

Making Corporate India Comply

TRAI Clarification on news articles published on 'Draft Regulations on Metering and Billing' and 'Tariff Plan Verification'

Updated at 20 May 2023 9:58AM IST

Clarificatory note on issue related to 'Draft Regulations on Accuracy of Metering & Billing System, way forward for light touch regulations':

- The proposed Regulations, in fact, reduce the burden of service providers in terms of number of audits being conducted in a year. Instead of auditing each LSA in each quarter, audit is proposed on yearly basis which means each LSA is to be audited only once in a year (reduction of 75 per cent efforts).
- Emphasis has been given to the audit of centralised system rather than reaching to each LSA and duplicating audit of each plan. Now, LSA audit will be subjected to only those plans which are not subjected to the centralised audit.
- Provisions have been made for self-correction of errors by the service providers. If the corrective actions are taken in time by service providers, then no financial disincentives will be imposed. A self-certificate in this regard will meet the audit requirement.
- The audit methodology currently in practice does not represent all segments of pre-paid customers, which contribute almost 95 per cent of the total customer base. Plans selection process has been rationalised to get a proper representation of all types of plans. However, in this case also, total quantum of samples will be similar to earlier quantum.
- Though TRAI acknowledges that most of the plans offered are on unlimited basis, however each plan has got fair usage policy (FUP) limit which determines the quality and quantity of usage of service by the consumers. To have a continued confidence of consumers towards service provider and the regulator, it is essential to continue the audit process.
- Efforts have been made to encourage service providers to refund overcharged amount, if any detected during the audit, to the customers promptly. Accordingly, the impact of financial disincentives has also been rationalised.
- Confidence built up on system accuracy through audit process shall further reduce burden of LSA audit on the Service Providers.

The TRAI clarificatory note on issue related to 'Tariff plan verification':

- Examination of tariff offers filed by telecom companies are being done by Authority in a routine manner to ensure compliance of same with extant regulatory provisions.
- Examination of Tariff is in vogue for last many years since inception of TTO in the year 1999.

Making Corporate India Comply

- There is no special drive being undertaken by TRAI to probe all the past tariff plans filed by telecom companies except those specific plans under examination.
- Any tariff may be subjected to fresh examination as per statutory mandate of the Authority on receipt of complaint of non-compliance to regulatory principles, including allegation of predatory nature of tariff by any stakeholder including TSP(s).
- On receipt of specific complaints of alleged predation by few TSPs, the matter is under examination and appropriate action as per regulatory provisions will be taken.