

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1486  
ANSWERED ON:06.03.2013  
ROLE OF TRAI  
Alagiri Shri S. ;Khaire Shri Chandrakant Bhaurao

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

- (a) whether the TRAI is playing its role effectively and functioning its duties purposefully;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether there has been some lapses on the part of TRAI in protecting the rights of telecom subscribers;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard; and
- (e) the details of cases decided/verdict given by TRAI against telecom operators and in favour of telecom customers?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI MILIND DEORA)

(a) to (e) "TRAI has contributed significantly in the growth of telecom services, resulting in increase in consumer base and deployment of vast network of the telecom services by the service providers across the length and breadth of the country. These measures have resulted in overall benefits to the consumer in terms of choice of services, affordable tariff of telecom services, and better quality of services etc. The exponential growth in subscriber numbers and its reach establishes the effective functioning of the Organisation. These achievements are result of supportive regulatory environment created by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India through issue of various Regulations, Directions and Orders.

TRAI has taken various steps, from time to time to protect the interests of consumers. A brief summary of these measures are given below:

TRAI has been monitoring quality of service provided by Service Providers against the benchmarks laid down by TRAI for the various quality of service parameters through Quality of Service Regulations issued from time to time, through quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports (PMRs) submitted by service providers. TRAI also undertakes objective assessment of the Quality of Service of Basic, Cellular and Broadband Services through independent agencies. A customer satisfaction survey is also conducted quarterly through these agencies. The results of these audit and surveys are being published for public/Stakeholders knowledge. TRAI has been following up with the Service Providers for addressing deficiencies in meeting the Quality of Service benchmarks.

To further strengthen the quality of standards TRAI had issued "The Standards of Quality of Service of Basic Telephone Service (Wireline) and Cellular Mobile Telephone Services (Second Amendment) Regulation, 2012 on 8th November 2012 for financial disincentives on those service providers who fail to meet the prescribed Quality of Service (QoS) benchmarks for Basic Telephone Service (Wireline) and Cellular Mobile Telephone Service and The Quality of Service of Broadband Service (Amendment) Regulations, 2012, on 24th December 2012 for financial disincentive on Broadband Service operators for non-compliance with the benchmark for the Quality of Service Parameters.

To protect the interest of consumers relating to metering and billing, TRAI had issued the Quality of Service (Code of Practice for Metering and Billing Accuracy) Regulations, 2006, which mandates yearly audit of the metering and billing system of the service providers through qualified empanelled auditors. The service providers are required to submit an audit report duly certified from the empanelled auditors by 30th June of every year. The service providers are also required to file with TRAI by 30th September of every year action taken report on the deficiencies pointed out in the audit reports by the auditors.

The framework for redressal of grievances of telecom consumers was also reviewed to improve the effectiveness of complaints redressal for the telecom consumer by the service provider. TRAI had notified the Telecom Consumers Complaint Redressal Regulation 2012 on 5th January 2012. These regulations provide for establishment of a Complaint Centre with a toll-free "Consumer Care Number", two-tier complaint redressal mechanism, registering of complaints by giving a unique docket number, a two member Advisory Committee in each of the service areas by the service provider comprising of one member from consumer organization registered with TRAI, publishing of Citizen's Charter and setting up of a Web based complaint monitoring system etc.

TRAI has also reviewed the offering and marketing of various vouchers in the market and provision of information to consumers after activation of every voucher and after every usage and issued The Telecom Consumers Protection Regulations, 2012 on 6th January 2012.

To address the problem of Unsolicited Commercial Communications (UCC) effectively, TRAI had issued The Telecom Commercial Communications Customer Preference Regulations, 2010 on 1st December 2010. In order to further strengthen the regulatory framework and to address various implementation issues, several amendments to the regulations and directions have been issued by TRAI, from time to time.

TRAI has also issued The Telecommunication Consumers Education and Protection Fund Regulations, 2007 on 15th June 2007, to enable the service providers to transfer unrefunded money of customers lying with them to Telecommunication Consumers Education and Protection Fund (TCEPF). The income received from the fund is utilised to undertake programmes to educate consumers, to conduct studies in the field of telecommunications and holding seminars, workshops etc on the subject of consumer welfare and for educating consumers.

TRAI has been registering consumer organisations for having an interface with the telecom consumers through regular interaction with these consumer organisations. In this regard TRAI had recently issued the "Registration of Consumer Organisations Regulations on 21st February 2013, for strengthening the framework for interaction with the consumer organisations.

The above measures have been pivotal in protecting the interests of consumers.