

Information note to the Press

For Immediate Release

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Telecom Regulatory Authority of India

TRAI Releases Telecom Consumers Protection (Eighth Amendment) Regulations, 2015

New Delhi 7th August, 2015: TRAI today issued the “Telecom Consumers Protection (Eighth Amendment) Regulations, 2015” to protect the interest of consumers using wireless data service.

2. TRAI has been receiving several complaints from consumers regarding non-availability of information relating to the amount of data used during a data session. The service providers offer concessional tariff for data, upto a certain limit, through Special Tariff Vouchers or Combo Vouchers (data packs), add on packs and also through certain tariff plans. The tariff for any usage beyond the specified limit is substantially higher. Therefore if the customer unknowingly exceed the limit for concessional tariff, it results in substantial charges being levied, leading to sudden bill shock or unexpected deduction of balance amount. The consumers have also voiced their concern about activation of internet service on mobile phones without their consent and deduction of charges for data usage. For addressing these concerns of the customers, TRAI proposed certain measures for public consultation through the draft Telecom Consumers Protection (Eighth Amendment) Regulations, 2015 issued on 29th April, 2015. Comments of stakeholders were sought upto 26.05.2015. Keeping in view the comments received during this consultation process and discussions with the service providers and their industry associations, TRAI today issued the Telecom Consumers Protection (Eighth Amendment) Regulations, 2015, the salient features of which are given below:-

i) **Information to consumers relating to usage of data:** Service providers have been mandated to provide, through SMS or USSD---

(a) Information to mobile data users regarding data used, after every 10MB of data usage to all mobile data users except users of special data packs (STV/Combo/add-on-pack). The consumers to be provided an option to opt out if they do not desire to receive such information.

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(b) Information to users of various of special data packs (STV/Combo/add-on-pack), whenever the limit of data usage reaches 50%, 90% and 100% of data available in the account of the subscriber or when the data balance available in the account of the subscriber reaches 500 MB, 100 MB and 10 MB. Further the consumer shall be informed about the details of tariff applicable after exhausting the data limit, when the data limit reaches 90% or the data balance available in the account reaches 10 MB.

(c) An alert to international roaming customer cautioning him to deactivate data service if he does not intend to use data services.

The service providers' have been given time till 1st November 2015 for implementation.

ii) **Activation or Deactivation of data services:**

(a) Data services should be activated only with the explicit consent of the subscriber through a toll free short code 1925. The data services could also be deactivated through the toll free short code 1925.

(b) Data services through Special Tariff Voucher or Combo Voucher or add-on pack will be deemed to have been activated with consent till the expiry of the validity period of the voucher/pack or on the consumption of entire data, whichever is earlier.

(c) The customers should also be informed through SMS at periodic intervals about the prescribed procedure for deactivation of data.

The service providers' have been given time till 1st September 2015 for implementation.

3. The "Telecom Consumers Protection (Eighth Amendment) Regulations, 2015" is available on TRAI website <http://www.trai.gov.in>. For any further clarifications please contact Mr. A. Robert J. Ravi, Advisor (QOS) on 011-23230404.

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Secretary-in-charge