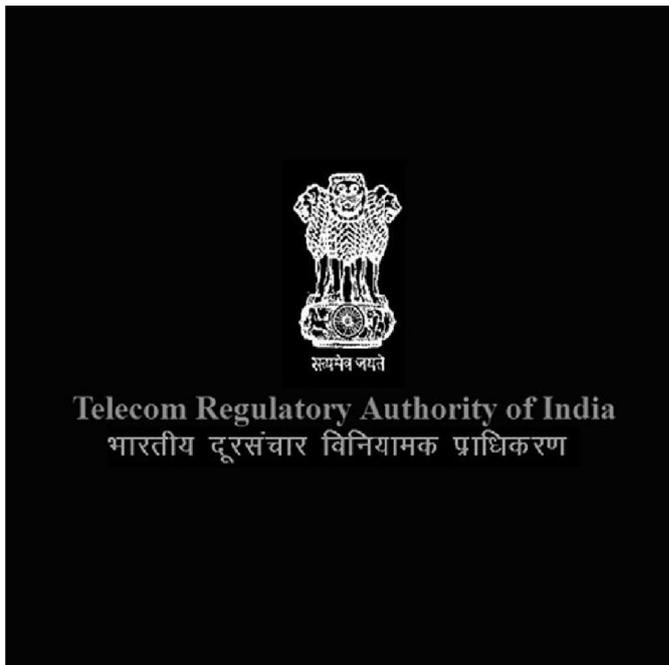


TRAI extends time for views on opening up DTT to private players

NEW DELHI: With sharing of Prasar Bharati infrastructure remaining a ticklish issue, the Telecom Regulatory Authority has decided to give more time to stakeholders to respond to its consultation paper on the issue of Digital Terrestrial Transmission (DTT), which has until now remained a monopoly of the public broadcaster Doordarshan.

Stakeholders can now respond with comments by 5 August and counter-comments on 12 August, and Trai has said no further time would be given.



The paper issued on 24 June 2016 was aimed at examining opening up DTT to private players in an effort to reach the largest audiences in the country.

indiantelelevision.com had earlier reported that the government was in the final stages of this exercise. Later, the website quoted Prasar Bharati Chief Executive Officer Jawhar Sircar has saying that the pubcaster had itself cleared this more than a year earlier, even while pointing out that this would necessitate use of the Prasar Bharati infrastructure.

DD, which presently has exclusive domain over terrestrial broadcasting, ranks amongst the world's largest terrestrial television networks. It has a network of 1412 analog transmitters that provide TV services through two national channels namely, DD National and DD News. In addition to this, the network also broadcast several regional TV channels over the terrestrial network in a time sharing mode to meet the local and regional needs of people in different parts of the country. All TV channels provided by DD are free-to-air.

DTT for broadcasting TV programme services was first introduced in the UK in 1998 by deploying the first generation DVB-T standard developed by the European Digital Video Broadcasting (DVB) group. Since then, Trai says many new standards have evolved and at this juncture implementation of the second generation standards are underway. The DTT broadcasting spectrum has been harmonized with earlier analog spectrum allocation and therefore DTT makes use of similar analog channel allocations. Latest DTT technologies provide a number of advantages over analog terrestrial broadcasting technology, of which some include better quality TV reception - with enhanced picture and sound performance; eEfficient use of frequency – one DTT transmitter can broadcast multiple TV channels; frequency reuse possible – a single frequency network (SFN) can be implemented to cover a

large geographical area; efficient reception of TV channels in portable environment such as on moving vehicles; TV channels can also be received on mobile phones and handheld devices; and the 7 or 8 MHz TV frequency band can accommodate 10-12 Standard Definition (SD) TV channels or it can be employed as a data pipe to deliver different type of services including radio services.

The DTT platform is flexible and content format agnostic - newer formats of TV channels such as HD TV, 3D TV, UHD TV, data and radio services etc. can thus be delivered with reduced transmission power requirements. Digitization also allows for government bodies to reclaim spectrum and repurpose it.

With standardized DTT transmission and clear advantages in terms of effective frequency utilization as well as enhanced TV quality, many countries the world over have laid down clear roadmaps to switch-off analog terrestrial TV transmission with a transition to DTT. In India, though work for changeover from Analog terrestrial transmission to digital terrestrial transmission by DD has already commenced, a clear roadmap is however unavailable.