



Telecom Regulatory Authority of India



Consultation Paper

on

**Formulation of a Regulatory Framework for
Application-based Linear Television Distribution
(ALTD) Services
(Including Free Ad-Supported Streaming
Television (FAST) Services)**

06th April 2026

World Trade Centre
4th, 5th, 6th & 7th Floor, Tower F
Nauroji Nagar
New Delhi-110029
Website: www.trai.gov.in

Written comments on the consultation paper are invited from the stakeholders by 4th May 2026. Counter comments, if any, may be submitted by 18th May 2026. Please support your comments with detailed reasons and justifications.

The comments and counter comments may be sent, preferably in electronic form to Dr. Deepali Sharma, Advisor (B&CS), Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, on the email advbcs-2@traigov.in and jtadvisor-bcs@traigov.in.

Comments and counter comments will be posted on TRAI's website: www.traigov.in.

For any clarification/information, Dr. Deepali Sharma, Advisor (B&CS) may be contacted at Tel. No.: +91-11-20907774.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER I: Introduction	1
A. MIB reference dated 15 th December 2025	1
B. Summary of stakeholder comments provided with MIB reference	3
C. Stakeholder representations to MIB.....	7
D. Meeting held with TV Manufacturers by TRAI.....	9
E. Stakeholders involved in offering FAST Services	11
F. TRAI Recommendations related to FAST Services	13
G. Indian Television Broadcasting Landscape.....	17
H. Market Insights and factors leading to adoption of FAST services in India ..	22
I. Scope of consultation paper.....	25
CHAPTER II: Issues for Consultation	27
A. Definition and Scope of ‘ALTD Services’	27
B. Primary Stakeholders provisioning ‘ALTD Services’.....	31
C. Terms and conditions for authorisation of application providers provisioning ‘ALTD Services’	33
D. Television channels offered by application providers of ‘ALTD Services’	48
E. Pay television channels available as free on ALTD service platforms	54
F. Consumer protection in the context of ‘ALTD Services’	57
G. Audience Measurement	58
H. Future consideration for ‘ALTD Services’	61
I. Any other issue.....	62
CHAPTER III: Summary of Issues for Consultation	64
List of Acronyms	70
Annexure-I.....	71

CHAPTER I

Introduction

A. MIB reference dated 15th December 2025

- 1.1 The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (hereinafter, referred to as “TRAI”, or “the Authority”) received a reference from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) on 15th December 2025 ([Annexure-I](#)), to provide its recommendations, under Section 11(1)(a) of the TRAI Act, 1997 for the formulation of an appropriate regulatory framework governing Free Ad-Supported Streaming Television (FAST) Services in India.
- 1.2 An extract of the reference dated 15th December 2025 is reproduced below:

‘...this Ministry has been deliberating on the industry concerns regarding the Free Ad-Supported Streaming Television (FAST) services in India. In this regard ministry received representations from industry stakeholders, including the All India Digital Cable federation (AIDCF), expressing concern over the unregulated FAST services (Copy attached).

2. The said issue was discussed with various industry stakeholders and comments were sought from them. The responses received from them (Copy attached) indicate that FAST platforms are currently being deployed through preloaded or built-in applications on connected TVs and operate on an advertisement-supported model without any licensing or registration framework.

3. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), in its earlier recommendations on (i) "Regulatory Framework for Ground-Based Broadcasters" (dated 15.01.2025) and (ii) "Framework for Service Authorisations for Provision of Broadcasting Services under the

Telecommunications Act, 2023" (dated 21.02.2025), has also noted the growing presence of FAST services and recognized the existence of regulatory gaps in the present framework and recommended that a separate authorization for FAST channel distribution may be considered.

4. In view of the above and keeping in mind the evolving broadcasting landscape, the Ministry is of the view that there is a need to examine the matter comprehensively and develop a clear regulatory framework for FAST services, ensuring parity, content accountability, and consumer protection.

5. Accordingly, in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 11(1)(a) of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997, the Ministry hereby seeks the recommendations of TRAI on the formulation of an appropriate regulatory framework governing Free Ad-Supported Streaming Television (FAST) services in India.

...'

1.3 The reference attached two representations received from a Multi-System Operator (MSO) association dated 16th June 2025 and 24th April 2025. The Ministry had also consulted various industry stakeholders and solicited their comments on certain issues pertaining to FAST Services via following specific questions, which are reproduced below:

- 1. Name of TV Manufacturer*
- 2. Brand Name(s) for Smart TV*
- 3. Model Name(s) and Size of Screen of Smart TVs*
- 4. Operating System in use*
- 5. Playstore (or known by any other name) in use for downloading of FAST channels*

6. *Complete list of PRE-LOADED FAST channels/applications for FAST channels*
7. *What is your process to verify the permission status of a channel before including it in your FAST service?*
8. *What internal systems are in place to ensure that all channels on your FAST service comply with the Programme Code and Advertising Code under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995?*
9. *How is compliance with content standards monitored — do you maintain a content recording/archiving system?*
10. *How do you handle complaints regarding objectionable content or advertising?*
11. *What is the commercial arrangement between Smart TV Manufacturer and broadcasters/content owners for carrying FAST channels?*
12. *Do you share advertising revenues with broadcasters, and on what terms?*
13. *What type of viewer data is collected through FAST services (e.g., watch time, channel preferences, demographics)?*

B. Summary of stakeholder comments provided with MIB reference

- 1.4 The responses have been received from three stakeholders, which are attached with the reference. An examination of the comments indicates three key stakeholders representing different segments of the ecosystem that operate under three distinct business models for distribution of FAST services. For ease of reference in this paper, these FAST services distribution business models have been termed as Business Model I, II and III championed by Stakeholders A, B, and C respectively. The summary of the responses received from these stakeholders are provided in the following paragraphs.

- 1.5 **Business Model I for distribution of FAST Services**: In this business model, Stakeholder A, engaged in manufacturing of television sets operates FAST services through its own secure application platform, which comes pre-installed on its smart TV models with screen size of 32 inches and above. It is also available on its selected smart monitors, smart refrigerators, tablets and mobile phones. These smart TVs operate on its own proprietary operating system. As on 5th September 2025, the FAST service offered through its application carried more than 150 linear channels.
- 1.6 Regarding compliance with Programme Code and Advertising Code, the stakeholder submitted that most of the channels available on its application are already present on linear television, Direct-to-Home (DTH), cable and over-the-top (OTT) platforms and therefore have established rights and permissions. Further, verification of channels is undertaken prior to onboarding. The stakeholder mentioned that advertising content on its application is controlled independently and does not rely on content partners for advertisements. Advertisements carried on FAST channels are similar and, in most cases, identical, to those aired on DTH and cable platforms in India. Compliance is ensured with the Guidelines for Prevention of Misleading Advertisements and Endorsements, 2022¹, under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019² and the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) guidelines³. It also mentioned that there is no requirement under existing OTT regulations to maintain content recording or archiving systems, though due-diligence processes are in place to prevent the display of inappropriate content.

¹ https://doqa.gov.in/ccpa/files/CCPA_Notification.pdf

² https://consumeraffairs.gov.in/public/upload/files/CP%20Act%202019_1732700731.pdf

³ https://www.ascionline.in/wp-content/uploads/guidelines/ASCI_Codes_Guidelines_Book.pdf

- 1.7 With regard to complaints handling, it has been submitted that grievances and 'Voice of Customer' inputs are handled through Customer Care. It has further been stated that complaints raised through the FAST platform are logged, assessed and appropriate corrective actions, including removal of content, are undertaken wherever required.
- 1.8 In terms of revenue sharing, it has been submitted that the business model is based on sharing of advertisement inventory and revenue-sharing arrangements with content partners, on mutually agreed terms. Further in respect of data collection, it has been stated that viewer data collected is anonymised and aggregated and includes parameters such as total viewership, average watch time, device type, session duration and engagement trends, without collecting demographic information.
- 1.9 **Business Model II for distribution of FAST Services**: In this model, television manufacturing is done by third-party TV manufacturers, from whom finished products are purchased for distribution by Stakeholder B (Indian entity). The smart TVs operate on android operating system and are available across all screen sizes. The stakeholder stated that it does not own or operate the FAST application platform, but its FAST service is operated by an affiliated overseas entity, which has an arrangement with a third-party content aggregator that onboards content providers and provides the content to the FAST platform. The application can be downloaded from the Operating System's play store available on smart TVs.
- 1.10 Stakeholder B further mentioned that channel verification is conducted by the content aggregator prior to onboarding of channel. Further, Programme Code and Advertising Code compliance is managed by the overseas entity and only channels specific to the

Indian territory are allowed to be broadcast in India. The Indian entity does not undertake monitoring, recording or archiving of content, as FAST channels are provided by the affiliated overseas entity and content delivery is handled by the content aggregator.

- 1.11 Regarding grievance handling, it submitted that Indian customers may write to the designated grievance redressal officer, who forwards complaints to the concerned overseas entity operating the FAST service, or customers may also directly contact the overseas entity for grievance redressal.
- 1.12 With respect to revenue sharing, the stakeholder B (Indian entity) mentioned that it does not receive any share of advertising revenue. As regards data collection, it informed that no personally identifiable information-based viewership data, such as preferences or demographics is collected from viewers.
- 1.13 **Business Model III for distribution of FAST Services**: This business model is championed by Stakeholder C who is an android-based smart TV operating system provider in India. The operating system powers devices for over 300 registered and white-labelled TV brands in India. Access to FAST channels is provided through its proprietary application store and a list of 72 pre-loaded FAST channels was shared.
- 1.14 The stakeholder submitted that verification of channel antecedents and content strategy is undertaken before onboarding, including verification of family-friendly content and checking the availability of such content on popular video streaming or global FAST TV platforms. Regarding compliance with Programme Code and Advertising Code, the stakeholder mentioned that it acts as an intermediary and does not

exercise direct control over channels, though it keeps a check on the family-friendly nature of the content.

1.15 With respect to monitoring and compliance, it is stated that no recording or archiving system for content is maintained. Complaint handling is undertaken through a dedicated grievance email address made available within the application and on the Terms of Service page.

1.16 In terms of revenue sharing, the platform follows a revenue-sharing arrangement between the content broadcaster or owner and the platform, with varying percentages, largely in favour of the broadcaster or content owner. Further in respect of data collection, the stakeholder submitted that general analytics relating to application performance and session time are collected, without collection of personal or demographic viewer data.

C. Stakeholder representations to MIB

1.17 An association of MSOs in its representations to MIB has mentioned that FAST services are being offered in violation of the Policy Guidelines for Uplinking and Downlinking of Television Channels in India, 2022⁴ issued by MIB. It emphasised that the intent of the policy guidelines for downlinking of television channels dated 5th December 2011⁵ has remained unchanged, i.e., no television channel is permitted for public viewing in India without registration or permission from the Ministry. The Downlinking Guidelines, 2011, as amended in November 2022, lay down mandatory requirements for transmission of TV channels in India. The association also highlighted some clauses of the 2022 guidelines that are being violated by FAST channels.

⁴ <https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-05/uplinking-and-downlinking-guidelines-2022-english.pdf>

⁵ <https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-05/uplinking-and-downlinking-guidelines-2011.pdf>

- 1.18 The representation further emphasizes that only licensed TV channels are permitted to be distributed in India through licensed service providers, namely, MSO, DTH, Headend-in-the-Sky (HITS) and Internet Protocol Television (IPTV). Any other method of distributing such channels constitutes a legal violation. It also draws attention to the lack of adherence to the Programme Code and Advertising Code, and that in absence of any registration or regulatory oversight, content and nature of these channels cannot be verified or monitored.
- 1.19 The representations also mentioned TRAI's recommendations on 'Regulatory framework for Ground-based Broadcasters' issued on 15th January 2025⁶ [hereinafter referred to as 'GBB Recommendations dated 15th January 2025'] and 'Framework for Service Authorisations for provision of Broadcasting Services under the Telecommunications Act, 2023' issued on 21st February 2025⁷ [hereinafter referred to as 'Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025'].
- 1.20 In addition, the association submitted that there is a violation of TRAI regulations as pay channels are being retransmitted on unregulated FAST platforms free of charge, notwithstanding the amendment⁸ to Clause 3(2) of the Tariff Order, 2017.
- 1.21 **Business Model IV:** Based on the submissions received from the MSO association, an additional business model for the distribution of FAST services has been observed. Under this model, certain service providers offer FAST services (linear television channels) through websites and/or

⁶ https://traai.gov.in/sites/default/files/2025-01/Recommendation_15012025.pdf

⁷ https://traai.gov.in/sites/default/files/2025-02/Recommendations_21022025.pdf

⁸ In clause 3 of the principal Tariff Order, in sub-clause (2), in item (b), after the second proviso, the following proviso shall be inserted, namely: ---

“Provided also that a channel, which has been granted downlinking permission by the Central Government and is available without any subscription fee on the direct to home platform of the public service broadcaster, shall not be declared as pay channel for addressable distribution platforms.”

https://traai.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-11/Regulation_Tariff_4th_amd_08072024.pdf

applications that host channels originating from multiple countries. These platforms typically organise and provide access to such channels through placement folders or links that redirect users to various channels and content providers. Some of these channels may have obtained downlinking permission from MIB, while others may be available without such permission.

D. Meeting held with TV Manufacturers by TRAI

- 1.22 A preliminary discussion was held at TRAI Headquarters on 12th January 2026, to gather inputs from some TV manufacturers along with their associations on the operational aspects and modus operandi of FAST services in India. The deliberations focused on different operational models and the overall ecosystem across smart connected TVs and devices, providing FAST services.
- 1.23 During the discussion, one of the stakeholders mentioned that FAST services are offered through a proprietary platform that is available exclusively on its own television or equipment. It was mentioned that a third-party content partner manages channel agreements and content hosting and primary responsibility for content accountability rests with the content partner. A two-step verification mechanism is followed, wherein the TV manufacturer carries out the final content accuracy check. It was further mentioned that the FAST channels largely show news and entertainment channels and only licensed channels are offered under a self-regulatory framework, with content monitoring undertaken by the TV manufacturer.
- 1.24 Another stakeholder specified that its FAST service platform is available only within its own ecosystem and is generally pre-installed on the new devices. It was indicated that approximately 150+ FAST channels are available on the platform, hosting mostly Indian content,

with no content from land border countries, and content is tailored based on geography. The stakeholder also shared that the overall subscriber base approximates to 4 million, spanning multiple device categories like mobile, TV and tablets. With respect to advertisements, it mentioned that ads are largely provided by broadcasters and require platform approval, with consistency in ad timing for live content, though the specific advertisements for different form factors may differ. Responsibility for content rests with the platform entity, while details regarding quality of service and grievance redressal mechanisms were stated to be shared subsequently. Transmission of FAST channels was stated to be internet-based.

- 1.25 Yet another stakeholder informed that its FAST services operate on an android-based platform, with content provision and responsibility, including management of the Electronic Program Guide (EPG), being handled by a third-party entity. It was further specified that all content-related agreements and regulatory aspects are managed by its overseas team.
- 1.26 Another stakeholder mentioned that its proprietary operating system features inbuilt FAST services. Content for these services is sourced from multiple content providers. It was mentioned that content sanitization is primarily undertaken by partner firms, while platform-level review is carried out on a complaint basis. The stakeholder mentioned that there are 140+ channels offered on its FAST platform, comprising both permitted and non-permitted channels.
- 1.27 One stakeholder specified that it uses an operating system provided by another manufacturer, which includes inbuilt FAST services. Content for these FAST services is supplied by a third-party content partner. It was further mentioned that compliance with applicable legal

provisions, including the Information Technology Act, 2000 is followed for devices operating on the said platform.

- 1.28 Another stakeholder specified that it is primarily engaged in the manufacturing and assembling of television hardware for multiple brands in India. It clarified that it provides only hardware solutions and has not integrated any FAST channel services on its televisions.

E. Stakeholders involved in offering FAST Services

- 1.29 From a *prima facie* examination of the responses received from the stakeholders along with the representations submitted by the MSO association, enclosed with MIB reference, and the meetings held with the TV manufacturers with TRAI, it is observed that FAST services/platforms are bundling two sets of services:

- 1) Linear television channels and/or,
- 2) Value-added services (on-demand content) to consumers over the internet.

Such services are accessible across various form factors, including connected TVs; mobile devices (smartphones); tablet devices; personal computers/laptops etc.

- 1.30 From the inputs, it appeared that following categories of stakeholders are involved in the ecosystem of distribution of linear television:

- i. Television manufacturers
- ii. Television (equipment) distributors
- iii. Operating system providers
- iv. Application providers
- v. Content aggregators/broadcasters
- vi. Website owners etc.

1.31 In addition to the entities discussed above, there may be other categories of service providers that form part of the value chain in the distribution of linear television channels. These linear television channels are being made available either through a dedicated app downloadable on television, mobile or any other device or through pre-installed applications integrated into smart televisions. Some service providers also provide these services on a webpage, which contains links to the webpages of various channels and content providers.

1.32 Further to understand the distribution flow through applications and the interaction among various entities involved, an indicative block diagram of the delivery of linear television channels is illustrated in **Figure 1.1** below.

