Telecom Regulatory Authority of India

TRAI holds Open House Discussion on Net Neutrality Traffic Management Practices (TMPs)

New Delhi, 26th June, 2020: Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) held an Open House Discussions (OHD) on 24th of June, via online video conference, on the subject- Net Neutrality Traffic Management Practices (TMPs). This was done in reference to additional recommendations sought by the Department of Telecom (DoT) related to Net Neutrality, a subject on which TRAI has earlier given its recommendations in November 2017. After setting core principles of "Net Neutrality", additional recommendations are regarding reasonable traffic management practices which TSPs may adopt and institutional mechanisms required to monitor and enforce core principles of Net Neutrality.

2. OHDs play an important role in providing opportunities for stakeholders to participate in face-to-face meetings, express their views and support or counter arguments of others in an interactive way. OHD is conducted after submission of written comments and counter comments by the stakeholders. Transparency in the process and making consultations more participative has always been part of TRAI's consultation process.

3. Like other meetings and conferences, OHD was used to be a physical gathering of people for better interaction. Recently, COVID-19 situation has forced us to avoid physical meetings and conduct OHDs affecting the key part of the consultation process. Even if OHDs would have been planned to be held with social distancing norms- substantial reduction in the numbers of people who can be present in the event- OHDs would have lost its basic character of being "OPEN" as the number of participants would have been restricted. And even if one would have been part of the invitee list, he might not have attended the OHD if it was required for him to travel from another part of the country.
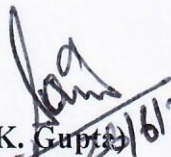
4. TRAI had to devise a mechanism, so that it can complete the consultation process with the requirements of social distancing norms and without compromising on OHD stage. To accomplish this, TRAI has started holding OHDs using online video conference

platforms which allows stakeholders to participate remotely in almost the same manner and with same vigour as it used to be in a physical OHDs.

5.   In the virtual OHD held recently on 24th June, more than 125 participated, from various organisations/sectors such as Telecom Services Providers (TSPs), Internet Service Providers (ISPs), Law firms, Technology firms, Media, Academia etc., and associations representing different sectors like Telecom, Internet, Broadband, Commerce and Industry etc. It also had international participants from various countries such as the USA, UK, Singapore, Hongkong etc. Renowned personalities on the subject like Professor Barbara Schewick from Stanford University have also participated. Online remote participation facility has enabled International participation. Virtual OHD has made the consultation process more inclusive, participative and truly international.

6.   TRAI would continue its endeavour to make its consultation process more wide based and engaging. For any clarifications Mr. Asit Kadayan, Advisor (QOS) may be contacted on telephone 011-23230404, email advqos@trai.gov.in

(S.K. Gupta) 26/6/2020
Secretary, TRAI