

TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA

Implementation of New Regulatory Framework for Broadcasting and Cable Services

New Delhi, 12th February 2019: Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), in March 2017, notified the 'New Regulatory Framework' (or the New Framework) for Broadcasting and Cable services. The new framework came into effect on 29th December 2018. However, to provide sufficient time to subscribers for exercising their options, the Authority provided time up to 31st January 2019. All the Distribution Platform Owners¹ (DPOs) are required to migrate the subscribers as per their choice with effect from 1st February 2019.

2. There are approx. 100 million cable service TV homes and 67 million DTH TV homes in the country. As on date, approximately 65% of the subscribers of the cable services and 35% subscribers of the DTH services have already exercised the options. It was brought to the notice of the Authority that as the system of selecting channels/bouquet by the subscribers had been introduced for first time in the country, some subscribers are facing difficulties in selecting the channels/bouquet of their choice. In some cases, LCOs have not been able to reach out to subscriber to create awareness among them and collect the options. Some subscribers may be required to go to nearest Point of Sale (POS) for exercising their option as they did not have access to IT facility or are not comfortable in using IT system to exercise their options.

3. A few cases have been reported recently where pay channels of the subscribers who have not exercised the options have been deactivated. Such incidences are causing hardship to the subscribers. The Authority



¹ Direct To Home (DTH) service providers, Multi System Operators (MSOs) and Headend Into The Sky (HITS) operators are collectively referred as Distribution Platform Owners (DPOs)

has been emphasising time and again that no inconvenience should be caused to subscribers while they are migrated to the new framework.

4. In view of the above issues and to assess to status of implementation of new framework, a meeting of all DTH operators and major Multi System Operators (MSO) were convened in the TRAI office on 11.02.2019. The operators informed that implementation of migration is in full swing and they stated that subscribers who have exercised their option have been migrated to new framework. They are making all efforts to reach out to remaining subscribers. They further assured that in no case any inconvenience would be caused to any subscriber in the whole migration process.

5. The Authority noted that though the new framework promotes consumer choice and enables the subscribers to pay for what they wish to view but 'non-exercise of the option' should not create any inconvenience to the subscribers. Accordingly, the Authority requests all DPOs to create 'Best Fit Plan' for its subscribers who have not exercised their options yet.

6. The 'Best Fit Plan' shall be designed based on Consumers' usage pattern and language spoken. It should preferably be a blended combination of various Genres, while making 'Best Fit Plan' for a subscriber, DPOs should ensure that payout per month of the 'Best Fit Plan' generally does not exceed the payout per month of existing tariff plan of the subscriber.

7. DPOs should continue to provide various user-friendly methods to subscribers to exercise their choice. These methods may include personal contact by Local Cable Operator, calling on Call Centre Number, using Mobile Apps or through Website. DPOs should also continue to generate awareness among the subscribers regarding new Regulatory framework, its benefits and methods to exercise the option to choose the channels of their choice.

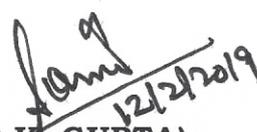


8. The Authority further reiterates that subscribers who have taken long term packs will continue to avail the services for the contracted period. However, they have freedom to choose the channels of their choice under the new regulatory framework and in case if they exercise this option, money for the remaining period shall be adjusted for their future use.

9. In view of the larger public interest, the Authority directs all DPOs that those subscribers who do not exercise their options shall be migrated to a 'Best Fit Plan'. The subscribers' old plan shall continue till either subscriber exercise his/her option, or he/she is migrated to the 'Best Fit Plan'. The Authority hereby, vide this press release, extends time up to 31st March 2019 for exercising the option by such subscribers who have not exercised option yet. Subscribers will be free to change their 'Best Fit Plan' at any date and time on or before 31st March 2019 and DPOs shall convert their 'Best Fit Plan' into the desired pack (channel/Bouquet) within 72 hours from the time choice exercised by the Subscriber. It is clarified that there will be no 'lock-in period' for the subscribers till 31st March 2019 who has been migrated to 'Best Fit Plan' by DPOs.

10. In case any further clarifications or details are required the following officers may be contacted:

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