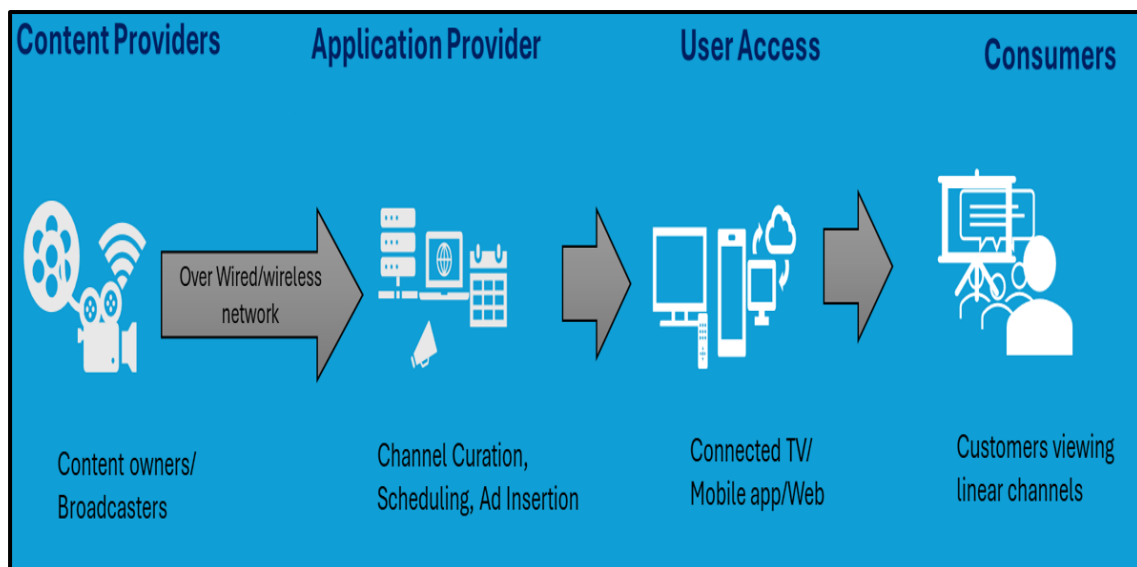


Figure 1.1: Block Diagram representing the linear television distribution over application platforms

1.33 The diagram represents the flow of linear TV content from broadcasters and content providers through aggregation and platform layers, and its subsequent delivery over different network medium to end-user devices. It shows the application providers are aggregating the linear

television channels and other on-demand content and distributing through wired or wireless network. The figure also reflects the multi-device accessibility of such services, including smart televisions, mobile devices, web-based platforms etc. This shows the layered and distributed nature of the services ecosystem, wherein multiple stakeholders operate across different functional segments of content creation, aggregation, delivery and consumption.

- 1.34 The service delivery ecosystem comprise four integral elements viz., equipment, operating system, platform management and content aggregation. These components may be delivered by a single entity or outsourced in various combinations. In a vertically integrated model, one provider manages all elements end-to-end. Alternatively, service providers may outsource the equipment, operating system and content aggregation to third parties, while retaining platform control. Another model involves outsourcing only the operating system, with the remaining components managed internally. These approaches differ in terms of control, cost and operational complexity.

F. TRAI Recommendations related to FAST Services

- 1.35 The Authority in its recommendations on ‘GBB Recommendations dated 15th January 2025’ and ‘Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025’ noted that FAST channels are new introduction and yet to be defined in the regulatory framework. Common industry parlance refers FAST to a form of streaming that delivers programming similar to cable, satellite or traditional TV⁹. FAST channel is also referred to as a grouping of programme that is shown on a set timetable. FAST services can be provided by broadcasters, equipment providers and entertainment companies. FAST is not limited to live TV

⁹ <https://www.cnet.com/tech/services-and-software/fast-tv-what-it-is-and-why-it-should-matter-to-you/>

channels but also include free on-demand content. One can view FAST content on virtually any device at no subscription fee. The providers of FAST channels achieve this by either developing their own apps or signing agreements with equipment manufacturers to have their service. However, programme distribution of TV channels on FAST seems analogous to broadcast of TV channels by regulated Distribution Platform Operators (DPOs).

1.36 In response to the consultation paper on regulatory framework for ground-based broadcasters issued on 18th October 2024¹⁰, stakeholders highlighted that the biggest regulatory challenge the industry is facing is the anomaly governing the OTT aggregators and the OTT application developers. Majority of the linear channels, which are presently regulated by downlinking guidelines and the TRAI's regulatory framework are made available on the OTT aggregator application, in the guise of slightly changing the programme mix and that by doing so, OTT players are clearly circumventing the present regulatory mechanism.

1.37 Further, during the consultation for Ground-based Broadcasters, stakeholders mentioned that several apps/digital media platforms are offering live television channels directly to consumers, which in certain cases appear to fall outside the scope of the existing regulatory framework governing uplinking, downlinking and IPTV services. It was stated that, unlike DPOs, such services may not be subject to comparable regulatory oversight, potentially creating an uneven competitive environment for pay television operators. The stakeholders further suggested that these services effectively function in a manner similar to broadcast distribution platforms and therefore should be considered within the scope of the emerging regulatory framework for

¹⁰ https://tra.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-10/CP_18102024_0.pdf

such entities, with appropriate guidelines for the distribution of live channels through such OTT-based platforms.

- 1.38 Further, during the consultation for Ground-based Broadcasters (GBB), stakeholders mentioned that several apps/digital media platforms are offering live channels to consumers, which, in many cases, appears to be outside the scope of existing Uplinking/Downlinking guidelines dated 9th Nov 2022 & its subsequent amendment dated 24th March 2023 & IPTV Regulation dated 14th Sep 2023. These services, unlike traditional DPOs do not seem to be subject to the same regulatory scrutiny, potentially distorting level playing field for pay TV operators. Moreover, they are practically operating as a GBB and therefore should be included in the definition of GBB. They mentioned that the current regulatory framework and the forthcoming regulatory framework for GBB, should necessarily bring clear guidelines for live channel distribution via such OTT platforms, which are circumventing the regulations ...”
- 1.39 Some stakeholders raised concerns regarding rapid and unregulated proliferation of FAST channels in India. These stakeholders mentioned that the unregulated growth of FAST channels is leading to regulatory disparity with respect to the regulated content distribution ecosystem. Hence, it is posing a significant business challenge to the DPOs. These stakeholders suggested introducing a comprehensive regulatory framework to cover FAST channels comparable to traditional broadcasters.
- 1.40 In this regard, in the ‘GBB Recommendations dated 15th January 2025’, the Authority noted that OTT is a wider term encompassing OTT communication and OTT application services including OTT media services. The issues raised in respect of regulation of OTT media

services need a wider examination. The present recommendations are limited to the current reference of MIB and the issues related to OTT media services raised by the stakeholders are beyond the scope of present consultation.

1.41 However, the Authority noted that FAST channel services, to the extent they are streaming TV channels, are quite similar to traditional broadcasting. The concerns raised by the stakeholders regarding rapid and unregulated proliferation of FAST channels in India leading to regulatory disparity, thereby affecting level playing field with respect to the regulated traditional broadcasting ecosystem, needs further examination. Therefore, MIB may like to examine as to whether FAST channels, which appear to be similar to traditional broadcasting, are compliant with extant guidelines/policy framework and whether there is a need to bring any additional policy guidelines for such channels, to bridge the gap, if any.

1.42 The Authority in its 'Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025' noted that FAST services, to the extent they are streaming television channels including those authorised by MIB, are performing function similar to that of a Distribution Service Provider¹¹, without any regulatory oversight. The recommendations further mentioned that the concerns raised by the stakeholders regarding rapid and unregulated proliferation of FAST channels in India leading to regulatory disparity, thereby affecting level playing field with respect to the regulated traditional broadcasting ecosystem, is a genuine one.

¹¹ "**Distribution Service Provider (DSP)**" shall mean 'Distribution Platform Operator (DPO)' and includes Direct-to-Home (DTH) service provider, Head-end In The Sky (HITS) service provider, Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) service provider, Multi-System Operator (MSO) or any other service provider engaged in distribution of programmes/television channels to the users; Definition taken from Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025.

Such a regulatory arbitrage is likely to topple the competitive balance in the industry towards such free of cost service providers.

- 1.43 Accordingly, in ‘Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025’, the Authority had recommended that a separate authorisation for FAST channels distribution may be considered under Television Channel Distribution Services. MIB may make a reference to the Authority to provide detailed terms and conditions for the service authorisation for ‘FAST channels distribution service’.

G. Indian Television Broadcasting Landscape

- 1.44 The television broadcasting landscape comprises of 300+ broadcasters, 774¹² registered MSOs, 1 HITS operator and 4 pay DTH operators. Besides, there is a free-to-air DTH service named ‘DD Free Dish’ owned and operated by Prasar Bharati, the public service broadcaster of the country. Additionally, 70+¹³ IPTV service providers are also providing television services to the consumers. In addition, there are 81,706 Local Cable Operators (LCOs) registered in the country as of 1st January 2022, as communicated to the MIB by the Department of Posts.
- 1.45 Considering that FAST Services are new and are not a part of structured licensing system, an assessment of the proliferation of these services and their impact on existing services can only be accessed from various market reports. A gist of these market reports is presented in the following paragraphs.

¹² <https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/2026-02/registered-msos-as-on-31.01.2026.pdf> accessed as on 17.3.2026

¹³ https://traf.gov.in/sites/default/files/2025-12/QPIR_03122025.pdf

1.46 In the broadcasting and distribution value chain, private broadcasters provide television channels, available either as pay or Free-to-Air (FTA), which are delivered to the consumers through cable TV services, DTH services, HITS services and IPTV services. As per the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and Ernst & Young (EY) report titled ‘Stories, scale and impact: Unlocking India’s media and entertainment economy, March 2026’¹⁴, the television broadcasting sector generated a revenue of Rs. 617 billion in 2025. The report mentioned 193 million television households, which included Cable, DTH, HITS and Free TV Services and connected TV.

TV viewership habit by Chrome OTT

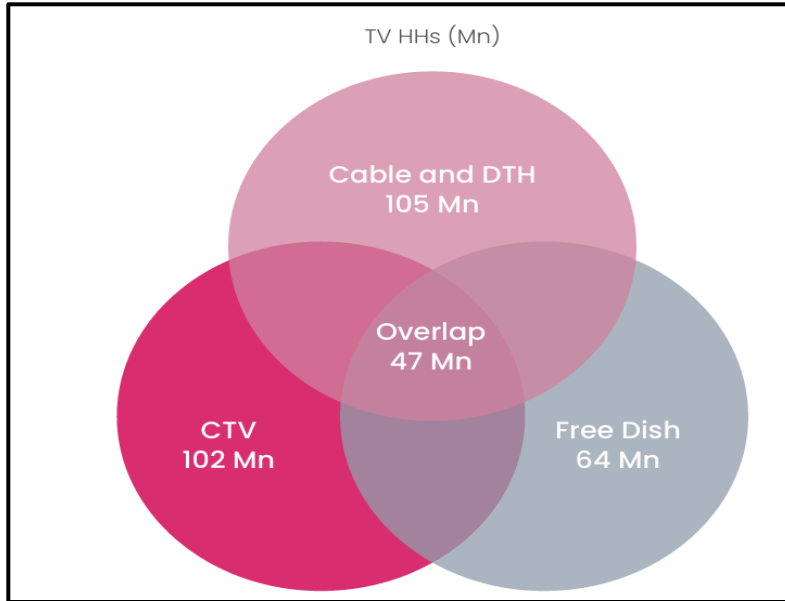
1.47 In terms of TV viewership in India, an industry whitepaper issued by Chrome OTT titled ‘From Linear to Logarithmic Mapping India’s M&E Convergence; Measuring the True Cost of Digital Dominance; Defining Strategies for Linear Survival’¹⁵ published on 20th November 2025, provides that there are 222 million (i.e., 68% of India’s total population) TV households in India. These households access TV services through satellite-based broadcasting, DD Free Dish and internet TV/Connected TV (CTV).

1.48 The report mentioned that approximately there are 105 million linear TV households, 102 million CTV households and 64 million DD Free Dish or Free TV households, with an overlap of 47 million households, common for all three. **Figure 1.2** in the form of the Venn diagram depicts the converging TV households, whereas **Figure 1.3** illustrates the households split in India.

¹⁴ <https://www.ey.com/content/dam/ey-unified-site/ey-com/en-in/insights/media-entertainment/2026/03/ey-stories-scale-and-impact-unlocking-indias-media-and-entertainment-economy.pdf>

¹⁵ <https://chromedm.com/reports.php>

Figure 1.2: Converging TV Households



[Source: Industry Whitepaper by Chrome OTT titled as 'From Linear to Logarithmic']

Figure 1.3: Households split in India

Zone	Pay	Free Dish	CTV	Cord Cutters	Pay + CTV	DDFD + CTV	DDFD + Pay	Only Pay	Only DDFD
ALL INDIA	104.60	64.13	101.55	54.78	41.57	4.27	1.60	61.44	58.44

Source - Chrome DM, Mkt - All India, Sep'2025

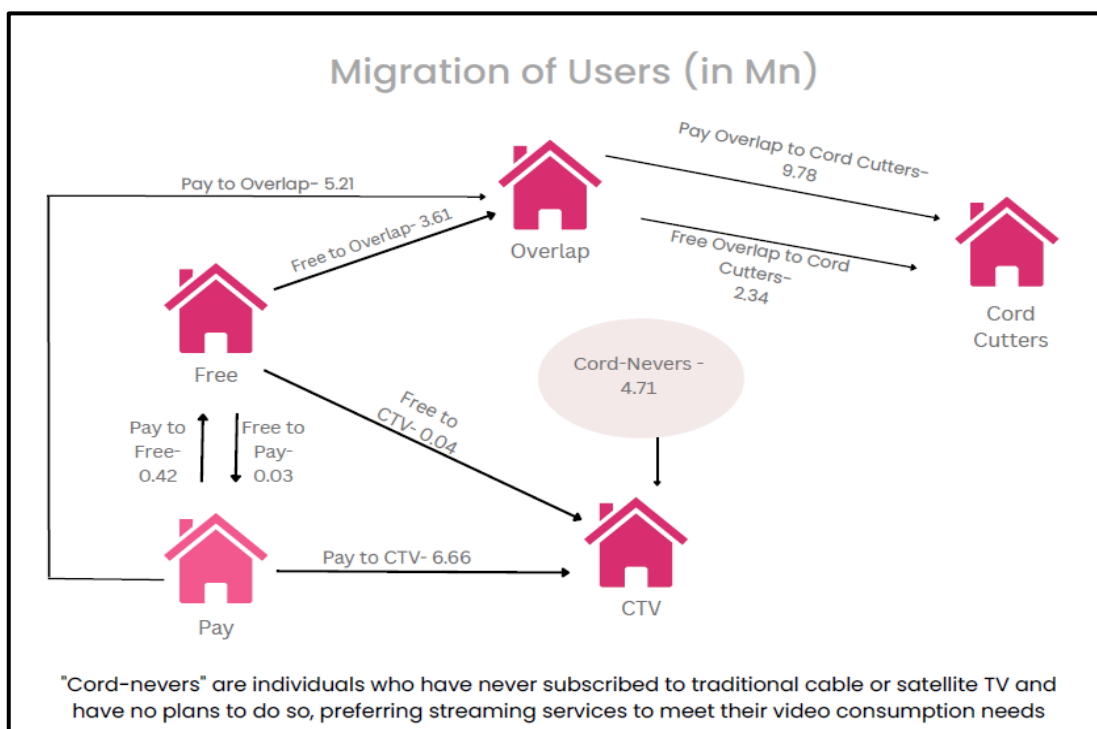
[Source: Industry Whitepaper by Chrome OTT titled as 'From Linear to Logarithmic']

1.49 The report also mentions that CTV viewership is rapidly matching traditional pay TV viewership, indicating a major shift in audience habits. Cord-cutting¹⁶ and shifting to CTV is one of the major shifts observed.

¹⁶ **Cord-cutting** in industry parlance, refers to the practice of viewers cancelling their traditional cable or satellite television subscriptions and switching to internet-based streaming services. **Cord-cutters** refer to consumers who cancel their pay-TV subscriptions and rely primarily on internet-based platforms for accessing audio-visual content.

- 1.50 Further, the report highlights that India’s CTV ecosystem is driven by strong overlap across platforms and highly bidirectional audience behaviour, with many users switching between linear, pay and digital options. Core segments like CTV-only, overlap (linear + CTV) and bidirectional are the largest, reflecting a landscape where cross-platform viewing is becoming the norm.
- 1.51 Smaller segments such as ‘Pay to Free’, ‘Free to Pay’ and ‘Free to CTV’ indicate the ongoing experimentation and fluidity of user preferences, but they account for much less volume than platform overlaps. Overall, overlapping and migratory behaviours are pushing steady growth for CTV. The report presents audience migration across Pay, Free and CTV from 2023-2025 as illustrated in **Figure 1.4**.

