



DIRECTIONS FOR GREEN COMMUNICATION

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Directions for green communication

As part of the global initiatives to contain emissions of greenhouse gases and with a view to reduce carbon emissions in the telecom sector, TRAI had, in April 2011, given its recommendations on “Approach Towards Green Telecommunications”. Government has accepted these recommendations and directions have been accordingly issued to service providers on January 04, 2012. The highlights of these directions are: **(i)** At least 50% of all rural towers and 20% of the urban towers are to be powered by hybrid power (Renewable Energy Technologies (“**RET**”) + Grid power) by 2015. Further 75% of rural towers and 33% of urban towers are to be powered by hybrid power by 2020; **(ii)** All telecom products, equipments and services in the telecom network should be certified “Green Passport” by the year 2015. Telecommunication Engineering Centre will certify telecom products, equipments and services on the basis of ECR ratings; **(iii)** All service providers should declare to TRAI, the carbon footprint of their network operations. The declaration of the carbon footprints should be done twice in a year; **(iv)** Service providers should adopt a voluntary code of practice encompassing energy efficient network planning, infra-sharing, deployment of energy efficient technologies and adoption of RET to reduce carbon footprints; **(v)** Service providers should evolve a “Carbon Credit Policy” in line with carbon credit norms with the ultimate objective of achieving a maximum of 50% over the carbon footprint levels of the Base Year (2011) in rural areas and achieving a maximum of 66% over the carbon footprint levels of the base year in urban areas by the year 2020; **(vi)** Service providers should aim at carbon emission reduction targets for the mobile network at 5% by the year 2012-2013, 8% by the year 2014-2015, 12% by the year 2016-2017 and 17% by the year 2018-2019.

PSA view – It is pleasing to see such directives and the impact that they can ultimately create on environment. Indeed such steps are always welcome for the greater good of environment and controlling the emission of greenhouse gases. This will allow the renewable energy service companies to gain benefits and in turn will also reduce the dependence of tower companies on diesel.

TRAI issues norms for better customer services

TRAI has mandated by way of the Regulations that all telecom operators requires setting up a complaint centre that would have a toll-free number and can be accessed by a subscriber of even another mobile operator. Such a centre would be responsible to address all complaints it receives from the consumers. Further, the Regulations also mandates that all operators have to set up a web-based complaint monitoring system, through which the consumer can track their complaints. The Regulation proposes to replace the

existing three-tier complaint redressal mechanism (comprising call centre, nodal centre and appellate authority) with a two-tier system by doing away with the nodal officer. Every complaint at the centre will be registered by giving a unique docket number, which will remain in the system for at least three months. The docket number, along with the date and time of registration and the time limit for resolution of the complaint, would be communicated to the consumer through SMS. The customer shall also be informed of the action taken through an SMS. The service provider shall also set up a two-member advisory committee in each of the service areas wherein one member should be from the consumer organization registered with TRAI and the other from the service provider.

PSA view – This step proposes to better customer services. The two-tier redressal system definitely makes sense as the complaint centre is generally assigned the task of registration and responses, and do not deal with the resolution of complaints. Depending upon the complexity of the problems, the involvement of any officer within a company is determined. Mobile operators now has to publish a telecom consumers' charter that will contain different time-frames specified by the authority for various complaints and various procedures related to services, like mobile number portability, etc.

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