

## TRAI Telecommunication Regulations, 2026

**Prelims:** Current events of national and international importance | Governance

### Why in News?

Recently, TRAI issued the Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services Interconnection (Addressable Systems) (Seventh Amendment) Regulations, 2026.

- **Aim** - To enhance credibility, accountability and efficiency of the audit process in broadcasting and cable services.
- **Amendment to** - Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services Interconnection (Addressable Systems) Regulations, 2017.
- **Under** - Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI).
- **Objectives** -
  - Improve audit-related provisions.
  - Reduce repetitive audits of Distribution Platform Operators (DPOs).
  - Incorporate infrastructure sharing in the audit framework.
  - Strengthen the accountability and credibility of auditors.
- **Key Features** -

Aspects	Provisions
<b>Audit Timeline</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual audit <b><u>to be conducted on a financial year basis</u></b> and audit report to be submitted by 30<sup>th</sup> September every year.</li> </ul>
<b>Audit Transparency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadcasters allowed to depute representatives during audits.</li> </ul>
<b>Clarification Mechanism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadcasters can seek clarifications on discrepancies through DPO.</li> <li>• Auditors must respond within a time limit.</li> </ul>
<b>Re-Audit Provision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If unsatisfied, the broadcaster may conduct an audit at its own cost after TRAI approval.</li> </ul>

<b>Non-submission of Audit Report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the distributor fails to submit the report by 30th September, the broadcaster can cause an audit of the distributor.</li> </ul>
<b>Small Distributors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual audit is <b><i>optional for DPOs with less than 30,000 subscribers.</i></b></li> <li>Here, the broadcasters may audit at their own cost.</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure Sharing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Separate SMS and CAS/DRM instances are required for each distributor for entity-wise reconciliation.</li> </ul>
<b>Logo &amp; Watermarking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Infrastructure provider to insert network logo watermark at encoder end for all pay channels.</li> <li>Seeker to provide logo via Set-Top Box (STB)/middleware; preferably, only two logos visible.</li> </ul>
<b>Audit Framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revised Audit Manual to be issued in line with amended regulations.</li> </ul>

- Significance - Credibility** - Enhances credibility and accountability of the audit process by reducing repetitive and overlapping audits.
- Ease of doing business** - *Lowers compliance costs for DPOs and broadcasters* by promoting ease of doing business in the broadcasting sector.
- Timeliness** - Ensures time-bound completion of audits without compromising stakeholder trust.

## Quick Facts

### The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)

- It is a *statutory body established by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997.*
- Aim** - To regulate telecom services, including fixation/revision of tariffs for telecom services which were earlier vested in the Central Government.
- The TRAI Act was amended in 2000 to establish the *Telecommunications Dispute Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT).*
- TDSAT** - Adjudicates any dispute between,
  - A licensor and a licensee,
  - Two or more service providers,
  - A service provider and a group of consumers,
  - And hears and disposes of appeals against any direction, decision or order of TRAI.

## References

[PIB | TRAI Telecommunication Regulations, 2026](#)