Figure 1.4: Audience migration across Pay, Free & CTV from 2023-25



[Source: Industry Whitepaper by Chrome OTT titled as ‘From Linear to Logarithmic’]

Future of TV in India by IIM Ahmedabad

- 1.52 The 'Future of TV in India' report¹⁷ by the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIMA) reveals that India's television audience will continue to grow at a steady pace of approximately 2.37% annually, expanding to nearly 1.03 billion viewers by 2029. Significant growth and expansion are expected from rural and lower-income states by 2029 as their income levels move closer to the current levels of higher income states.
- 1.53 Notably, the report mentions that the number of internet subscribers is a key driver of TV audience growth across the country. Rising internet penetration is associated with a significant increase in the television audience base, indicating the complementary effect of digital connectivity to television consumption. As internet access expands, consumption of both TV and online video content is expected to coexist and thrive.
- 1.54 Further, in states with lower than the national per capita income, an increase in the state GDP per capita by Rs 1 lakh is likely to result in an increase of 25 million in TV audience. Additionally, the report also indicates a strong co-relation between literacy rates and dependency ratios with television adoption. Findings highlight the role of television as a catalyst of social development with same-language subtitling, enabling improved literacy levels, especially in rural India.

¹⁷ Press release: <https://www.iima.ac.in/inmediatv-set-touch-1-billion-audience-base-2029-reveals-iim-ahmedabad-report>

Report: https://www.iima.ac.in/sites/default/files/2026-01/Future%20of%20TV%20in%20India%20Report%20-%20compressed_0.pdf

H. Market Insights and factors leading to adoption of FAST services in India

Growth of FAST Services by Muvi

1.55 According to the report by Muvi¹⁸, titled ‘FAST Forward: Projecting the explosive growth of FAST Channels from 2024 to 2027’¹⁹, India is the fourth largest country, after USA, China and Japan in terms of revenue generation through FAST Services. FAST Services revenue in India is projected at 63.69 million USD (INR 590.66 crore²⁰) in 2023 and is estimated to reach 104.10 million USD (INR 965.42 crore) by 2027. The following **Figure 1.5** illustrates top five revenue generating countries in FAST Services. **Figure 1.6** illustrates growth of FAST Services in India from 2017-2027 (estimated).

Figure 1.5: Top 5 countries in terms of FAST Services revenue

Top FAST Countries - Revenues Wise			
Country	FAST Revenue 2023 (in million USD)	FAST Revenue 2024 (in million USD)	FAST Revenue 2027 (in million USD)
United States	6,158	7,752	10,130
China	149	187.60	244.70
Japan	68.83	86.68	113.10
India	63.69	80.04	104.10
Germany	60.26	75.82	99.17

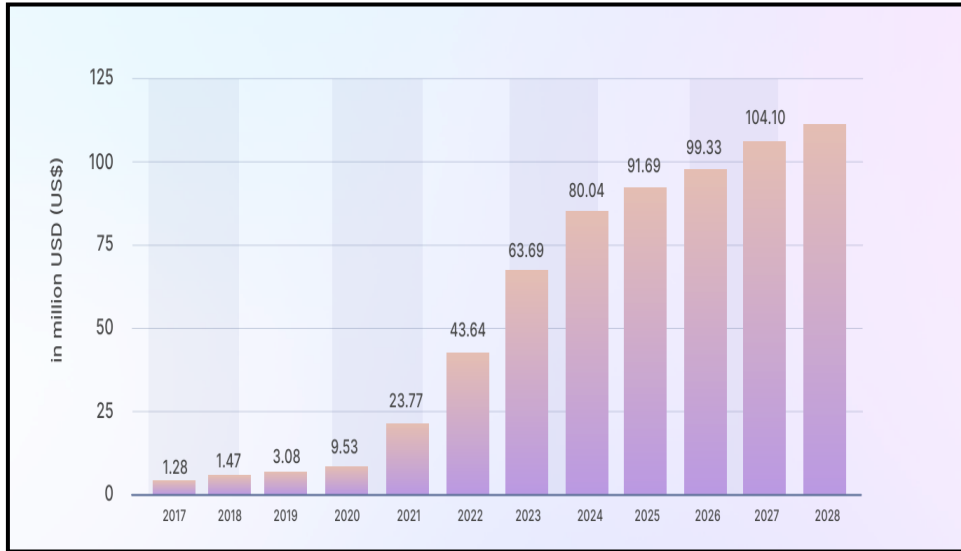
[Source: Report by MUVI titled as ‘FAST Forward: Projecting the explosive growth of FAST Channels from 2024 to 2027’]

¹⁸ Muvi is a global OTT SaaS platform that enables content owners to launch, manage, and monetize video and audio streaming services across devices.

¹⁹ Report by MUVI titled as ‘FAST Forward: Projecting the explosive growth of FAST Channels from 2024 to 2027’ available at <https://www.muvi.com/> on registration

²⁰ 1 USD = INR 92.74, as on 5.4.2026

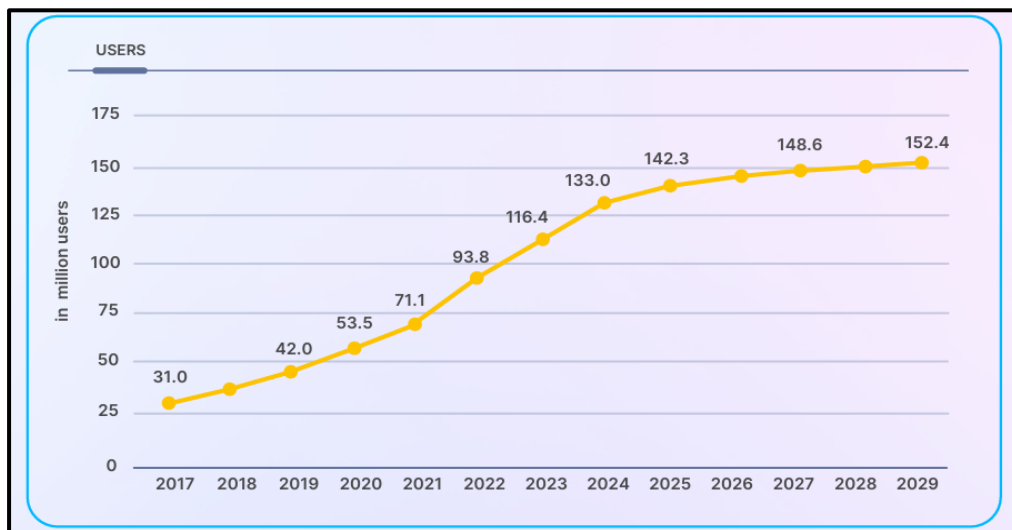
Figure 1.6: FAST Services revenue generation in India from 2017-2027 (estimated)



[Source: Report by MUVI titled as 'FAST Forward: Projecting the explosive growth of FAST Channels from 2024 to 2027']

1.56 Further, the number of users of FAST Services in India was 116.4 million in 2023. The user base is expected to reach 148.6 million by 2027. **Figure 1.7** illustrates the growth of users for FAST Services in India from 2017-2027 (estimated).

Figure 1.7: FAST users in India from 2017-27 (estimated)



[Source: Report by MUVI titled as 'FAST Forward: Projecting the explosive growth of FAST Channels from 2024 to 2027']

- 1.57 This report suggests that one of the factors instrumental in adoption of FAST Services in India is the growth in CTV usage besides internet/broadband penetration, affordability and availability of linear/live pay TV channels as well as on-demand content at zero subscription cost.
- 1.58 It is noteworthy that total internet subscribers have crossed the 1 billion plus (100.37 crore)²¹ mark as of November 2025. As per the Indian Telecom Services Performance Indicators October-December, 2025²² released by TRAI, the average revenue realization per GB for wireless data usage during the quarter stands at Rs. 7.87. Affordability has been a game changer: data costs have plummeted from ₹269 per GB in 2014 to roughly ₹8-10 per GB (about \$0.10) in 2025-2026, making India one of the world's cheapest data markets²³.

Growth in CTV users by Ormax Media

- 1.59 As per the key data points from the Ormax OTT Audience Report: 2025 by Ormax Media²⁴ on 'India's CTV growth story in numbers'²⁵, India has 129.2 million CTV audiences in 2025, i.e., users who streamed digital video content on a connected TV device at least once in last one month. It is noted from the industry report that India's CTV audience base has grown by 85% in one year, from 69.7 million in 2024 to 129.2 million in 2025. CTV has overtaken devices such as laptops and tablets to become the number two device for streaming in India, after smartphones.

²¹ <https://traai.gov.in/sites/default/files/2025-12/%28Press%20Release%20No.155%29.pdf>

²² https://traai.gov.in/sites/default/files/2026-03/QPIR_03032026_0.pdf

²³ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2236529®=3&lang=2>

²⁴ Ormax Media is an Indian media research and analytics firm

²⁵ <https://www.ormaxmedia.com/insights/stories/indias-ctv-growth-story-in-numbers.html>

1.60 The industry report also reveals that 75.8 million of India's CTV audiences are in the small towns (<1 million population) and villages, up from 40.4 million in 2024. Further, the National Capital Territory of Delhi (Delhi NCT), Karnataka and Maharashtra lead as the top three states in terms of CTV penetration, measured as a percentage of their respective OTT audience base.

I. Scope of consultation paper

1.61 The document has been prepared in response to the reference received from MIB on FAST services, examination of the responses received from stakeholders and the prevailing industry practices. The scope of this consultation is intended to encompass all such application providers that distribute linear television channels to consumers. Such services may be offered through mobile or smart TV applications downloadable through the application store available on the respective operating system, or web-based applications accessible through web browsers, or applications pre-installed on television sets and other devices.

1.62 Further, these applications may operate on either a fully free model or a subscription-based model. Notably, irrespective of whether the application itself is free or paid, the linear television channels are presently being offered free to the consumers without an explicit charge. However, it cannot be ascertained whether the cost of linear channels is already factored within the subscription packages. Additionally, there exists the possibility that, going forward, application providers, whether currently free or subscription-based may introduce separate charges for access to linear television channels. Accordingly, considering its future scope and evolving nature, these services are designated as **Application-based Linear Television Distribution (ALTD) Services** in this consultation paper. Hence 'ALTD Services' being broader in scope *inter-alia* includes FAST services.

1.63 ALTD services have emerged as a distinct and rapidly growing segment of the broadcasting ecosystem. These services typically offer television channels and other value-added services like on-demand content delivered over the internet, free to consumers with revenues primarily generated through advertising. These services have features of traditional linear television distributed over internet, and are accessible on different devices through applications. They occupy a unique position in the evolving media services.

1.64 It may be seen that ALTD services are providing traditional linear television broadcasting services and other digital content in some cases, and their regulatory treatment remains largely unarticulated under the existing regulatory frameworks. In this background, the Authority proposes to undertake stakeholder consultation on key issues related to ALTD/FAST services. Accordingly, this consultation paper is being issued with a view to seek comments from the stakeholders on the scope, characteristics and regulatory considerations relevant for authorisation of these services. The inputs received through this process will assist the Authority in framing a structured, balanced and forward-looking regulatory framework that promotes innovation, ensures consumer protection and maintains a level playing field in the broadcasting ecosystem.

1.65 Accordingly, this consultation paper is divided into 3 chapters:

Chapter I provides the introduction.

Chapter II deliberates on the issues for consultation.

Chapter III summarises the issues for consultation.

CHAPTER II

Issues for Consultation

2.1 This chapter examines the following issues pertaining to ALTD Services²⁶ as part of the consultation process, with the objective of getting inputs from all stakeholders on all points of interest:

- A. Definition and Scope of ‘ALTD Services’
- B. Primary stakeholders offering ‘ALTD Services’
- C. Terms and Conditions for authorisation of application providers distributing ‘ALTD Services’
- D. Television channels offered by application providers of ‘ALTD Services’
- E. Pay television channels available as free on ALTD service platforms
- F. Consumer Protection in the context of ‘ALTD Services’
- G. Audience measurement
- H. Future consideration for ‘ALTD Services’
- I. Any other issue

A. Definition and Scope of ‘ALTD Services’

2.2 ‘ALTD Services’ are similar to traditional broadcasting services given their linear pre-scheduled nature. In addition, some ALTD service providers also offer value added services in the form of on-demand content. Accordingly, ALTD services may be considered in the category

²⁶ As mentioned in para 1.62 of this consultation paper, all application providers that distribute linear television channels to consumers, either as applications pre-installed on television sets and other devices; or as downloadable mobile or smart TV applications; or as web-based applications accessible through web browsers are referred to as **‘Application-based Linear Television Distribution (ALTD) Services’**. Further, while these services are at present primarily ad-supported, there may be instances where its cost is bundled within a subscription package and they may evolve into paid offerings in the future. Accordingly, these services are designated as **‘ALTD Services’** as a wider term encompassing FAST Services.

of distributor of linear television services over internet, warranting a regulatory oversight.

- 2.3 TRAI in its 'Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025' had provided the definitions of 'Broadcaster', 'Broadcasting Services' and 'Distribution Service Provider (DSP)' as per the following:

*“**Broadcaster**” means a person or a group of persons, or body corporate, or any organization or body who, after having obtained, in its name, authorisation from the Central Government, is providing programming services;*

*“**Broadcasting Services**” means the dissemination of any programme(s) through terrestrial or satellite communication medium or a combination of both, intended to be received by the users, either directly or indirectly and all its grammatical variations and cognate expressions shall be construed accordingly;*

*“**Distribution Service Provider (DSP)**” shall mean ‘Distribution Platform Operator (DPO)’ and includes Direct-to-Home (DTH) service provider, Head-end In The Sky (HITS) service provider, Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) service provider, Multi-System Operator (MSO) or any other service provider engaged in distribution of programme(s)/television channel(s) to the users; ’*

- 2.4 The 'Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025' are under the consideration of the Government for formulation of the Authorisation Rules for broadcasting services. The above definitions indicate that broadcasting services disseminate programme(s) through terrestrial and/or satellite communication media and that such dissemination is carried out by authorised service providers engaged in the distribution of television channels or programmes to users. These definitions are primarily aligned with traditional broadcasting

and distribution models, such as DTH, cable television, HITS and IPTV services. ‘ALTD/FAST Services’ have not been defined explicitly in these definitions. However, the definition of DSP provides the scope for including any other service provider engaged in distribution of programme(s)/television channel(s) to the users and ALTD/FAST service providers are appropriate to be categorised as a DPO/DSP.

2.5 Although ‘ALTD/FAST Services’ are not uniformly or explicitly defined across jurisdictions, some countries like United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and Italy through their official documents or reports, enunciated definitions or terminologies to describe FAST channels or services. These definitions or terminologies are reproduced in the subsequent paragraphs.

2.6 In the document titled as ‘Future of TV distribution’ published by the Office of Communications (OfCom), United Kingdom on 17th October 2023²⁷, provided definition of FAST channels in the footnote number 11 of the document as under:

‘Free Ad-Supported Streaming Television (FAST) channels are linear channels that viewers access to watch TV shows, films, and other content without paying a subscription fee. These channels generate revenue through advertising.’

2.7 The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), Canada, while highlighting the audience measurement data²⁸ for broadcast Radio, Linear Television and Audiovisual Streaming, provided a definition for FAST channels under the Video Audience Measurement section as:

²⁷ <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/siteassets/resources/documents/consultations/category-1-10-weeks/269636-call-for-evidence-future-of-tv-distribution/associated-documents/call-for-evidence-future-of-tv-distribution?v=330282>

²⁸ <https://web.crtc.gc.ca/eng/publications/reports/PolicyMonitoring/audmetho.htm>

‘Free Ad-Supported TV (FAST) refers to Connected TV video platforms that are typically free to watch, are advertising-supported, and provide linear channels and on-demand programming together.’

2.8 The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA), Australia in its ‘2025 Annual ACMA Consumer Survey #1 – Broadcasting, Online Content and News Questionnaire’ issued on 21st April 2025 provided the following definition and information on FAST channels:

‘FAST services are subscription-free streaming services that play live video content continuously like a traditional TV channel, but it is delivered via the internet. Some services may also offer advertising-based video on demand content.’

2.9 The Autorità per le Garanzie nelle Comunicazioni (the Italian Communications Regulatory Authority) issued the first two authorizations for the provision of audiovisual media services to a distributor network for two FAST channels on 19th March 2025²⁹ and defined FAST channels as under:

‘These are free-to-air linear television channels of the so-called Fast Channels type, which broadcast via IP protocol and are therefore accessible exclusively on Internet-connected TVs.’

2.10 Further, the MSO association in its representation to MIB dated 24th April 2025, provided the following description of FAST Services, along with the distinction between FAST TV and FAST Channels:

‘FAST services deliver linear TV content to viewers using an ad-supported video-on-demand model. These include two key formats:

²⁹ <https://www.agcom.it/node/44196/printable/print>

- *FAST TV, which refers to platforms that stream only free, ad-supported linear TV channels; and*
- *FAST Channels, which are individual free, ad-supported linear TV channels offered within larger OTT platforms.'*

2.11 From a broader perspective, 'ALTD/FAST Services' are largely free and ad-supported services that offers television channels over internet using a 'Application platform'. In some cases, value added services in the form of on-demand content are also included. In view of the international definitions and industry distinctions, it may become necessary to examine how ALTD (including FAST services), ALTD/FAST linear television channels be defined, differentiated and appropriately addressed in the Indian regulatory context.

