

TRAI releases 'Rating of Properties for Digital Connectivity (Amendment) Regulations, 2026 (3 of 2026)'

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The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) released the 'Rating of Properties for Digital Connectivity (Amendment) Regulations, 2026 (3 of 2026)' on 13th May 2026.

TRAI had issued a Consultation Paper on 27th February 2026 seeking stakeholder inputs on certain proposed amendments to the Rating of Properties for Digital Connectivity Regulations, 2024 and the Rating Manual, based on implementation experience. During the course of implementation, stakeholder interactions, and capacity-building exercises, TRAI received feedback from Property Managers, Digital Connectivity Rating Agencies (DCRAs), service providers, and other stakeholders regarding certain practical aspects of implementation. These included issues relating to differentiation of rating levels, assessment of under-construction properties, categorisation of property types, and the need to enable property managers of existing properties to assess digital connectivity infrastructure prior to applying for formal ratings.

Based on stakeholder comments, implementation experience, and further analysis, the following key amendments and refinements have been incorporated into the Regulations:

i) Additional 'Star' Rating Levels: The rating framework has been refined by introducing additional half-star levels, thereby expanding the rating scale from five to nine levels. This refinement will enable better differentiation among properties, provide greater visibility to incremental improvements in digital connectivity infrastructure and service performance, and help consumers make more informed comparisons between properties.

ii) Under-Construction Properties Eligible to Apply for Ratings: A large proportion of residential and commercial properties are marketed and sold during the construction phase itself. To enable consumers to have visibility into the level of digital connectivity infrastructure (DCI) planned for under-construction properties, the rating framework has been strengthened through a phased assessment mechanism.

Under the revised framework, the DCRA shall evaluate the design-stage DCI based on approved DCI design documents and declarations submitted by the property manager and issue an evaluation report along with a 'Designed For' certificate for the property. Thereafter, upon completion of construction and installation of In-Building Solutions (IBS), the DCRA shall evaluate the implementation of DCI in the property and issue an evaluation report along with an 'Installation Completed For' certificate. Finally, the DCRA shall undertake evaluation and award the 'Final' rating after the digital connectivity services become operational.

These measures are expected to improve transparency during the construction phase, encourage early integration of digital connectivity infrastructure in building design, and strengthen accountability between design commitments and actual implementation.

iii) Alignment of Property Types with Assessment Criteria: The categorisation of certain property types has been refined to improve alignment between property usage characteristics and applicable assessment methodologies. These refinements are intended to improve clarity, ensure more appropriate applicability of assessment criteria, and better reflect actual digital connectivity requirements across different property types.

iv) Optional Digital Connectivity Audit: It was observed that certain property managers of existing properties may wish to first evaluate the existing status of digital connectivity infrastructure in their properties, identify gaps, and undertake improvements before applying for a formal rating. In view of this, an Optional Digital Connectivity Audit has been introduced.

Under this mechanism, property managers may engage a registered DCRA to undertake an audit of the existing Digital Connectivity Infrastructure without entering into the formal rating process. The audit report will provide a sub-criteria-wise assessment of the existing status of digital connectivity infrastructure along with areas requiring improvement. This mechanism is expected to encourage proactive enhancement of digital connectivity infrastructure and support wider adoption of the Digital Connectivity Rating framework.

v) Revision in Code of Conduct for DCRA: The Code of Conduct for DCRA has been strengthened to further reinforce independence and transparency in assessments. It has also been clarified that any DCRA engaged in the business of providing Digital Connectivity Infrastructure (DCI) shall not undertake digital connectivity assessment of properties where another DCRA has provided the DCI.

vi) Incorporation of References to National Building Construction Standards (NBCS), 2026: The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has issued the National Building Construction Standards (NBCS), 2026, revising the earlier National Building Code (NBC), 2016. Accordingly, references to the NBC have been substituted with NBCS.

The Regulations shall apply to property managers seeking rating or audit of properties for digital connectivity, Digital Connectivity Rating Agencies, In-Building Solution Providers establishing IBS within properties, and service providers integrating their telecommunication networks with the digital communication infrastructure, including IBS, of the properties for provision of telecommunication services.

The above amendments and refinements are aimed at enhancing clarity, improving implementation, strengthening transparency and accountability, facilitating wider participation of relevant stakeholders, and promoting robust, future-ready, and non-discriminatory digital connectivity infrastructure across properties, while preserving the core principles and objectives of the Digital Connectivity Rating framework.

The revised Rating Manual, incorporating the above amendments and refinements arising from stakeholder consultations and implementation experience, shall also be published on the TRAI website.

The amendments to the Regulations have been placed on TRAI's website (www.trai.gov.in) and shall come into force with effect from 13th May 2026.

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