

Consumers Association of India, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Issues of consultation

Question 1: Is the complaint redressal mechanism, as presently existing, adequate or is there a need to strengthen it?

Answer: The complaint redressal mechanism as presently existing is woefully inadequate. As per a report by the DOT, the median rate for the top 7 telecom forms is 11%. The report further states that there is dip in number of redressal, in an era of call drops and poor connectivity (attached details)

	Total Complaints	Responses	Resolved
Reliance	15,620	8,975	284
Aircel	6,432	4,799	234
Tata Docomo	95	3	3
MTS	2,270	217	19
Airtel	24,270	9,759	252
Vodafone	13,829	3,999	221
Idea	8,178	5,176	121

Source: consumer complaint forum, Department of telecommunications

Question 2: Are there any specific changes that can be made to the existing system to improve it?

Answer: The present system of replying through IVRS must be abolished and the calls must be attended by the persons who handle the lines. The minister of consumer affairs had wanted that the time limit of 3 minutes should be reduced to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ minutes in all help lines.

Question 3 : Should a separate- independent and appropriately empowered-structure to resolve telecom sector complaints and grievances be established?

Answer: The complaint redressal mechanism now in operation in the national and state help lines of the ministry of consumer affairs must be followed.

Question 4: If yes, comment with regard to the organization its structure” kinds of complaints to be handled and its powers?

Answer: Yes, it should have the same pattern of officials as available in the help lines of the Ministry of Consumer affairs.

Question 5: Is establishing an office of telecom ombudsman an option that should be revisited, especially given the experience of the past few years of increasing numbers of complaints?

Answer: At present the TRAI has no rural offices to regulate the telecom companies in the matter of consumer redressal

Except getting a QOS report on the functioning of these companies, the TRAI does not act further.

The ombudsman should carry out the decisions of the appellate authority of each telecom company

The ombudsman should be empowered to penalize service providers and compensate for mental agony. The funding of the ombudsman structure can be through the amount lying with TRAI by collection of penalties from telecom companies due to defective services. This is prevalent in all other ombudsman structures in insurance, banking etc.,

Yours Sincerely

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