2.12 In this background, stakeholders are requested to furnish their comments on the following question:

Issue for Consultation:

Q1. What should be the appropriate definition and scope of Application-based Linear Television Distribution Services, i.e., 'ALTD Services' in the Indian broadcasting context, taking into account terminologies available internationally? Stakeholders are requested to provide their comments with detailed justification.

B. Primary Stakeholders provisioning 'ALTD Services'

2.13 Based on analysis of the responses to MIB's questionnaire and TRAI's discussion with industry representatives, the following stakeholders and their role in ALTD services provisioning may be categorized:

- a. TV Manufacturers (OEMs): These companies provide the television set and/or have their own integrated application platforms

- b. Operating System Providers: Entities that develop the software environment where the applications reside
- c. Application Providers: Dedicated platforms or apps that aggregate and stream linear channels
- d. Content/Solution Partners: Third-party companies/aggregators that onboard content providers and manage the technical push of content to the platforms

2.14 Further, various websites/online platforms (OTT)/mobile applications also offer linear television channels alongside on-demand content. This includes broadcasters and DPOs curating their own online platforms or operating as aggregators offering linear television and on-demand content to the consumers. Moreover, the programme and advertisement schedule of linear television channels carried on ALTD platforms may differ to that of the linear satellite television channels downlinked by the permitted DPOs.

2.15 In this background, the determination of which entity operates as the primary stakeholder of 'ALTD Services' needs examination. Unlike DPOs, where a single entity carries the TV channels of broadcasters to the consumer through their distribution networks, ALTD ecosystem involves multiple entities such as TV manufacturers, OS providers, streaming applications, third-party aggregators, etc. as discussed in Chapter I.

2.16 In view of the above, stakeholders are requested to furnish their comments on the following question:

Issue for Consultation:

Q2. The 'ALTD Services' ecosystem involves multiple entities, including application providers, television equipment manufacturers, operating system providers, broadcasters, content

providers, content aggregators and other technology or solution providers. However, the application provider appears to play a central role in the distribution of linear television channels across various business models. In this context, should the Application Provider be designated as the primary stakeholder responsible for obtaining authorisation for the provisioning of ‘ALTD Services’?

a. If yes, please provide detailed justification and supporting reasons.

b. If not, please identify the appropriate stakeholder(s) who should be responsible for obtaining such authorisation, along with rationale.

C. Terms and conditions for authorisation of application providers provisioning ‘ALTD Services’

2.17 Any entity involved in distributing linear television broadcasting services in India are required to be authorised or permitted by MIB (e.g., DTH, HITS, MSO, IPTV). Since application platforms also offer linear television channels of a similar nature, using different underlying technology, it may be appropriate to consider formulation of a suitable policy and regulatory framework for application providers distributing ALTD services on internet. In this context, any **Application Provider** offering linear television channels over internet on television, mobile or web could potentially be brought within an authorisation framework under MIB.

2.18 At present, there are four permitted distribution platforms for delivering linear television services to consumers. They are governed by the policy guidelines and rules issued by MIB from time-to-time. These are DTH Services, HITS Services, IPTV Services and Cable Services delivered through MSOs and linked LCOs.

- i. Policy Guidelines for Direct-to-Home (DTH) Service:** The policy guidelines for obtaining license for providing DTH broadcasting service were issued by MIB on 15th March 2001. The said guidelines were amended from time to time, latest amendments being made in 2007³⁰ and 2020³¹. Subsequently, the ‘Operational DTH Guidelines’ were issued by MIB on 16th September 2022³² with respect to license fee, platform service channels and sharing of infrastructure by DTH operators.
- ii. Policy Guidelines for Head-end In The Sky (HITS) Service:** MIB issued the policy guidelines on 26th November 2009³³ for granting permission to the eligible entities to establish, maintain and operate HITS broadcasting service in India. Further, in the year 2020, MIB issued an amendment in the HITS guidelines dated 6th November 2020³⁴, permitting sharing of infrastructure.
- iii. Policy Guidelines for Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) Service:** MIB had issued the policy guidelines for IPTV operations on 8th September 2008³⁵. The guidelines were designed to establish clear principles for various IPTV platforms and to stimulate stakeholder participation in the Indian IPTV market.
- iv. Act and Rules for cable registration and operation:** The registration and operation for cable television services (which includes MSOs and LCOs) is done under the ‘The Cable Television

³⁰ [https://new.broadcastseva.gov.in/digigov-portal-web-app/jsp/mib/common/PDFContent/DTH_PDF/DTH%206.11.2007%20\(1\).pdf](https://new.broadcastseva.gov.in/digigov-portal-web-app/jsp/mib/common/PDFContent/DTH_PDF/DTH%206.11.2007%20(1).pdf)

³¹ <https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-12/amendment-in-guidelines-for-obtaining-license-for-providing-dth-broadcasting-services-in-india.pdf>

³² <https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-12/-english-version-operational-guidelines-for-direct-to-home-dth-broadcasting-service-in-india-dated-16.09.2022.pdf>

³³ https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-12/headend_repaired.pdf

³⁴ <https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-12/amendment-in-hits-guidelines-compressed.pdf>

³⁵ https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-12/ilovepdf_merged_1.pdf

Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995³⁶ and the rules made thereunder, which have been amended from time-to-time.

- 2.19 Further, the Telecommunications Act, 2023³⁷, aiming to amend and consolidate the law relating to development, expansion and operation of telecommunication services and telecommunication networks, assignment of spectrum, and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto was notified in the official Gazette of India on 24th December 2023. MIB had sought recommendations from TRAI on the terms and conditions, including fees or charges for authorisation to provide broadcasting services, aligned with the provisions of the Telecommunications Act, 2023, and harmonizing the terms and conditions across various service providers.
- 2.20 Based on the reference received from MIB, after due consultation, TRAI had issued the recommendations on ‘Framework for Service Authorisations for provision of Broadcasting Services under the Telecommunications Act, 2023’ on 21st February 2025. The recommended authorisation framework provides for two distinct sets of terms and conditions.
- a. The first set applies to the applicant entity intending to obtain authorisation for broadcasting services and is referred to as ‘The Broadcasting (Grant of Service Authorisations) Rules’.
 - b. The second set, referred to as ‘The Broadcasting (Television Channel Broadcasting, Television Channel Distribution, and Radio Broadcasting) Services Rules’, is to be complied with by the authorised entity for service provisioning during the period of authorisation.

³⁶ <https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/1928/4/aa1995-07.pdf>

³⁷ <https://egazette.gov.in/WriteReadData/2023/250880.pdf>

- 2.21 The Broadcasting (Television Channel Broadcasting, Television Channel Distribution, and Radio Broadcasting) Services Rules' are structured in two parts. Part-I encompasses '*Common Terms and Conditions*' that apply universally across all broadcasting services, while Part-II delineates '*Specific Terms and Conditions*' for provisioning each of these services. The broadcasting services have been classified into three primary categories namely, 'Television Channel Broadcasting Services', 'Television Channel Distribution Services' and 'Radio Broadcasting Services'.
- 2.22 The first category of services, i.e., Television Channel Broadcasting Services covers four types of authorisations, namely, Television Channel Broadcasting, News Agency for Television Channel(s), Teleport/Teleport Hub and Uplinking of Live event/news/ footage by Foreign Channel/News Agency and any other service as notified by the Central Government from time to time.
- 2.23 The second category of services, namely, Television Channel Distribution Services' contains two types of authorisations, viz., 'DTH Service' and 'HITS Service' or any other service as notified by the Central Government from time to time. Further 'IPTV Services' can be provided by the authorised entities having authorisation under Unified Service Authorisation, Access Service Authorisation, Internet Service Authorisation or MSO registration. It may be noted that the authorisation framework didn't include authorisation for MSOs and LCOs, since they are governed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995.
- 2.24 The third category, namely, Radio Broadcasting Services covers three distinct authorisations, viz., Terrestrial Radio Service, Community Radio Stations and Low Power Small Range Radio Service or any other service as notified by the Central Government from time to time.

2.25 The recommended terms and conditions for **grant of service authorisation** to the above-mentioned broadcasting services are set out in Annexure-II of the ‘Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025’. These include the terms and conditions under following heads mentioned in ‘Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025’ from page number 306 to 363, as listed in **Table 2.1** below.

Table 2.1 Heads of terms and conditions for Broadcasting (Grant of service authorisations)

S. No.	Title of the Terms and Conditions for Grant of Authorisation
1.	Definitions
2.	Non-exclusivity
3.	Framework of Authorisation for Broadcasting Services
4.	Scope of Service and Service Area
5.	Validity Period
6.	Eligibility Conditions
7.	Financial Conditions
8.	Process of application to obtain Service Authorisation
9.	Grant of Service Authorisation
10.	Security Conditions
11.	Migration of existing service provider

2.26 The recommended terms and conditions for **provisioning of Broadcasting (Television Channel Broadcasting, Television Channel Distribution, and Radio Broadcasting) Services** are contained in Annexure-III (page no. 364 to 478) of the ‘Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025’. Part-I contains ‘Common Terms and Conditions for the Broadcasting (Television Channel Broadcasting, Television Channel Distribution, and Radio

Broadcasting) Services, while Part-II comprises of Specific Terms and Conditions for provision of each of these broadcasting services.

2.27 The common terms and conditions for the Broadcasting (Television Channel Broadcasting, Television Channel Distribution, and Radio Broadcasting) Services are contained under the heads as listed in the **Table 2.2** below.

Table 2.2: Heads of Common Terms and Conditions for the Broadcasting (Television Channel Broadcasting, Television Channel Distribution, and Radio Broadcasting) Services

S. No.	Title of the Common Terms and Conditions
1.	Definitions
2.	Assignment and use of Spectrum
3.	Equity Holding and Management Control
4.	Renewal of Authorisation
5.	Modifications in the Terms and Conditions of Service Authorisation
6.	Creation of Security Interest
7.	Restrictions on 'Transfer of Service Authorisation'
8.	Provision of Service
9.	Monitoring & Inspection
10.	Reporting Requirements
11.	Adherence to Programme Code and Advertisement Code
12.	Sharing of Infrastructure
13.	Financial Conditions
14.	Commercial Conditions
15.	Security Conditions
16.	Technical Conditions
17.	Confidentiality
18.	Force Majeure
19.	Disputes with Other Parties

20.	Dispute Resolution and Jurisdiction
21.	Surrender of Authorisation
22.	Contravention of Rules/Regulations and Violation of Orders/Directions/Codes
23.	Offences
24.	Termination of Authorisation
25.	Obligations imposed on the Authorized Entity
26.	Residual Clause

2.28 Section 2 of Part II lays down the terms and conditions governing 'Television Channel Distribution Services'. Within this, Section 2.1 specifies the provisions applicable to DTH and HITS services, while Section 2.2 outlines those pertaining to IPTV services.

2.29 The heads of specific terms and conditions for DTH Service and HITS Service is depicted in **Table 2.3** below:

Table 2.3: Heads of Specific Terms and Conditions for DTH Services and HITS Services

S. No.	Title of Specific Terms and Conditions
1.	Prohibition of certain activities
2.	Value Added Services (VAS)
3.	Vertically Integrated Entity: Reservation of Operational Channel Capacity
4.	Platform Services (PS) for DTH Service
5.	Mandatory sharing of Sports Broadcasting Signals with Prasar Bharti
6.	Compulsory transmission of certain channels
7.	Interoperability of Set Top Box (STB)
8.	Miscellaneous

2.30 Further, heads of specific terms and Conditions for provision of IPTV Service is depicted in **Table 2.4** below:

Table 2.4: Heads of Specific Terms and Conditions for IPTV Services

S. No.	Title of Specific Terms and Conditions
1.	Entity permitted to provision IPTV Service
2.	Applicable Regulatory Framework
3.	Authorisation Fee
4.	Provision of IPTV Service
5.	Cross-holding Pattern
6.	Vertically Integrated Entity: Reservation of Operational Channel Capacity
7.	Sharing of Infrastructure
8.	Mandatory sharing of Sports Broadcasting Signals with Prasar Bharti
9.	Compulsory transmission of certain channels
10.	Technical Conditions
11.	Monitoring and Inspection
12.	Supply of Information to the Central Government/TRAI
13.	Provision for Public Emergency or Public Safety
14.	Contravention of terms and conditions of Act/Rules

2.31 Further, as discussed in para 1.64 of Chapter I, the Authority in 'Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025' has recommended for consideration of a separate authorisation for provisioning of FAST channels distribution under Television Channel Distribution Services. Accordingly, detailed terms and conditions for grant of service authorisation and service provisioning needs to be formulated for the application providers offering 'ALTD Services' (which

includes FAST Services) for which the Authority intends to undertake the consultation.

- 2.32 These recommended terms and conditions for 'DTH Service', 'HITS Service' and 'IPTV Service' may be appropriately referred to while formulating the terms and conditions for the offering 'ALTD Services'.
- 2.33 Further, it is observed from the tables above that the recommended terms and conditions for broadcasting services are largely uniform across various broadcasting and distribution platforms. Such common elements, *inter alia*, include Process of application to obtain Service Authorisation, Grant of Service Authorisation, Security Conditions, Monitoring & Inspection, Confidentiality, Force Majeure, Dispute Resolution and Jurisdiction, Termination etc. These provisions may be suitably referred to for ALTD services, as they are already well-established under the applicable framework.
- 2.34 Accordingly, while formulating the terms and conditions for the authorisation of 'ALTD Services', stakeholder inputs are primarily sought on terms and conditions that may be specific to technology or require contextual adaptation in view of the unique operational and delivery characteristics of ALTD services. These include Eligibility Criteria; Net worth; and fees and charges such as Processing Fee, Entry Fee, Bank Guarantee, Authorisation Fee, Security Deposit, Roll Out Obligations etc. The remaining provisions, being largely standardised and generally applicable, may be adopted with suitable modifications, wherever necessary.
- 2.35 Further, it is observed from the responses received to MIB questionnaire and during meeting held at TRAI that in one of the cases, the entity is operating overseas, while the service is accessible on smart connected television sold in India. Here the overseas entity is determining the channel availability, advertisements, content

standards and user experience but the services are provided to the Indian audiences through their smart TV sold in India.

2.36 In this regard, Clause 10 regarding furnishing of application in Part IV titled as ‘Downlinking of a Satellite TV Channel’ of Guidelines for Uplinking and Downlinking of Satellite Television Channels in India, 2022 may be referred. The said clause is reproduced below:

‘10. Furnishing of Application — (1) *A company or an LLP may apply online on the Broadcast Seva on payment of processing fees specified in **Appendix I** for downlinking a TV channel, subject to fulfillment of the following conditions:*

...

(ii) *It has a commercial presence in India with its principal place of business in India;*

(iii) *It must either own the channel, or must enjoy, for the territory of India, exclusive marketing/distribution rights for the same, inclusive of the rights to the advertising and subscription revenues for the channel and must submit proof at the time of application.*

Provided that where the company/LLP has exclusive marketing/distribution rights, it should also have and habitually exercise in India

...’

2.37 Similarly, for obtaining DTH License in India, the applicant company has to be an Indian Company registered under Indian Company’s Act, 1956 or 2013, and the applicant company must have Indian management control with majority representatives on the board as well as the Chief Executive of the company being a resident Indian. Further, the technical standards and other obligations under the

guidelines for obtaining license for providing DTH service in India *inter alia* mentions the following:

‘...

7.5 All content provided by the DTH platform to the subscribers, irrespective of its source, shall pass through the encryption and conditional access system, located within the Earth Station, situated on Indian soil.

...’

2.38 As seen from the above conditions, entities providing television broadcasting and distribution services in India are required to have a commercial presence with its principal place of business in India with exclusive marketing/distribution rights and/or technical infrastructure. Since broadcasting is a strategic sector and broadcasting services are key services for formulation of public opinion in a democracy, it is to be considered if only Indian owned and controlled entities are allowed to obtain authorisation for provisioning ALTD services. This is particularly important for the purposes of authorisation, content compliance and enforcement.

Issues for Consultation:

Q3. What should be the terms and conditions including fees or charges for the grant of service authorisation to the application providers provisioning ‘ALTD Services’ in India, under the ‘Television Channel Distribution Services’ as recommended in Annexure-II of ‘Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025’? Stakeholders are requested to provide their detailed comments covering, though not limited to, the following conditions:

- a. Service Area**
- b. Validity Period**
- c. Eligibility Conditions**
- d. Minimum Net worth**

- e. Processing Fee**
- f. Entry Fee**
- g. Bank Guarantee**
- h. Authorisation Fee**
- i. Security Deposit**
- j. Roll Out Obligations**
- k. Any other terms and conditions**

Further, what terms and conditions/obligations should be put in place for foreign entities providing 'ALTD Services' in India?

