



TRAI issues the Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services Interconnection (Addressable Systems) (Seventh Amendment) Regulations, 2026

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Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has today issued the Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services Interconnection (Addressable Systems) (Seventh Amendment) Regulations, 2026.

During various interactions with the Authority, the stakeholders had highlighted the need for:

- i improving audit related provisions in the Interconnection Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the audit manual,
- ii. reducing repetitive audits of DPOs, resulting in resource wastage, operational disruption, and diminished stakeholders' confidence in the audit process,
- iii. incorporating provisions related to infrastructure sharing in the audit framework, and
- iv. enhancing the accountability of auditors and categorising auditors based on their experience to ensure credibility of auditors.

To enhance accountability and credibility of audit process, technical proficiency requirements, categorisation of auditors based on their experience and stringent accountability provisions have been incorporated into the Expression of Interest (EOI) document issued by TRAI in August 2025 for empanelment of auditors.

Further, to address the issues related to audit framework, TRAI issued a consultation paper on 'Audit related provisions of Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services Interconnection (Addressable Systems) Regulations, 2017 and the Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services Digital Addressable Systems Audit Manual' on 9th August 2024 for seeking comments of the stakeholders. 64 comments and 03 counter comments were received from the stakeholders, which were placed on TRAI's website. An open house discussion was held on 5th December 2024.

Subsequently, TRAI issued Draft Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services Interconnection (Addressable Systems) (Seventh Amendment) Regulations, 2025 on 22nd September 2025, for stakeholders' comments. 37 comments were received from the stakeholders which were placed on TRAI's website.

Based on the above consultations, the Authority has finalized these Amendment Regulations. The salient features of the same include:

- Clearly defined timelines for audits; wherein distributors have to conduct audit and submit audit report to broadcasters by 30th September every year.
- Audit is to be done on financial year basis in place of calendar year.

- Broadcasters can depute their representative during audit to ensure transparency and credibility of the audit process.
- If broadcasters find inadequacies/discrepancies in audit report, they can seek clarifications from the auditor through DPO. Auditors must clarify the same in a time-bound manner.
- If broadcaster is not satisfied with these clarifications, it can get the audit conducted at its own cost, after obtaining approval of the Authority.
- In case a broadcaster does not receive the audit report by 30th September from the distributor, it can cause audit of such a distributor.
- To promote ease of doing business, the requirement of annual audit at DPOs cost has been made optional for distributors with fewer than 30000 subscribers. However, broadcasters can get such DPOs audited at broadcasters' cost.
- In case of infrastructure sharing, SMS and CAS/DRM should meet all the specified requirements for each distributor. Separate instances are required to be created such that entity wise reconciliation is possible.
- Infrastructure provider has to insert network logo watermarking for all pay channels at the encoder end, while seeker has to provide network logo through STB/middleware. However, to ensure best viewing experience for the viewers, preferably only two logos should be visible.
- The amended audit manual will be issued in alignment with the updated regulatory framework shortly.

The aforesaid amendments in the audit related provisions in regulations, coupled with strengthening of criteria for empanelment of auditors will ensure enhanced credibility and accountability in the audit process. It will reduce the instances of repetitive audits without compromising stakeholder trust. It will also reduce costs for DPOs as well as broadcasters and ensure time bound completion of the audit exercise.

Full text of the Regulation is available on the TRAI's website www.trai.gov.in.

For any clarification/information, Dr. Deepali Sharma, Advisor (B&CS), TRAI, may be contacted at email ID: advbcs-2@trai.gov.in or Telephone +91-11-20907774.

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