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Following are our Comments & suggestions to Consultation Paper on Telecom Ombudsman;

Q1: Is the complaint redressal mechanism, as presently existing, adequate or is there a need to strengthen it?

It is not only inadequate, it is hopeless and serves no purpose. Telecom Consumers do not get any help from this system. There is a dire need to strengthen the mechanism for the benefit of aggrieved consumers.

Q2: Are there any specific changes that can be made to the existing system to improve it?

Yes. In the first attempt of TRAI, our Forum has forcefully advocated for a redressal mechanism that is independent of TSP and preferably judicial in nature.

Q3: Should a separate - independent and appropriately empowered - structure to resolve telecom sector complaints and grievances be established?

Yes. We back this mode for redressal of telecom complaints.

Q4: If yes, please comment with regard to the organization; its structure; kinds of complaints to be handled and its powers?

Yes. We suggest following type of complaint resolution system;

- a. A complaint redressal system should be established in every Telecom Circle at the head of that circle
- b. It should be headed by a retired or working Judicial Officer not below the rank of District Judge
- c. Would be system may consist of a single or multiple Judicial officers depending upon the number of complaints
- d. This system should be assisted by proper office set up with appropriate material and human resources
- e. Would be system should be an adjudicating authority with all powers of civil court as in civil procedure code; it should have necessary legal backing, through Legislation or a Statute. Their decisions shall be binding on the service providers. They should have the powers to award compensation.
- f. Kinds of complaints should be as in TRAI Regulation on Grievance Redressal.
- g. This system may be funded by the licensing fee

Q5: 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?

Yes.

Q6: If yes, how should it be created – the legal framework? What should be its structure? How should it be funded? What types of complaints should it handle? What should be its powers, functions, duties and responsibilities?

We advocate for following type of system;

- a. **It should be like Banking Ombudsman that is present for the benefit of Banking consumers of India**
- b. **It should be funded by licensing fee**
- c. **It should have all judicial powers including the powers to award compensation and pass penal orders**
- d. **It should be given the responsibility of handling complaints of that Telecom Circle for which it is established**

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Secretary