Q4. What should be the common terms and conditions applicable for the authorised entities provisioning 'ALTD Services' in India, under the 'Television Channel Distribution Services' as recommended in Part-I of Annexure-III in 'Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025'? Stakeholders are requested to provide their detailed comments on the following conditions:

- a. Renewal of Authorisation**
- b. Renewal Fee**
- c. Equity Holding and Management Control**
- d. Restriction on cross-holding of equity shares/capital contribution between**
 - i. TV broadcasters and application providers provisioning ALTD services**
 - ii. Application Providers provisioning ALTD services and other DSPs**
- e. Transfer/Surrender of Service Authorisation**
- f. Sharing of Infrastructure**
- g. Any other terms and conditions**

Q5. What should be the specific terms and conditions applicable for the authorised entities provisioning ‘ALTD Services’ in India, under the ‘Television Channel Distribution Services’ as recommended in Part-II of Annexure-III in ‘Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025’? Stakeholders are requested to provide their detailed comments on the following conditions:

- a. Reservation of operational channel capacity by Vertically Integrated Entity**
- b. Platform Services (PS) offered by application providers provisioning ALTD services**
- c. Monitoring and Inspection of facilities**
- d. Supply of Information to Central Government/TRAI**
- e. Contravention of terms and conditions of authorisation**
- f. Any other terms and conditions**

Further, whether the mandatory sharing of Sports Broadcasting Signals with Prasar Bharati and the compulsory transmission of certain channels as mandated for DTH, HITS and IPTV services should be made applicable to the application providers provisioning ‘ALTD Services’. Stakeholders are requested to provide their comments with detailed justification on all such obligations that should be made applicable on such entities.

2.39 ‘ALTD Services’ are not limited to smart TV sets only but can also be accessed on other form factors like laptop, tablet, smartphones etc. hence the regulatory framework should not distinguish among such devices and should be form-factor agnostic.

2.40 As discussed, the distribution of ALTD services may originate from applications that come pre-integrated with Smart TV sets, or from applications that can be downloaded from operating system-specific

play store or service provider-specific application libraries (standalone applications available on Internet that offer linear channels). Such applications can be installed on televisions and/or mobile devices or accessed directly through web browsers across a wide range of devices, including smart TVs, laptops, tablets, and mobile phones.

2.41 It is observed that these mobile and web applications aggregate and distribute linear television channels (including channels having permission of MIB or unpermitted ones) and provide users access to such channels through self-curated Electronic Program Guides (EPGs), similar to those offered by regulated DPOs or DSPs. In effect, these applications appear to function as independent ALTD service, exercising control over various aspects such as channel aggregation, EPG curation, content discovery, advertising integration and user interface design.

2.42 Further, television manufacturers, distributors and operating system providers may also have an important role in this ecosystem, particularly where applications provisioning ALTD services are pre-installed or available for download on their platforms or systems. In this context, it becomes necessary that suitable mechanisms (in the form of assurance/certification) may be put in place to ensure that such applications comply with the applicable regulatory and authorisation requirements prescribed for the provision of these services.

2.43 In addition to offering linear television channels, it has been observed that certain ALTD/FAST platforms are also providing Value-Added Services (VAS) in the form of catch-up content, library content or on-demand access to programmes. In several cases, these value-added services are integrated within the same user interface and platform ecosystem, and are supported through similar content discovery mechanisms, advertising models and user engagement features.

2.44 Though 'ALTD Services' are primarily characterised by linear scheduled programming, certain service providers also offer on-demand content involving greater user choice and control. In this regard, it may be noted that existing DPOs, such as MSOs³⁸ and DTH operators³⁹, offer value-added services in the form of 'Platform Services'. These are distinct from permitted television channels and include content or features curated or aggregated by the DPO itself, such as local or interactive services. The provision of such services is governed by MIB guidelines and TRAI regulations.

2.45 In view of the above discussions, stakeholders are requested to furnish their comments on the following questions:

Issues for Consultation:

Q6. What type of assurance or certification mechanism should be prescribed for television manufacturers and operating system providers to ensure that applications provisioning ALTD services, (whether pre-integrated with television sets or made available for download through application stores or web platforms) are duly authorised by MIB.

Q7. What kind of assurance mechanisms should be instituted to ensure that the application providers authorised for provisioning ALTD services carry only those channels which are authorised/permitted by MIB for distribution in India. What kind of penalty/disincentive/deterrent be instituted for non-compliance? Provide your comments with justification.

³⁸ <https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-02/Guidelines%20for%20Platform%20Services%20offered%20by%20Multi%20System%20Operators..pdf>

³⁹ <https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-12/-english-version-operational-guidelines-for-direct-to-home-dth-broadcasting-service-in-india-dated-16.09.2022.pdf>

Q8. Whether there is a need to prescribe any specific terms and conditions for value-added services offered by ALTD service providers? If yes, what should be the terms and conditions? Stakeholders are requested to provide their detailed comments with justification.

D. Television channels offered by application providers of ‘ALTD Services’

2.46 In view of the above discussion and the representations received from DPOs, it is observed that the channels appearing on ALTD platforms can broadly be categorised into two types. These include:

- Channels that are duly permitted by MIB for downlinking in India
- Channels that do not have any permission from MIB

2.47 As per the extant uplinking and downlinking guidelines 2022, only satellite-based broadcasting is permitted by MIB, wherein the broadcasters are required to obtain permission for ‘uplinking only’, ‘downlinking only’ or ‘uplinking and downlinking’ for their channels.

2.48 Further, as per ‘GBB Recommendations dated 15th January 2025’, any broadcaster intending to provide programming services can also use communication medium other than satellite-based broadcasting. Such communication medium can be wireline (cable/fibre) including underground cable/fibre, etc. or wireless (e.g. cellular/microwave/Wi-Fi, etc.)/internet/cloud, etc. The detailed terms and conditions for ground-based broadcasting are available in ‘GBB Recommendations dated 15th January 2025’. The same has been extended in the ‘Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025’ also. Both the recommendations are under consideration of the Government.

2.49 Some of the recommended definitions in this context are:

‘Television Channel Broadcasting: *The authorisation for Television Channel Broadcasting in India shall enable the entity to broadcast programmes of a television channel through satellite or ground-based medium. The signal reception decoder(s) for such television channel shall be provided only to the authorised/registered Distribution Service Provider (DSP).*

i) **Satellite-based Broadcasting of a Television Channel:** *For provisioning of service through satellite medium, the applicant entity shall seek approval for ‘Uplinking’ or ‘Downlinking’ or both ‘Uplinking and Downlinking’ of a television channel, as required.*

ii) **Ground-based Broadcasting of a Television Channel:** *For provisioning of service through ground-based medium, the applicant entity shall seek approval for ground-based broadcasting of a television channel.*

“Ground-based Broadcasting” *means providing programming services through terrestrial communication medium using ground infrastructure (other than satellite-based communication medium) for delivery of programme(s)/television channels to the distributors of television channels;*

“Ground infrastructure” *means the facilities and systems comprised of communication network nodes (e.g. switches, routers, servers and/or transmission systems, etc.) and the means to connect them (e.g., wireline (cable/fibre) including underground cable/fibre, etc.) or wireless (e.g. cellular/microwave/Wi-Fi, etc.)/internet/cloud, etc. for the purpose of communication between two points;*

“Satellite-based Broadcasting” *means providing Programming Services using satellite-based communication medium for delivery of*

programme(s)/television channel(s) to the distributors of television channels;

“Television Channel Broadcasting Services” means and includes ‘Television Channel Broadcasting’, ‘News Agency for Television Channel(s)’, ‘Teleport/Teleport Hub’, ‘Uplinking of Live event/news/footage by Foreign Channel/News Agency’ services or any other service as notified by the Central Government from time to time;

“Terrestrial Communication Medium” means a communication medium using ground infrastructure, which includes but is not limited to wireline (e.g. cable/fibre, etc.)/wireless (e.g. cellular/microwave/Wi-Fi, etc.)/internet/cloud or any other equipment/system other than satellite medium;’

2.50 In ‘Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025’, television broadcasting services have been broadly categorised as the ‘Television Channel Broadcasting Services’ and the ‘Television Channel Distribution Services’. The first category of services, i.e., Television Channel Broadcasting Services covers four types of authorisations, namely, Television Channel Broadcasting, News Agency for Television Channel(s), Teleport/Teleport Hub and Uplinking of Live event/news/footage by Foreign Channel/News Agency and any other service as notified by the Central Government from time to time. The detailed recommended terms and conditions for each authorisation are provided in the ‘Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025’.

2.51 The existing guidelines for uplinking and downlinking of television channels provision for providing television channels through satellite medium only. The proposed authorisation for ‘Television Channel Broadcasting’ can be obtained either for satellite-based medium or ground-based medium or both. Broadcasting of television channel

signals through satellite-based medium will include authorisations for uplinking of a television channel, downlinking of a television channel or both uplinking and downlinking of a television channel. Whereas, authorisation for ground-based broadcasting of a television channel enables television channel to be transmitted to the distributors, through one or more terrestrial communication mediums, viz., wireline (e.g. cable/fibre, etc.) or wireless (e.g. cellular/microwave/Wi-Fi, etc.)/internet/cloud.

- 2.52 In ‘ALTD Services’, television channels being delivered on internet are linear in nature in a sense that they carry scheduled programming and advertisements (which may be same or different) but is functionally indistinguishable to consumers watching a channel through conventional regulated DPO.
- 2.53 This situation raises regulatory concerns, as the same television channels which are otherwise required to obtain permissions under the extant uplinking and downlinking guidelines and to comply with the Programme Code and Advertising Code are being made available on ALTD platforms without any regulatory obligations. Moreover, serious concerns arise in respect of the second category of channels, which have not obtained any permission whatsoever and are operating entirely outside regulatory oversight, giving rise to significant concerns relating to content regulation, compliance, accountability and consumer protection.
- 2.54 In international context, on 19th March 2025⁴⁰, AGCOM (the Italian Regulator) issued the first two authorizations for the provision of audiovisual media services via alternative communication networks to a Fast Channel Network for its two FAST channels. The authorization process was conducted in accordance with Article 4 of the regulation

⁴⁰ <https://merlin.obs.coe.int/article/10279>

adopted under Resolution No. 295/23/CONS. This regulation governs the issuance of authorisation titles for the provision of audiovisual and radio media services via satellite, alternative electronic communication networks, and on-demand services. Specifically, it stipulates that FAST channels must obtain authorisation based on each individual programming schedule they offer. Consequently, all audiovisual media service providers operating FAST channels, including those already available on Italian smart TVs, will be required to obtain specific authorisation from AGCOM for each programming schedule they offer.

- 2.55 To address the above issue in Indian context, a regulatory approach similar to AGCOM may be that the channels provided by any broadcaster or content provider to ALTD/FAST platforms may be duly authorised; in addition to extant authorisations for DPOs/DSPs. Accordingly, all such channels appearing on ALTD/FAST platforms may obtain authorisation for satellite-based broadcasting or ground-based broadcasting or both.
- 2.56 At the distribution end, any platform offering 'ALTD Services' may function in the capacity of DPOs/DSPs, while content providers/broadcasters shall continue to remain responsible for the content and provisioning of linear television channels to the DPOs/DSPs.
- 2.57 Once all the channels are obligated to obtain authorisation for 'Television Channel Broadcasting Services,' their respective terms and conditions would be applicable on such broadcasters/content providers. Such terms and conditions include scope, use of communication medium, FDI, roll-out obligations, operational status, prohibition of certain activities, monitoring and record keeping, name and logo, compliance with TRAI Regulations/Orders/Directions, intimation of primary language and genre and penalties for violation etc.

2.58 Further, in the context of Policy Guidelines for Uplinking and Downlinking of Satellite TV Channels, 2022, MIB has reaffirmed⁴¹ that permission holders of Satellite TV Channels shall provide signal reception decoders only to the following:

- i. MSOs/Cable Operators registered under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995
- ii. DTH Operators registered under the DTH guidelines
- iii. Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) Service Provider duly permitted under their existing Telecom License or authorized by Department of Telecommunications
- iv. HITS Operator duly permitted under the HITS Policy Guidelines

2.59 The 'Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025' also provisions for any other service provider in addition to above four. While only above four types of distributors are allowed under the extant guidelines, ALTD service providers will also be required to be included in this list. If so, suitable amendments to the relevant guidelines may be needed.

2.60 In view of the above discussion, stakeholders are requested to furnish their comments on the following question:

Issue for Consultation:

Q9. Whether the broadcasters/content owners providing or intending to provide television channels on ALTD platforms operating in India be mandated to obtain authorisation either for:

- **Satellite-based Broadcasting and/or**
- **Ground-based Broadcasting**

⁴¹ <https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-05/clarification-regarding-policy-guidelines-for-uplinking-and-downlinking-of-satellite-tv-channels-2022-dated-09.11.2022-reg.pdf>

along with its applicable terms and conditions, before entering into the agreements with authorised entities provisioning ALTD services to consumers? If yes, provide reasons with justifications.

E. Pay television channels available as free on ALTD service platforms

2.61 Based on representations received from stakeholders, it has been observed that a significant number of television channels which are offered as pay channels on traditional distribution platforms are available free of cost on ALTD/FAST platforms. Further, it has been noted that several applications and digital platforms are retransmitting such pay channels without charging any subscription fee from end-users, thereby enabling free access to such TV channel that is otherwise monetised as pay channels on regulated distribution platforms.

2.62 The MSO association in its representation to MIB, *inter alia*, mentioned the following in respect of violation of TRAI's regulations:

'8. In July 2024, TRAI amendment Clause 3(2) of its Tariff Order 2017. The amendment introduced a critical clarification i.e. each television channel must be distinctly categorized as either a "Pay Channel" or a "Free-to-Air (FTA) Channel." The amendment further implied that an FTA channel must remain free across all distribution platforms, and conversely, a Pay Channel cannot be offered for free, regardless of the platform or delivery mechanism.

9. However, several channels currently being retransmitted as FAST channels are categorized as "Pay Channels" on licensed distribution platforms, yet are being offered for free through unregulated FAST platforms. This constitutes a direct violation of

TRAI's regulatory framework, distorting the pricing logic of channel availability and breaching the principle of uniformity mandated by the Authority.'

2.63 The amended proviso of the Clause 3(2) of the 'Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services (Eighth) (Addressable Systems) Tariff Order, 2017⁴²' is reproduced below:

'3. Manner of offering of channels by broadcasters.--

*...
Provided also that a channel, which has been granted downlinking permission by the Central Government and is available without any subscription fee on the direct to home platform of the public service broadcaster, shall not be declared as pay channel for addressable distribution platforms.
...'*

2.64 The rationale behind this proviso is mentioned in the Explanatory Memorandum, which is reproduced below:

'93. Stakeholders have mentioned that the current price gap for pay TV channels between private DPOs and DD Free Dish. Further, on DD Free Dish both free-to-air and pay channels are accessible to viewers without any monthly fees. Due to which increasing numbers of consumers are moving to the DD Free Dish platform. As a result, private DPOs are facing a decline in the subscribers number. This also results in discrimination among customers of DD Free Dish vis-à-vis private DPOs, as the same product is available at different prices.

94. The Authority is of the view that price of a pay channel should be uniform across all the distribution platforms in order to ensure the

⁴² https://tra.gov.in/sites/default/files/2024-09/CR_22072024.pdf

level playing field among DPOs and non discrimination among customers. Accordingly, the Authority has decided that a channel, which is permitted by MIB and is available at no subscription fee on DD Free Dish platform, shall not be declared as pay channel for addressable distribution platforms. Suitable provisions to this effect have been incorporated in the Tariff Order 2017.'

2.65 The rationale behind this amendment could be extended to ALTD services, to ensure that a pay channel is available at uniform price across all delivery platforms. The stakeholders in their representations to TRAI and MIB have also raised this issue and have argued that the availability of pay channels on unregulated ALTD platforms without subscription undermines the intent of tariff parity among distribution platforms.

2.66 In addition to the ALTD platforms, several OTT platforms also provide access to linear television channels, either as standalone offerings or bundled with video-on-demand services. In many such cases, the pricing of individual linear channels is neither disclosed nor separately identifiable, being subsumed in the overall subscription charges. This absence of channel-wise price may make it difficult to determine the effective price being charged for these channels, or any cross-subsidization being provided to the consumer free of charge.

2.67 In view of the above discussion, stakeholders are requested to furnish their comments on the following question:

Issue for Consultation:

Q10. In view of the availability of the pay television channels on ALTD platforms, what pricing methodology should be adopted for price parity of television channels across these platforms? Please provide detailed justification for your response.

