



TRAI initiates phase-wise implementation of 1601-series for service and transactional calls by utilities, courier and logistics sectors entities

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The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has today issued the Direction on use of 1601 series numbers for the transactional and service calls by the entities in sectors other than Banking, Financial Services & Insurance (BFSI) sector, and Government entities which are using numbers from 1600 series, issued earlier. Considering the critical and sensitive nature of communications made by the entities in BFSI sector and Government, this separate series has been issued for the sectors other than BFSI and Government in order to avoid mixing of important financial voice calls with the service and transactional calls from the other sectors.

After widespread adoption of the 1600-series numbers for service and transactional calls by BFSI sector entities, which has provided valuable experience for extending the trusted numbering framework to the other sectors also, **TRAI has now initiated phase-wise implementation of the 1601-series allotted by the DoT** for similar calls by the entities in sectors other than BFSI sector and Government. Based on consultations with stakeholders, it has been decided to implement the series, covering entities in **Utilities, Courier and Logistics sectors under Phase-I**.

The 1601-series numbers will be allocated directly to eligible entities, and not to intermediaries or aggregators, after due verification by the telecom service providers (TSPs). Their adoption is, therefore, expected to become an important tool in combating impersonation by fraudsters who use normal 10-digit numbers and falsely claim to represent legitimate businesses. Moreover, the distinct numbering identity will enable the consumers to easily identify legitimate service and transactional calls, thereby, strengthening trust in such voice-based communications.

Key Provisions of the Direction

A. Phase-I sectors: The 1601-series shall be initially allocated to the eligible entities in the following sectors:

- i. **Utilities** – Electricity distribution companies, water utilities, city gas distribution companies, LPG distribution entities and such other utility service providers.
- ii. **Logistics and courier services** – Courier companies, express logistics companies, parcel delivery service providers, freight and logistics service providers engaged in delivery of consignments.

B. Time-bound onboarding

The Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) have been asked to complete migration and onboarding of eligible entities covered under Phase-I within 90 days from the date of issue of the order.

C. Verification and exclusive use

The TSPs shall verify the eligibility of entities before assigning 1601-series numbers, and obtain an undertaking from them regarding exclusive use of these numbers for service and transactional voice calls. The numbers shall not be used for promotional voice calls by any entity.

NJ/AR

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