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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**

**K.N.Venkatagiri**

**Secretary**