F. Consumer protection in the context of ‘ALTD Services’

- 2.68 It is observed that MIB, in its reference has *inter alia*, highlighted the need for ensuring parity, content accountability and consumer protection while examining the regulatory framework for ALTD services. Consumer protection, including an effective grievance redressal mechanism for services and content, is a core element of the existing regulatory framework governing broadcasting and distribution services in India.
- 2.69 Under the extant regulatory regime, regulated DPOs are subject to detailed consumer protection obligations under their respective policy guidelines issued by MIB and TRAI Regulations. The regulatory framework, particularly related to quality of service and consumer protection *inter alia* prescribe standards relating to service continuity, complaint handling, time-bound redressal of grievances, accessibility of customer care, transparency in service offerings and accountability of the service provider towards subscribers/consumers.
- 2.70 In contrast, application providers provisioning ‘ALTD Services’ are currently operating outside the existing licensing framework. These services are being delivered through internet-enabled platforms, including smart televisions with pre-installed applications, downloadable applications on app stores and web-based interfaces.
- 2.71 From a consumer’s perspective, a consumer may have several concerns on ALTD platforms in relation to non-availability of linear channels, interruption or degradation of service, malfunctioning of applications, errors in electronic programme guides, inappropriate content, misleading advertising or difficulties in accessing content. In the absence of a clearly defined regulatory framework, consumers may not have clarity on whom to approach for redressal of such grievances-

the television brand, application provider, content aggregator or any other intermediary involved in service/content provisioning. These parameters will hold greater significance as ALTD service models mature with growing consumer adoption, thereby increasing the potential impact of service-related and content-related grievances of consumers.

2.72 In view of the above, it becomes necessary to examine the need for consumer protection measures for ALTD services. Accordingly, stakeholders are requested to furnish their comments on the following questions:

Issue for Consultation:

Q11. What obligations are required to be specified for the authorised entities provisioning ALTD services, with respect to consumer protection and grievance redressal mechanism, considering the different modes of service access such as smart televisions, websites, mobile applications etc.? Please provide your comments with detailed justification.

G. Audience Measurement

2.73 At present, audience measurement for linear television channels is undertaken by a registered television rating agency⁴³, which captures channels distributed through regulated DPOs. Such measurement is carried out on a sample basis and is used to generate television ratings, including channel-wise viewership, reach and time spent, which are extrapolated to reflect the overall television viewing universe in the country. These ratings serve as a key reference for broadcasters, advertisers and other stakeholders in the broadcasting ecosystem.

⁴³ BARC is the registered television rating agency in India.

2.74 With the emergence and growth of ALTD platforms, as well as the increasing availability of the same linear television channels on other platforms (including both linear and on-demand formats), the distribution and consumption of linear television content is no longer confined to conventional distribution platforms alone. Viewers now access linear television channels across multiple delivery platforms, including internet-based platforms, leading to a fragmentation of viewership across distribution modes.

2.75 MIB had issued Policy Guidelines for Television Rating Agencies in India on 16th January 2014⁴⁴ to regulate the functioning and operations of television rating agencies in the country. MIB has amended the aforesaid guidelines and introduced a revised policy titled 'TV Ratings Policy 2026- Guidelines for the Regulation of Television Ratings' on 27th March 2026⁴⁵. Clause 5.1 titled as 'Viewing Platform' under Clause 5 delineating 'Methodology for Audience Measurement' reads as under:

'5.1.1 Ratings ought to be technology neutral and shall capture data across multiple viewing platforms viz. cable TV, Direct-to-Home (DTH), Terrestrial TV, OTT, connected TVs, and any other platform wherever feasible.'

2.76 Further the revised guidelines also mention the following:

*'14. PROVISIONS WITH RESPECT TO EXISTING RATING AGENCIES
14.1 These guidelines shall also be applicable to the existing TV Rating Agencies. Existing agencies shall register under these Guidelines within 30 days on notification.'*

⁴⁴<https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/2025-07/policy-guidelines-for-television-rating-agencies-in-india-dt-16.01.2014-1.pdf>

⁴⁵<https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/2026-03/tv-rating-policy-2026-dated-27032026.pdf>

14.2 No rating agency shall generate and publish ratings till such time that they comply with the provisions of these guidelines.

14.3 TV Distribution Platforms and / or OTT platforms may publish periodic viewership data of broadcasters / channels being played on their platforms, on their websites, without obtaining registration or permission under these guidelines.'

While para 5.1.1 brings in TV channels distributed across multiple viewing platforms under the TV Rating ambit, provision number 14.3 enables TV Distribution Platforms and/or OTT platforms to publish viewership data on their websites, without obtaining registration or permission.

2.77 FAST service providers during interaction with TRAI have indicated that day they do general analytics of the application, its performance and session time and collect anonymous data. However, no PII based viewership data such as preferences and demographics is collected. Although certain market research and analytics companies provide viewership estimates for online platforms, these measurements are not standardised and are not integrated into the existing television rating system, thereby limiting the availability of a unified and comprehensive view of audience behaviour across platforms. This raises issues relating to the completeness and representativeness of audience measurement, particularly where the same channel is consumed across regulated distribution platforms as well as unregulated or differently regulated digital platforms.

2.78 In view of the revised policy guidelines, which, inter alia, enable the inclusion of television channels distributed on connected TVs (including those delivered through ALTD services) within the television audience measurement framework, as well as permit television distribution platforms to publish viewership data on their respective websites, stakeholders are invited to provide their comments on the

appropriate methodology and timelines for operationalising such enablement in the context of ALTD services.

Issues for Consultation:

- Q12. With the revised guidelines now including multiple viewing platforms in audience measurement, stakeholders are requested to furnish their comments on the right methodology for integrating ALTD service data into the television ratings framework, as well as the proposed timelines for implementation, supported by detailed justifications.**
- Q13. Under the revised guidelines, television distribution platforms and/or OTT platforms may publish periodic viewership data of broadcasters/channels they carry on their platforms and/or on their websites, without prior registration. In this context, stakeholders are invited to provide their comments on how such an enablement can be aligned with the proposed authorisation framework for application providers provisioning ALTD services, along with any related considerations.**

H. Future consideration for ‘ALTD Services’

- 2.79 As per FICCI and EY report titled “Stories, scale and impact: Unlocking India’s media and entertainment economy, March 2026”⁴⁶, the revenue of television broadcasting is generated through two means, i.e., advertising and distribution. According to the estimates, in the year 2024, the television broadcasting sector generated a revenue of INR 263 billion through advertising and INR 354 billion through distribution, cumulating a total revenue of INR 617 billion. This

⁴⁶ <https://www.ey.com/content/dam/ey-unified-site/ey-com/en-in/insights/media-entertainment/2026/03/ey-stories-scale-and-impact-unlocking-india-s-media-and-entertainment-economy.pdf>

indicates that television broadcasting in India operates under a mixed revenue model comprising both advertising and subscription models. Further the digital platform also operates on advertising-based and subscription-based or a combination of two models.

2.80 At present, ALTD services operate on a free, ad-supported model, with revenues generated exclusively through advertisements. However, there may be a possibility in future, when the business models of ALTD services may evolve to adopt a hybrid structure, wherein certain services or channels continue to be offered free of cost, while others are made available on paid basis or the entire services be made available on payment of certain subscription cost. In such a scenario, it may become necessary to examine how these ALTD services be regulated, particularly with respect to the applicability of tariff, interconnection and QoS regulations.

2.81 In view of above stakeholders are requested to furnish their comments on the following question:

Issue for Consultation:

Q14. Considering the scenario wherein application providers provisioning ALTD services may adopt a hybrid business model offering free and/or paid services, stakeholder comments are invited on how such services should be subject to the regulatory framework, particularly with respect to tariff, interconnection and quality of service aspects. Please provide your comments with justification.

I. Any other issue

2.82 While this consultation focuses on specific aspects of the regulatory treatment of ALTD services, it is felt that functioning of such services

may also involve several other parameters that may have a bearing on competition, consumer choice and protection, transparency and parity akin to regulated DPOs. These parameters may *inter alia* include:

- a) Positioning and display of channels on the home screen of ALTD platforms similar to landing page in television
- b) Structure and functioning of EPG, including display of programme and channel information
- c) The terms and conditions governing interconnection arrangements between ALTD platforms and broadcasters/content providers
- d) Commercial arrangements relating to marketing and placement of channels on ALTD platforms

2.83 Further, stakeholders are requested to provide their comments on any other issue which should be taken into consideration while formulating the regulatory framework for 'ALTD Services'. Best practices from the international legislations, regulations may also be provided.

Issue for Consultation:

Q15. Whether there are other issues (such as channel positioning on home screen, EPGs, revenue sharing, interconnection agreements including marketing and placement agreements, etc.), not specifically covered in this consultation paper, which may be relevant for consideration while formulating the regulatory framework for ALTD services? Stakeholders are also requested to share relevant international best practices or regulatory approaches, if any, along with appropriate justification.

CHAPTER III

Summary of Issues for Consultation

Definition and Scope of ‘ALTD Services’⁴⁷

- Q1. What should be the appropriate definition and scope of Application-based Linear Television Distribution Services, i.e., ‘ALTD Services’ in the Indian broadcasting context, taking into account terminologies available internationally? Stakeholders are requested to provide their comments with detailed justification.**

Primary Stakeholder

- Q2. The ‘ALTD Services’ ecosystem involves multiple entities, including application providers, television equipment manufacturers, operating system providers, broadcasters, content providers, content aggregators and other technology or solution providers. However, the application provider appears to play a central role in the distribution of linear television channels across various business models. In this context, should the Application Provider be designated as the primary stakeholder responsible for obtaining authorisation for the provisioning of ‘ALTD Services’?**
- a. If yes, please provide detailed justification and supporting reasons.**
 - b. If not, please identify the appropriate stakeholder(s) who should be responsible for obtaining such authorisation, along with rationale.**

⁴⁷ As mentioned in para 1.62 of this consultation paper, all application providers that distribute linear television channels to consumers, either as applications pre-installed on television sets and other devices, or downloadable mobile or smart TV applications, or web-based applications accessible through web browsers are referred to as ‘**Application-based Linear Television Distribution (ALTD) Services**’. Further, while these services are presently primarily ad-supported, there may be instances where its cost is bundled within a subscription package and they may evolve into paid offerings in the future. Accordingly, these services are designated as **ALTD Services** as a wider term encompassing FAST Services.

Terms and Conditions of 'ALTD Services' Authorisation

Q3. What should be the terms and conditions including fees or charges for the grant of service authorisation to the application providers provisioning 'ALTD Services' in India, under the 'Television Channel Distribution Services' as recommended in Annexure-II of 'Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025'? Stakeholders are requested to provide their detailed comments including but not limited to the following conditions:

- a. Service Area**
- b. Validity Period**
- c. Eligibility Conditions**
- d. Minimum Net worth**
- e. Processing Fee**
- f. Entry Fee**
- g. Bank Guarantee**
- h. Authorisation Fee**
- i. Security Deposit**
- j. Roll Out Obligations**
- k. Any other terms and conditions**

Further, what terms and conditions/obligations should be put in place for foreign entities providing 'ALTD Services' in India?

Q4. What should be the common terms and conditions applicable for the authorised entities provisioning 'ALTD Services' in India, under the 'Television Channel Distribution Services' as recommended in Part-I of Annexure-III in 'Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025'? Stakeholders are requested to provide their detailed comments on the following conditions:

- a. Renewal of Authorisation**
- b. Renewal Fee**
- c. Equity Holding and Management Control**

- d. Restriction on cross-holding of equity shares/capital contribution between**
 - i. TV broadcasters and application providers provisioning ALTD services**
 - ii. Application Providers provisioning ALTD services and other DSPs**
- e. Transfer/Surrender of Service Authorisation**
- f. Sharing of Infrastructure**
- g. Any other terms and conditions**

Q5. What should be the specific terms and conditions for the authorised entities provisioning ‘ALTD Services’ in India, under the ‘Television Channel Distribution Services’ as recommended in Part-II of Annexure-III in ‘Authorisation Recommendations dated 21st February 2025’? Stakeholders are requested to provide their detailed comments on the following conditions:

- a. Reservation of operational channel capacity by Vertically Integrated Entity**
- b. Platform Services (PS) offered by application providers provisioning ALTD services**
- c. Monitoring and Inspection of facilities**
- d. Supply of Information to Central Government/TRAI**
- e. Contravention of terms and conditions of authorisation**
- f. Any other terms and conditions**

Further, whether the mandatory sharing of Sports Broadcasting Signals with Prasar Bharati and the compulsory transmission of certain channels as mandated for DTH, HITS and IPTV services should be applied to the application providers provisioning ‘ALTD Services’. Stakeholders are requested to provide their comments with detailed justification on all such obligations that should be made applicable on such entities.

- Q6. What type of assurance or certification mechanism should be prescribed for television manufacturers and operating system providers to ensure that applications provisioning ALTD services, (whether pre-integrated with television sets or made available for download through application stores or web platforms) are duly authorised by MIB.**
- Q7. What kind of assurance mechanisms should be instituted to ensure that the applications providers authorised for provisioning ALTD services carry only those channels which are authorised/permited by MIB for distribution in India. What kind of penalty/disincentive/deterrent be instituted for non-compliance? Provide your comments with justification.**
- Q8. Whether there is a need to prescribe any specific terms and conditions for value-added services offered by ALTD service providers? If yes, what should be the terms and conditions? Stakeholders are requested to provide their detailed comments with justification.**

Television channels provisioned under ‘ALTD Services’

- Q9. Whether the broadcasters/content owners providing or intending to provide television channels on ALTD platforms operating in India be mandated to obtain authorisation either for:**
- Satellite-based Broadcasting and/or**
 - Ground-based Broadcasting**
- along with its applicable terms and conditions, before entering into the agreements with authorised entities provisioning ALTD services to consumers? If yes, provide reasons with justifications.**

Q10. In view of the availability of the pay television channels on ALTD platforms, what pricing methodology should be adopted for price parity of television channels across these platforms? Please provide detailed justification for your response.

Consumer Protection

Q11. What obligations are required to be specified for the authorised entities provisioning ALTD services, with respect to consumer protection and grievance redressal mechanism, considering the different modes of service access such as smart televisions, websites, mobile applications etc.? Please provide your comments with detailed justification.

Audience Measurement

Q12. With the revised guidelines now including multiple viewing platforms in audience measurement, stakeholders are requested to furnish their comments on the right methodology for integrating ALTD service data into the television ratings framework, as well as the proposed timelines for implementation, supported by detailed justifications.

Q13. Under the revised guidelines, television distribution platforms and/or OTT platforms may publish periodic viewership data of broadcasters/channels they carry on their platforms and/or on their websites, without prior registration. In this context, stakeholders are invited to provide their comments on how such an enablement can be aligned with the proposed authorisation framework for application providers provisioning ALTD services, along with any related considerations.

Future consideration for 'ALTD Services'

Q14. Considering the scenario wherein application providers provisioning ALTD services may adopt a hybrid business model offering free and/or paid services, stakeholder comments are invited on how such services should be subject to the regulatory framework, particularly with respect to tariff, interconnection and quality of service aspects. Please provide your comments with justification.

Any other Issue

Q15. Whether there are other issues (such as channel positioning on home screen, EPGs, revenue sharing, interconnection agreements including marketing and placement agreements, etc.), not specifically covered in this consultation paper, which may be relevant for consideration while formulating the regulatory framework for ALTD services? Stakeholders are also requested to share relevant international best practices or regulatory approaches, if any, along with appropriate justification.

List of Acronyms

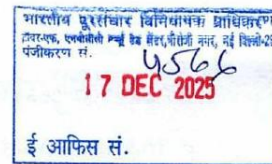
Acronym	Description
ALTD	Application-based Linear Television Distribution
ACMA	Australian Communications and Media Authority
AIDCF	All India Digital Cable Federation
ASCI	Advertising Standards Council of India
CRTC	Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission
CTV	Connected Television
DPO	Distribution Platform Operator
DSP	Distribution Service Providers
DTH	Direct-to-Home
EPG	Electronic Programme Guide
EY	Ernst & Young
FAST	Free Ad-Supported Streaming Television
FICCI	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry
FTA	Free-to-Air
GBB	Ground-based Broadcasters
HITS	Headend-in-the-Sky
IIMA	Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad
IPTV	Internet Protocol Television
LCO	Local Cable Operator
MeitY	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
MIB	Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
MSO	Multi-System Operator
OEM	Original Equipment Manufacturer
OfCom	Office of Communications, United Kingdom
OTT	Over-the-Top
PS	Platform Services
TRAI	Telecom Regulatory Authority of India
TV	Television
VAS	Value-Added Services

MIB Reference dated 15.12.2025

No. 2/27/2025-BP&L
Government of India
Ministry of Information & Broadcasting

Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi
Dated: the 15th December, 2025

To,
The Chairman,
Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI),
Mahanagar Doorsanchar Bhawan,
Jawaharlal Nehru Marg,
New Delhi – 110002.



Subject: Seeking recommendations from TRAI under Section 11(1)(a) of the TRAI Act, 1997 regarding formulation of a regulatory framework for Free Ad-Supported Streaming Television (FAST) Services – reg.

Sir,

I am directed to state that this Ministry has been deliberating on the industry concerns regarding the Free Ad-Supported Streaming Television (FAST) services in India. In this regard ministry received representations from industry stakeholders, including the *All India Digital Cable Federation (AIDCF)*, expressing concern over the unregulated FAST services (*Copy attached*).

