of television channels or its linked local cable operator, as the case may be, shall ensure privacy and protection of subscribers' personal



information and the same shall not be used for any other purpose except in accordance with law.

**77. What will be the timeline for activation of channel/bouquet?**

Every distributor of television channels or its linked local cable operator upon receiving a request from a subscriber, activate requested channel or bouquet available on its platform, as soon as possible, but not later than seventy two hours.

**78. What will be the timeline for de-activation of channel/bouquet?**

Every distributor of television channels or its linked local cable operator upon receiving a request from a subscriber, de-activate requested channel or bouquet available on its platform, as soon as possible, but not later than seventy two hours.

However, it shall be permissible for the distributor, to refuse such deactivation request if the subscription of such channel or bouquet is within a lock-in period which was declared by the distributor on its website and informed to the subscriber at the time of subscription of such channel or bouquet.

**79. How would the consumers be informed about change/discontinuation of channel/bouquet?**

Every distributor of television channels shall inform its subscribers about any change in the nature of a channel/bouquet available on its platform, at least fifteen days prior to the scheduled change, by running scrolls on television screen and such information shall also be disseminated through customer care programming service.

**80. What rebate would be provided to the consumers if the signals of television channels are disrupted?**

In case signals of television channels are continuously disrupted for a period exceeding seventy two hours, the distributor of television channels or its linked local cable operator, as the case may be, shall reduce the subscription charges of the subscriber by an amount

equivalent to the proportionate distributor retail price and network capacity fee in respect of such channels for the entire period of such disruption. However, the period of such disruption shall be calculated from the time the complaint is registered by the subscriber.

**81. What is the timeline for relocation of service connection?**

In case a subscriber requests for relocation of his service connection from one location to another location, the distributor of television channels or its linked local cable operator, as the case may be, shall, subject to technical and operational feasibility, relocate the connection within a period of seven days from the date of receipt of such request.

**82. What is the timeline for disconnection of service connection?**

Every distributor of television channels or its linked local cable operator, as the case may be, shall, upon request from the subscriber, disconnect the service connection of broadcasting services related to television to such subscriber from the date indicated by the subscriber in his request and refund the deposits due to the subscriber, subject to fulfilment of the terms and conditions for providing services as agreed by the distributor and the subscriber, within seven days thereafter. However, the subscriber shall make such request for disconnection at least fifteen days before the requested date of disconnection.

**83. What happens if a service provider violates the Tariff Order & Regulations?**

Service providers that violate the Tariff Order and Regulations may face financial disincentives as prescribed in regulations. Financial disincentives are in place to ensure that service providers comply with the Tariff Order and Regulations, helping to protect consumer interests.

### **List of Acronyms**

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Description</b>
BIS	Bureau of Indian Standards
CAF	Consumer Application Form
CAS	Conditional Access System
CPE	Customer Premises Equipment
DPO	Distribution Platform Operator
DRP	Distributor Retail Price
DTH	Direct to Home
EPG	Electronic Programme Guide
FTA	Free to Air
GST	Goods and Services Tax
HD	High Definition
HITS	Headend-In-The-Sky
IPTV	Internet Protocol Television
LCO	Local Cable Operator
MIB	Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
MRP	Maximum Retail Price
MSO	Multi-System Operator
NCF	Network Capacity Fee
QoS	Quality of Service
RIO	Reference Interconnect Offer
SD	Standard Definition
SIM	Subscriber Identity Module
SMS	Short Message Service
STB	Set Top Box
TRAI	Telecom Regulatory Authority of India

## **Contact Details of Service Providers**

### **Contact numbers of DTH Operators**

<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Name of DTH Operator</b>	<b>Contact Number</b>
1.	Airtel	18001036065
2.	Dish TV	9501795017
3.	Dish TV (for brand d2h)	1800212212
4.	Sun Direct	18001037575
5.	Tata Play	18002086633

### **Contact numbers of HITS Operators**

<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Name of HITS Operator</b>	<b>Contact Number</b>
1.	NXT Digital	18002100400

### **Contact numbers of Multi-System Operators**

The contact details of the MSOs are available on their websites. The following are the major MSOs that have subscriber base greater than 1 million:

<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Name of MSO</b>	<b>Contact Number</b>
1.	Siti Networks Limited	18001234001
2.	Den Networks Limited	18004192020
3.	Hathway Digital Private Limited	18004197900
4.	GTPL Hathway	18004190419
5.	Fastway Transmission Pvt. Ltd	18001026602
6.	Tamil Nadu ARASU Cable TV Corporation Ltd	18004252911
7.	Kerala Communicators Cable Ltd	18004195755
8.	Thamizhaga Cable TV Communication Pvt. Ltd	18001029845
9.	Kal Cable Private Ltd	18001020728
10.	V.K. Digital Network Pvt. Ltd	18004199908
11.	NXT Digital	18002666456

### Useful Links

Category/Topic	Link to the webpage
TRAI	<a href="https://traigov.in/"><u>https://traigov.in/</u></a>
MIB	<a href="https://mib.gov.in/"><u>https://mib.gov.in/</u></a>
Prasar Bharati	<a href="https://prasarbharati.gov.in/"><u>https://prasarbharati.gov.in/</u></a>
Doordarshan	<a href="https://prasarbharati.gov.in/doordarshan/"><u>https://prasarbharati.gov.in/doordarshan/</u></a>
All India Radio	<a href="https://prasarbharati.gov.in/homepage-air/"><u>https://prasarbharati.gov.in/homepage-air/</u></a>
Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services (Eighth) (Addressable Systems) Tariff Order,2017	<a href="https://traigov.in/sites/default/files/CR_22072024.pdf"><u>https://traigov.in/sites/default/files/CR_22072024.pdf</u></a>
The Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services Interconnection (Addressable Systems) Regulations, 2017	<a href="https://traigov.in/sites/default/files/CR_18072024.pdf"><u>https://traigov.in/sites/default/files/CR_18072024.pdf</u></a>
The Telecommunication (Broadcasting and cable) Services Standards of Quality of Service and Consumer Protection (Addressable Systems) Regulations, 2017	<a href="https://traigov.in/sites/default/files/Consolidated_Regulation_16082024.pdf"><u>https://traigov.in/sites/default/files/Consolidated Regulation 16082024.pdf</u></a>
Consumer Group	<a href="https://traigov.in/list-registered-consumer-groups"><u>https://traigov.in/list-registered-consumer-groups</u></a>
Broadcast Seva Portal	<a href="https://new.broadcastseva.gov.in/digigov-portal-web-app/"><u>https://new.broadcastseva.gov.in/digigov-portal-web-app/</u></a>