

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India

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Consultation Paper on proposal for Amendment to the Tariff Order of 1.10.2004 relating to Broadcast and Cable TV Services

TRAI today released a Consultation Paper on Amendment to the Tariff Order of 1.10.2004 relating to Broadcast and Cable TV Services. This short consultation paper is in response to a proposal received from MSO Alliance, an alliance representing major Multi System Operators for amendment to the 'The Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services (Second) Tariff Order 2004 (6 of 2004) dated 1.10.2004.

2 The major proposal is for deletion of the words 'or as part of new separate bouquet' which would in effect mean that all new channels can only be provided as separate individual channels. The existing provisions interalia provide that the new pay channels/converted FTA to Pay Channels are to be offered on a 'stand alone' basis and not part of the bouquet existing as on 26.12.2003. The stand alone channels could be offered either individually or as part of a separate new bouquet at the option of the Broadcaster. The Tariff Order also provided that the rates of new pay channels/converted FTA to pay channels must be similar to the rates of similar channels as on 26.12.2003.

3 The proposals for amendment to the Tariff Order were examined by TRAI in the context of the detailed Recommendations on Broadcasting and Distribution of TV channels of 1.10.2004. A number of related issues have also come up. It has therefore been viewed that there is a need for more inputs and broader consultation before a final decision can be taken.

4. The consultation paper seeks inputs on the following major issues:

- Whether all new channels be provided as separate individual channels ?
- Whether the prices charged by broadcasters to the MSOs for channels /Bouquets launched after 26.12.2003 should be frozen at the levels at which they were introduced with an annual increase in inflation?
- Whether there is a need to provide for benchmarks in the Tariff Order for determining similarity in rates of similar channels and what can be the methods of arriving at these benchmarks and what should be the criterion for determining similarity of channels?
- What should be the approach in case an existing pay channel changes from one distributor to another and what would be the changes that may be required in the Tariff Order?
- Whether the prices charged by broadcasters to the MSOs should be released for public information by TRAI as and when there are changes?
- Whether TRAI should move towards pricing of Individual channels so that the consumers through the cable operators exercise wider choice regarding channels in a non –CAS environment?

5. The gist of the comments received will be posted on the TRAI's website. The full text of the consultation paper is available on the TRAI's website ([www.trai.gov.in](http://www.trai.gov.in)).

6. For any further clarification on the matter Secretary, TRAI may be contacted on “[rstrai@gmail.com](mailto:rstrai@gmail.com)” (Telephone No.011- 26167448) or Advisor (B&CS) on “[rkacker@traigov.in](mailto:rkacker@traigov.in)” (Telephone No.011- 26713291). The Fax number of TRAI is 011-26713442.