2. The said issue was discussed with various industry stakeholders and comments were sought from them. The responses received from them (Copy attached) indicate that FAST platforms are currently being deployed through preloaded or built-in applications on connected TVs and operate on an advertisement-supported model without any licensing or registration framework.

3. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), in its earlier recommendations on (i) *"Regulatory Framework for Ground-Based Broadcasters"* (dated 15.01.2024) and (ii) *"Framework for Service Authorisations for Provision of Broadcasting Services under the Telecommunications Act, 2023"* (dated 21.02.2025), has also noted the growing presence of FAST services and recognized the existence of regulatory gaps in the present framework and recommended that a separate authorization for FAST channel distribution may be considered.

4. In view of the above and keeping in mind the evolving broadcasting landscape, the Ministry is of the view that there is a need to examine the matter comprehensively and develop a clear regulatory framework for FAST

Smt
15/12/2025

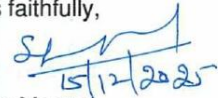
services, ensuring parity, content accountability, and consumer protection.

5. Accordingly, in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 11(1)(a) of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997, the Ministry hereby seeks the recommendations of TRAI on the formulation of an appropriate regulatory framework governing Free Ad-Supported Streaming Television (FAST) services in India.

6. This issues with the approval of the competent authority.

Encl.: As above.

Yours faithfully,



(Shiv Ram Meena)
Under Secretary to the Government of India
Tel. 011-23386746
Email: usbpl-moib@gov.in

Ref: AIDCF/FY 25-26/06

Date: 16th June 2025

To,

Shri Prabhat,
Hon'ble Additional Secretary
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
6th Floor, A Wing
Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi

Sub: Regulatory Framework for FAST channel over connected TV

Ref:

1. AIDCF meeting dated 13th June 2025 with Hon'ble Additional Secretary, MIB.
2. AIDCF Letter No. AIDCF/FY 25-26/02 dated 24th April 2025
3. TRAI recommendations on 'Framework for Service Authorisations for Provision of Broadcasting Services under the Telecommunications Act, 2023' dated 21st February 2025
4. TRAI recommendations on 'Regulatory Framework for Ground-based Broadcasters' dated 15th January 2024

Respected Sir,

At the outset, we are sincerely thankful to you for granting us time on 13th June 2025 and giving us an opportunity for a patience hearing regarding the Cable TV Industry issues and advising us regarding the solutions.

We are writing this letter regarding one of the issues highlighted by us during the meeting regarding FAST services. We have sent the detailed letter dated 24th April 2025 to Hon'ble Ministry, which is also attached as Annexure 1.

The key points which we like to reiterate are as:

1. One of the most concerning developments in India's evolving broadcasting landscape is the emergence of Free Ad-Supported Streaming Television (FAST) services. **These platforms deliver linear satellite TV channels over digital means in an unregulated and impermissible manner, without adhering to the licensing and compliance requirements that govern the conventional broadcasting framework.**
2. This practice is a direct violation of the Uplinking and Downlinking Guidelines notified by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in November 2022 and amended in March 2023.

VIOLATION OF EXISTING POLICY GUIDELINES FOR UPLINKING AND DOWNLINKING OF TELEVISION CHANNELS

3. The foundational intent behind the Uplinking and Downlinking Guidelines, introduced on 5th December 2011, was to ensure that **'No television channel will be permitted for public viewing without registration or permission from Ministry.'**
4. **Some excerpts from 5th Dec 2011 Downlinking and Uplinking policy guidelines state that:**

*"Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, has formulated policy guidelines for downlinking all satellite television channels downlinked / received / transmitted and re-transmitted in India for public viewing. **Consequently, no person/entity shall downlink a channel, which has not been registered by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting under these guidelines'**"*

"Henceforth, all persons/ entities providing Television Satellite Broadcasting Services (Television Channels) uplinked from other countries to viewers in India as well as any entity desirous of providing such a Television Satellite Broadcasting Service (Television Channel), receivable in India for public viewership, shall be required to obtain permission from Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, in accordance with the terms and conditions prescribed under these guidelines"
5. The above-quoted downlinking guidelines were amended on 9th November 2022, wherein the intention remained the same. **The key clauses of the guidelines which outline the requirements for any channel to be transmitted for public viewing in India along-with a brief description of the violations that FAST channels are indulging in are listed below:**

S. No.	Clause No. of Uplinking and Downlinking Guidelines	Clause Details	Violation of Downlinking Guidelines by FAST Channels
1	Clause 11(3)(h)	<i>(h) It shall ensure that any of its channels, which is unregistered or prohibited from being telecast or transmitted or re-transmitted in India, under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act 1995 or the DTH guidelines or <u>any other law for the time being in force, cannot be received in India through encryption or any other means</u></i>	Several TV channels, which are neither registered with MIB nor have been granted license for broadcasting, are being illegally broadcast in the country as FAST services. Detailed list of such 'unregistered TV channels' being transmitted illegally in the form of FAST services on prominent platforms such as Distro TV, Yupp TV, Samsung TV Plus, LG WebOS are



ALL INDIA DIGITAL CABLE FEDERATION

			attached with our letter dated 24 th April 2025 as Annexure 1
2	Clause 20(1)	<p><u>20. Name and logo of a TV Channel</u></p> <p><i>(1) A company/ LLP shall display on the permitted TV channel only that name and logo which has been approved by the Ministry.</i></p> <p><i>Provided that display of name/logo other than that permitted or display of dual logo would be treated as a violation of the Guidelines inviting penal action.</i></p>	<p>The name and logo of a TV channel is approved by MIB and use of the same Name and logo on FAST services is a clear violation of the Downlinking guidelines.</p> <p>Detailed list of such 'licensed TV channels' being transmitted illegally in the form of FAST services, using the same name and logo on prominent platforms such as Distro TV, Yupp TV, Samsung TV Plus, LG WebOS are attached with our letter dated 24th April 2025 as Annexure 1</p>

6. The combined reading of the respective clauses indicates that individual TV channels which are licensed to broadcasters by the Ministry, after being uplinked to satellites in encrypted form, can only be downlinked and retransmitted by authorized licensed service providers. **In other words, only 'licensed TV channels' can be distributed in India that too only through 'licensed service providers like MSO, DTH, HITS & IPTV. Any other method of distributing such channels would constitute a legal violation.**

TRAI'S RECOGNITION OF REGULATORY GAPS

7. The Hon'ble Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has also taken note of this issue in its recommendations issued with respect to two separate consultation papers:
- In its recommendations on 'Regulatory Framework for Ground-based Broadcasters' dated 15th January 2024, TRAI noted that "FAST channel services, to the extent they are streaming TV channels, are quite similar to traditional broadcasting." **TRAI observed that the issue needed further examination and recommended the Hon'ble Ministry to assess whether FAST channels align with the existing regulatory framework and, if necessary, introduce policy guidelines in consultation with TRAI.**
 - In its recommendations on 'Framework for Service Authorisations for Provision of Broadcasting Services under the Telecommunications Act, 2023' dated 21st February 2025, TRAI observed that concerns over the unregulated proliferation of FAST channels in India were "a genuine one" and were "affecting level playing field with respect to the regulated traditional broadcasting ecosystem." **TRAI underscored that such regulatory arbitrage had the potential of toppling the competitive balance in the industry. TRAI recommended that a separate authorisation maybe considered for FAST channels distribution and that the Hon'ble Ministry may make a reference to TRAI**

ALL INDIA DIGITAL CABLE FEDERATION
 CIN: U74140DL2014NPL268020
 236, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase -III, New Delhi - 110 020
www.aidcf.com



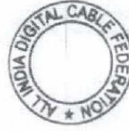
ALL INDIA DIGITAL CABLE FEDERATION

to provide detailed terms and conditions for the service authorisation for 'FAST channels distribution service'.

REQUEST FOR INTERVENTION

8. Considering the violation of several clauses of the Downlinking Guidelines, we respectfully urge the Hon'ble Ministry to:
 - a. issue a stringent direction to the concerned satellite TV channels, requiring them to rectify the ongoing violations. This may include, but need not be limited to, discontinuing the transmission of signals to FAST service providers.
 - b. make a timely reference to TRAI for the formulation of appropriate policy guidelines on FAST services by incorporated this issue into TRAI's forthcoming consultation process on the broadcasting sector.
9. We hope that our request will merit your kind consideration in the interest of a comprehensive and future ready regulatory framework.

Yours Sincerely,
For, ALL INDIA DIGITAL CABLE FEDERATION



Manoj P. Chhangani
Secretary General -AIDCF

Copy to:

1. Shri Gauri Shankar Kesarwani, Hon'ble Additional Director, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi.
2. Shri Niraj Kumar, Hon'ble Director, TVI, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi.
3. Shri Amit Kumar, Hon'ble Deputy Secretary, DAS, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi.

ALL INDIA DIGITAL CABLE FEDERATION
CIN: U74140DL2014NPL268020
236, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase - III, New Delhi - 110 020
www.aidcf.com

Ref: AIDCF/FY 25-26/02
Date: 24th April 2025

To,

Shri Sanjiv Shankar,
Hon'ble Joint Secretary
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
5th Floor, A Wing
Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi

Sub: Request for sending reference to TRAI for their recommendations regarding "Policy guidelines for FAST channel services" in their upcoming Holistic Consultation Process of the Cable and Broadcasting Industry.

Ref:

1. TRAI recommendations on 'Framework for Service Authorisations for Provision of Broadcasting Services under the Telecommunications Act, 2023' dated 21st February 2025
2. TRAI recommendations on 'Regulatory Framework for Ground-based Broadcasters' dated 15th January 2024

Respected Sir,

1. The rapid advancement of technology has significantly transformed the overall broadcasting landscape in India. Distribution of TV channels, which was once the exclusive domain of licensed DPOs, has now expanded to a wide array of unregulated content delivery modes, including but not limited to video OTT.
2. **Among the various types of unregulated video OTT services, one significantly concerning development is the rise of FAST (Free Ad-Supported Streaming Television) services.¹ These services are being offered in direct violation of the Hon'ble Ministry's Uplinking and Downlinking Guidelines issued in November 2022 (and amended in March 2023).**

TRAI'S RECOGNITION OF REGULATORY GAPS

3. The Hon'ble Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has also taken note of this issue in its recommendations issued with respect to two separate consultation papers:

¹ FAST services deliver linear TV content to viewers using an ad-supported video-on-demand (AVOD) model. These include two key formats:

- FAST TV, which refers to platforms that stream only free, ad-supported linear TV channels; and
- FAST Channels, which are individual free, ad-supported linear TV channels offered within larger OTT platforms.

- In its recommendations on 'Regulatory Framework for Ground-based Broadcasters' dated 15th January 2024, TRAI noted that "FAST channel services, to the extent they are streaming TV channels, are quite similar to traditional broadcasting." TRAI observed that the issue needed further examination and recommended the Hon'ble Ministry to assess whether FAST channels align with the existing regulatory framework and, if necessary, introduce policy guidelines in consultation with TRAI.
- In its recommendations on 'Framework for Service Authorisations for Provision of Broadcasting Services under the Telecommunications Act, 2023' dated 21st February 2025, TRAI observed that concerns over the unregulated proliferation of FAST channels in India were "a genuine one" and were "affecting level playing field with respect to the regulated traditional broadcasting ecosystem." TRAI underscored that such regulatory arbitrage had the potential of toppling the competitive balance in the industry. TRAI recommended that a separate authorisation maybe considered for FAST channels distribution and that the Hon'ble Ministry may make a reference to TRAI to provide detailed terms and conditions for the service authorisation for 'FAST channels distribution service'.

VIOLATION OF EXISTING POLICY GUIDELINES FOR UPLINKING AND DOWNLINKING OF TELEVISION CHANNELS

4. The base intention behind bringing up linking and downlinking guidelines on 5th December 2011 was that **'No television channel will be permitted for public viewing without registration or permission from Ministry.'**
5. **Some excerpts from 5th Dec 2011 Downlinking and Uplinking policy guidelines state that:**

*"Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, has formulated policy guidelines for downlinking all satellite television channels downlinked / received / transmitted and re-transmitted in India for public viewing. **Consequently, no person/entity shall downlink a channel, which has not been registered by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting under these guidelines**"*

"Henceforth, all persons/ entities providing Television Satellite Broadcasting Services (Television Channels) uplinked from other countries to viewers in India as well as any entity desirous of providing such a Television Satellite Broadcasting Service (Television Channel), receivable in India for public viewership, shall be required to obtain permission from Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, in accordance with the terms and conditions prescribed under these guidelines"
6. The above-quoted downlinking guideline dated 5th Dec 2011 was amended on 9th November 2022, wherein the intention remained the same. **The key clauses of the guidelines which outline the requirements for any channel to be transmitted for public viewing in India along-with a brief description of the violations that FAST channels are indulging in are listed below:**



ALL INDIA DIGITAL CABLE FEDERATION

S. No.	Clause No. of Uplinking and Downlinking Guidelines	Clause Details	Violation of Downlinking Guidelines by FAST Channels
1	Clause 4(3)(d)	<p>4. <u>Grant of permission</u> -</p> <p>... (3) <u>The Grant of permission to a company/LLP under sub-para (1) shall be subject to the following conditions:</u> ... (d) <u>It uplinks from the permitted teleport only those TV channels which have been permitted/ approved by the Ministry, and stops up linking a TV channel as soon as permission/ approval for such channel is withdrawn or suspended by the Ministry, or on specific order of the Ministry to stop such uplinking for such time period as may be specified in that order;</u></p>	<p>The logic behind grant of permission for uplinking and downlinking of any channel was to restrict the delivery of content with respect to Public Viewing. However, with the introduction of FAST services by TV manufacturers like Samsung, LG etc., the basic concept of permission is altogether violated.</p> <p>Therefore, Downlinking guidelines need to be amended to include FAST services in the same.</p>
2	Clause 8(1)(a)	<p>8. <u>Special conditions for up linking a satellite TV channel</u> -</p> <p>(1) <u>The company/LLP which is granted permission to uplink a TV channel under para 7 shall, in addition to the conditions laid down therein, also comply with the following:-</u></p> <p>(a) <u>Up linking may be done in the Frequency Band specified by the applicant, after due approval of the Ministry and other concerned authorities, subject to the further condition that up linking in any band (other than C band) shall only be in encrypted mode;</u></p>	<p>The guidelines clearly specify the requirement of due approval from the Ministry, which is conveniently being avoided by FAST channels.</p>
3	Clause 10 (1)(viii)	<p>10. <u>Furnishing of Application</u> -</p> <p>viii) <u>The downlinked channel must be licensed or permitted for being broadcast by the regulatory or licensing authority of the country of transmission, proof of which would have to be submitted at the time of application.</u></p>	<p>Several FAST services are retransmitting foreign channels in India that are uplinked from other countries without securing the mandatory downlinking permission from the MIB because the required proof of licensing or permission from the regulatory authority in the country of origin is not being submitted to MIB.</p>

ALL INDIA DIGITAL CABLE FEDERATION
 CIN: U74140DL2014NPL268020
 236, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase -III, New Delhi - 110 020
www.aidcf.com



ALL INDIA DIGITAL CABLE FEDERATION

			As a result, unregistered and unverified foreign channels are being transmitted in India without any regulatory oversight.
4	Clause 11(3)(f)	<p><u>11. Grant of permission -</u></p> <p>...</p> <p>(3) The Grant of permission to a company/ LLP shall be subject to the following conditions:</p> <p>...</p> <p>(f) It shall provide Satellite TV Channel signal reception decoders to MSOs/Cable Operators registered under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act 1995 or to a DTH operator registered under the DTH guidelines issued by Government of India or to an Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) Service Provider duly permitted under their existing Telecom License or authorized by Department of Telecommunications or to a HITS operator duly permitted under the policy guidelines for HITS operators issued by the Ministry;</p>	As per downlinking guidelines the satellite channel decoders can only be provided to DTH, HITS, IPTV and MSOs. Delivery of FAST services/channels without the need for any decoders effectively defeats the purpose and intention behind the relevant clause incorporated in the uplinking and downlinking guidelines.
5	Clause 11(3)(h)	<p>(h) It shall ensure that any of its channels, which is unregistered or prohibited from being telecast or transmitted or re-transmitted in India, under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act 1995 or the DTH guidelines or <u>any other law for the time being in force, cannot be received in India through encryption or any other means</u></p>	<p>Several TV channels, which are neither registered with MIB nor have been granted license for broadcasting, are being illegally broadcast in the country as FAST services.</p> <p>Detailed list of such 'unregistered TV channels' being transmitted illegally in the form of FAST services on prominent platforms such as Distro TV, Yupp TV, Samsung TV Plus, LG WebOS is highlighted in the Annexures below in red font colour.</p>
6	Clause 20(1)	<p><u>20. Name and logo of a TV Channel</u></p> <p>(1) A company/ LLP shall display on the permitted TV channel only that name and logo which has been approved by the Ministry.</p>	The name and logo of a TV channel is approved by MIB and use of the same Name and logo on FAST services is a clear violation of the Downlinking guidelines.

