

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1094
ANSWERED ON:15.11.2010
WORKS UNDERTAKEN BY TRAI
Rama Devi Smt.

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the benchmark quality services rendered by the service providers are subjected to review by TRAI;
- (b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years and the current year;
- (c) whether TRAI has not been effective in protecting the interests of the subscribers adequately;
- (d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (e) the remedial steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SACHIN PILOT)

(a) to (e) Madam, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) Act, 1997 (24) of 1997), as per provisions under section 11 (1) (b) (v) mandates the TRAI to 'lay down the standards of quality of service to be provided by the service providers and ensure the quality of service and conduct the periodical survey of such service provided by the service providers so as to protect interest of the consumers of telecommunication services'. Accordingly TRAI has laid down the quality of service standards to be performed by service providers through Quality of Service Regulations issued from time to time. During the last three years 2007-08 to 2009-10, TRAI had reviewed the Regulation on Quality of Service of Basic and Cellular Mobile Telephone Services, 2005 dated 1st July, 2005 and had issued the Standards of Quality of Service of Basic Telephone Service (Wireline) and Cellular Mobile Telephone Service Regulations, 2009 dated 20th March, 2009, repealing the regulations of 2005. TRAI is currently reviewing the consumer centric parameters contained in the Standards of Quality of Service of Basic Telephone Service (Wireline) and Cellular Mobile Telephone Service Regulations, 2009.

TRAI has taken several measures, from time to time, to protect the interest of consumers through issue of various regulations, directions and orders, following a transparent consultation process and taking into account the views expressed by stakeholders, including consumers and consumer organizations.

Transparency in the provision of telecommunications services and tariff offers are one of the concerns of TRAI. TRAI has in the past issued several regulatory guidelines to enhance transparency in the provisions of telecommunication services.

To address the concerns of consumers relating to billing, TRAI has mandated service providers through the Quality of Service (Code of practice for Metering and Billing Accuracy) Regulations 2006 dated 21st March 2006, which provides for Audit of Metering and Billing System of service providers through any one of the auditors appointed by the service providers from the panel of auditors notified by TRAI. The service providers are also required to submit the audit report by 30th June of every year and the action taken report on deficiencies if any pointed out by the auditor in the audit report by the 30th September of every year. The audit of metering and billing system of service providers undertaken in pursuance of these regulations have revealed over charging of calls in certain cases and such audit has helped in identifying billing deficiencies and also in effecting improvements in billing system. This has also resulted in refund of excess charges levied to affected consumers.

Regarding redressal of grievances of consumers, TRAI has prescribed the institutional framework, time limits and processes for handling of complaints by the service providers through the Telecom Consumers Protection and Redressal of Grievances Regulations, 2007. These regulation provide for a three stage grievance redressal mechanism at the level of Call Centre, Nodal Officer, and Appellate Authority. TRAI monitors the redressal of grievances of telecom consumers by the three stage grievance redressal machinery of the service providers through quarterly reports.