ALL INDIA DIGITAL CABLE FEDERATION

CIN: U74140DL2014NPL268020

236, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase -III, New Delhi - 110 020

www.aidcf.com



ALL INDIA DIGITAL CABLE FEDERATION

	<i>Provided that display of name/ logo other than that permitted or display of dual logo would be treated as a violation of the Guidelines inviting penal action.</i>	Detailed list of such 'licensed TV channels' being transmitted illegally in the form of FAST services, using the same name and logo on prominent platforms such as Distro TV, Yupp TV, Samsung TV Plus, LG WebOS is highlighted in the Annexures below in black font colour.
--	---	---

- The combined reading of the respective clauses indicates that individual TV channels which are licensed to broadcasters by the Ministry, after being uplinked to satellites in encrypted form, can only be downlinked and retransmitted by authorized licensed service providers. **In other words, only 'licensed TV channels' can be distributed in India that too only through 'licensed service providers like MSO, DTH, HITS & IPTV. Any other method of distributing such channels would constitute a legal violation.**

VIOLATION OF TRAI'S REGULATIONS

- In July 2024, TRAI amendment² Clause 3(2) of its Tariff Order 2017.³ The amendment introduced a critical clarification i.e. each television channel must be distinctly categorized as either a "Pay Channel" or a "Free-to-Air (FTA) Channel." The amendment further implied that an FTA channel must remain free across all distribution platforms, and conversely, a Pay Channel cannot be offered for free, regardless of the platform or delivery mechanism.
- However, several channels currently being retransmitted as FAST channels are categorized as "Pay Channels" on licensed distribution platforms, yet are being offered for free through unregulated FAST platforms. This constitutes a direct violation of TRAI's regulatory framework, distorting the pricing logic of channel availability and breaching the principle of uniformity mandated by the Authority.
- Few of the pay channels, for example, that are being carried on Yupp TV, Samsung TV Plus and LG WebOS without any cost include:

Channel Name	Channel Cost (in INR)
CNBC Awaaz	0.10
CNBC Bajar	1.00
CNBC TV18	4.00
CNN News18	0.50

² The Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services (Eighth) (Addressable Systems) Tariff (Fourth Amendment) Order, 2024 (No. 1 of 2024)

³ The Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services (Eighth) Addressable Systems) Tariff Order, 2017 (No. 1 of 2017)

ALL INDIA DIGITAL CABLE FEDERATION
CIN: U74140DL2014NPL268020
236, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase -III, New Delhi - 110 020
www.aidcf.com



ALL INDIA DIGITAL CABLE FEDERATION

India Today	1.80
NDTV Profit	1.50
NDTV24x7	3.50
News18 Bangla	0.10
News18 Gujarati	0.10
News18 Jammu Kashmir	0.10
News18 Kannada	0.10
News18 Keralam	0.10
News18 MP Chhattisgarh	0.10
News18 Odia	0.10
News18 Punjab Haryana	0.10
News18 Tamil Nadu	0.10
News18 UP Uttarakhand	0.10
Wion	1.00
Zee 24 Ghanta	0.10
Zee 24 Taas	0.10
Zee Business	0.10

LACK OF ADHERENCE TO PROGRAMME CODE AND ADVERTISING CODE

11. Moreover, the broadcast and distribution of 'unregistered TV channels' also raises serious concerns regarding non-adherence to the Programme Code and the Advertising Code prescribed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995.
12. **In the absence of any registration or regulatory oversight, the nature and content of these channels cannot be verified or monitored. This creates a significant risk, as it becomes impossible to ascertain whether the content is anti-national, anti-social, or contrary to the cultural fabric and public order of the country.**
13. The rapid and unregulated rise of these FAST services heightens the risk of undesirable content gradually infiltrating the ecosystem—if it has not already—thereby necessitating immediate policy attention and enforcement action.

REQUEST FOR POLICY ACTION AND INTERIM RELIEF

14. In light of the above, we respectfully urge the Hon'ble Ministry to:
 - a. make a timely reference to TRAI for including the aforementioned issue in their forthcoming consultation process reg. broadcasting sector to suitably amend the up linking & downlinking guidelines dated 9th November 2022 for inclusion of FAST services.

ALL INDIA DIGITAL CABLE FEDERATION
CIN: U74140DL2014NPL268020
236, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase -III, New Delhi - 110 020
www.aidcf.com



ALL INDIA DIGITAL CABLE FEDERATION

b. also bring FAST channels under similar regulatory framework as applicable to other DPOs, so as to ensure a level playing field and parity among the stakeholders.

15. Meanwhile, till the formation of policy guidelines over FAST services, we would request Hon'ble Ministry, to issue an immediate direction to stop transmission of these FAST channels, as they are a potential risk in their current unregulated form.

16. We hope that our request will merit your kind consideration in the interest of a comprehensive and future ready regulatory framework.

Yours Sincerely,
For, ALL INDIA DIGITAL CABLE FEDERATION

Manoj P. Chhangani
Secretary General -AIDCF



Copy to:

1. Shri Sanjay Jaju, Hon'ble Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi.
2. Shri Gauri Shankar Kesarwani, Hon'ble Director, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi.

ALL INDIA DIGITAL CABLE FEDERATION
CIN: U74140DL2014NPL268020
236, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase -III, New Delhi - 110 020
www.aidcf.com

The channels in Red Font are not "Licensed channels". Moreover, Channels in Black Font are using the same logo and name as approved under downlinking guidelines for being a satellite channel.

Annexure 1: List of Channels on Distro TV

List of Channels on Distro TV (As on 15-Apr-25)						
JACETV	Salle Baile	Entrepreneur	Indian Yoga & Wellness TV Telugu	News5Live	Sports Connect	TV9 Bharavarsh
JACETV AFROBEAT	Sark TV	Euronews	IndieBox	NewsX	Sports First TV	TV9 Gujarati
JACETV CLASSIC HITS	Bhaktini Sini	Euronews Español	Inside Investigations	NewsK World	SportsGrid	TV9 Kannada
JACETV ANB	Black Enterprise	Everyday Heroes	Island Escape	Nigbati TV	SportsKool TV	TV9 Marathi
4K TRAVEL TV	Blow Football	EVVA MUSIC	Jewish Duniya	WOMADrive TV	SportsVRBuz	TV9 Telugu
9X Jaha	Bless TV	REVA TV	Kol33tv	CAN Plus	Sports Escape	United Fight Alliance
9XM	Bollywood Masala	Fireplace Lounge	Kalyan TV	Did West TV	Study Lounge	Urban Action Channel
Aaj Ki Shabar	Bowery Classics	Fun Tank	Kartavya TV	GarVani	Sudarshan News	Us Weekly TV
ABP Ananda	Box Cinema	Fitness Review	Kids TV - Nursery Rhymes and Baby Songs	Outside	Sundaram TV	Vijay TV
ABP Asmita	Box Gamers	Reliving 24/7	Kids TV Español Latino	Pitara TV	Surf Roots TV	Vikatan TV
ABP Ganga	Boxing TV	RLOU Detonation	Kids TV India - Nursery Rhymes and Baby Songs	PL Network	Swar Shree	WaapTV
ABP Majha	BoxAsiaTV	RULI TV	KO.ZOOM TV	PMC Drama	Sword & Shield	Watchi Kid!
ABP News	Business Rockstars	tv. tv by Network	KuwaitTV	Powersports World	Tabbar Hits	Wild Nature
ABP Sanjha	CampusLife Sports	Galaxy TV	La Boca Latina	Pro Football Focus	Tara TV	Wild TV
ACT On The Go	Cartoon Classics	Garv Punjab Garbani	Lakshya TV	Punjabi Hits	TED	WorldZinh TV
ACL Console TV	Channel Divya	Chart Dimension	Life Style by Triptic	Real Life TV	Teton Gravity Research	World Poker Tour
Adventure Sports TV	ChoppedTown	ClevedTV Spanish	LifeFit by Triptic	Real Vision	The Beat Show	XFC TV
Africans	Cinema Hausa	ClevedTV The Vault	Living India News	Relaxing Ram	The Holiday TV Channel	Young Hollywood
Afwood Blackbuster	Cinegrid	ClevedTV Yoga & Fitness	Lone Star	Relaxing WinterScapes	The Unmute	YRF Music
AfrolandTV	ColonizedTV	Goalcast	N+	Revy	Tablu Authentically African	Zoomer TV
Al Arabiya	Comedy Classics	Green Chillies TV	Malgoli	Revy Her	Traffic TV	
Al Jazeera	Comercio TV	Gusto TV	Masala Entertainment Plus	Revy News	Toon Goggles on Lipsal	
Al Jazeera English	Cooking Panda	Hard Kopska	Mastli - India's No.1 Music and Youth Channel	Right Now TV	ToonKids	
Always Funny	CraftyTV	Hare Krishna	Mediacorp Entertainment - English	Rockola Television	ToonKids Afjal	
Always Funny on Español	Crafty Panda	Haryana Beat	Mediacorp Entertainment - Tamil	ROJ TV	ToonKids nRox	
Always Funny (Hindi & Fails)	crema.to	hip hop TV	Military Times	Rotana Affair	TR Rodeo	
AMusic Channel	Dabanga	HITS MEXICANOS	MMA Junkie	Sava Music	TRACC Brazuca	
Amr	Defiance Media	London Sports	MomCave	Sanmarq TV	TRACC Latina	
Asianet News Live	Divya	Number Mill	Monarch	Schwab Network	Trace UK	
Asianet Suvarna News	Documentary+	OS	Motorkacing	ScreenDreams by Inavincible	TRACE Urban	
AtmaBharat TV	Dos Sports	India News	MTRSPPT	Shemaroo Bollywood	Tranquil Thunderstorms	
Autism Escape	Drive TV	India News Gujarat	Nakshatra Digital TV	Shemaroo Filmgaane	TroviTV	
AWF Plus	Dunhams TV	India News Haryana	Namma Bangalore	Skull Bound TV	True African	
and Bmt Classic TV	Eartho TV	India News Punjab	NatureStream.tv	SWAG	True History	
a-2 Classic Film	El Conflicto TV	India News UP / UK	Nigodon TV	Saves TV	TV Punjab	
and Western Grid	ENCORE+	Indian Yoga & Wellness TV Hindi	News Nation	SonicCenter	TV9 Bangla	

List of Channels on Yupp TV

List of Channels on Yupp TV (As on 14-Apr-25)							
24	Bhakti TV	DRIVE IN MOVIE CHANNEL	insync	Mano TV International	NTV	Seethgiri TV	TV5 Kannada
10TV	Bharat Samachar	DROOL	Isai Anu	Manglamay TV	GAN PLUS	Shalom TV	TV9 Bangla
4K TRAVEL TV	BIG TV	Dy 365	Jai Maharashtra	Manorama News	OM CVR	Sharnam TV	TV9 Bharatvarsh
6TV	BOLLYWOOD 4U	EDDY TV	Jaihind TV	Mantavya News	CUTTERVISION TV	Shripoti TV	TV9 Gujarati
9X Jaiwa	Boogie Bollywood	EDDY URBAN	Jan TV	Masan TV	Pinkasi TV HD	Gyan Temple TV	TV9 Kannada
9x Jhakaas	Brijbhai Kumara	ENCORE	Janam TV	Mostill	PASAND	Songdev	TV9 Marathi
9x Tashan	ERAT TV	ENGLISH TV	Jantantra TV	Mothrubhumi News	Peace of Mind	SPACE SERIES	TV9 News
SXM	Calcutta News	ESCAPE TV	Jeevan TV	Mazhavil Manorama	People TV	SPORT FISHING TV	UNCHAINEDTV
A1 TV	Calvary TV	FIGHT TV	Jivanti Channel	Mazhavil Manorama HD	Peppers TV	Sri Sankara Kannada	URBAN ACTION
Aajtak	CARTOON TV CLASSICS	God TV	JUPITER TV	MediaOne TV	Pitakas Comedy	Sri Sankara Tamil	V6 News
Aastha Bhajan	Channel Win	Good News Today	JUST FOR LAUGHS GAGS	MERCURY	Pitaraa TV	STAR VISION	Vaniha TV
Aastha TV	Chardikala Time TV	Goodness TV	Kairali TV	MMA TV	PMC	Subharti TV	Vedic
ABP Anando	Chithiram TV	Hamdard TV	Kalaingar TV	Moon TV	Pollmer News	Sudarshan News	VendharTV
ABP Asmita	CHRONO TV	Hare Krishna TV	Kalinga TV	NOTOR RACING	PollmerTV	Surya Samachar	VCA News
ABP Majha	COEUR OCEAN TV	Harvest TV 24*7	Kanak News	MUNDO SERIES	Power Vision TV	Suvarna News India	VOYAGES
ABP News	CULOUR BLIND	Haryana Hrs	Kappa TV	Murasu	Pirag News	SVBC	VTV Gujarati
ACE TV	COMEDY TADKA	HD TRAVEL TV	Kashish News	Nambikkal	Prime News	SVBC 2	Wah Punjabi
AMERICAS BOATING CHANNEL	COWBOY MOVIE CHANNEL	HEARTFELT TV	Kaumudy TV	Nandighosha TV	Protidin Time	SVBC 3	We TV
Anaadi TV	CTVN AKD Plus	HERITAGE	Kerala Vision	NDTV 24x7	Puthiya Thalaimurai	SVBC 4	WESHORT
ANB News	CUISINE & CULTURE	HERITAGE TOURISM TV	Khabrain Abhi Tak	NDTV GoodTimes	Ramdhenu	Swaraj Express SMBC	WILDEST WISH TV
Angel TV	CVR English News	Hindi Khabar	KIDDO	NDTV INDIA	Rang	Swarshik TV	Wion
APN News	CVR Health	Hindu Dharam	KOZOOM	NDTV MP	Rengoni TV	T News	XTREM SPORTS
ARAB HERITAGE TV	CVR News	HMTV	Krushi Vani	NDTV Profit	Reporter TV	TANA Prajancha Sanhya Vadika	YUPPTV VEDA
Ardana TV	Dabangg	HOLY GOD TV	RUNG FU	NDTV Rajasthan	Republic Bangla	TENSIONS TV	Zee Business
Argus News	DANGEROUS TV	Heinbill TV	LakshyaTV	Nepal 1	Republic Bharat	THALAA TV	Zee News
Ashant	DarshanTV	HORROR TV	LATINO CLASSIC CHANNEL	Network 10	Republic Kannada	Thanthi TV	
Asianet News India	DD INDIA	Hosanna	LOL TV	News 1 India	Republic TV	THE CHUKKER CHANNEL	
Astrosience	DEFIANCE MEDIA	Hosanna TV Hindi	LOVE 2HATE TV	News 11 Bharat	Rupashi Bangla	THE EXPLORERS	
Ashvani TV HD	Dasi TV	IBC Bakshi	LUXURY DREAMS TV	News 1st	Saam TV	TOLLY TV	
AWE PLUS	DheeranTV	IBC Radio	Madha TV	News Live	SafariTV	Total TV	
Ayush TV	Dhoom Music	IBC Tamil	Madhmugam TV	News Nation	Sakshi TV	TRUFA	
Baile Baile	Disha TV	India Today News	Mahaa TV	News Time	Sandesh News	T. SAT Nipuna	
BANG BANG TV	Dkya Bhajan	India Voice	Maiboli	News7 Tamil	Sansad TV	T. SAT Vidya	
Bansal News	Dhya TV	IndiaTV	Makkal TV	News9Live	Santvani	Turito IT JEE	
BEST ACTION TV	DIY ART	iNews	MAMA BENZ TV	NITRO TV	Sarv Dharm Sangam	Turito NEST	
BEST CLASSIC TV	DOCUVISION	INH 24x7	Mans TV	North East Live	SCIFI WORLD	TVS	

ALL INDIA DIGITAL CABLE FEDERATION

CIN: U74140DL2014NPL268020

236, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase -III, New Delhi - 110 020

www.aidcf.com

List of Channels on Samsung TV Plus

List of Channels on Samsung TV Plus (As on 10-Apr-25)					
9X Jalwa	Colors Infinity Lite	History TV18 Hindi	Motorvision	People are Awesome	TV9 Bangla
9X Jhakaas	Comedy King	Hollywood Desi	Music India	Pitaara	TV9 Bharatvarsh
9X Tashan	Cook & Bake	Hooray Kids	Nazara	Powerkids Cartoon Channel	TV9 Gujarati
9XM	Cricket Gold	Hooray Rhymes	NDTV 24X7	Qwest TV	TV9 Kannada
Aaj Tak	Crime Tak	House of Crime	NDTV GoodTimes	R Bangla	TV9 Telugu
ABP Ananda	Dabangg	India Today	NDTV India	Republic Bharat	WeatherSpy
ABP Asmita	Divya	India TV Aap Ki Adalat	NDTV Profit	Republic Kannada	Wheel World
ABP Majha	Divya Bhajan	India TV News	News Nation	Republic TV	Wild Flix
ABP News	E24	India TV Speed News	News State BR JH	RIC+	WION
Animax	Epic	India TV Yoga	News State MP CG	Sangeet Bangla	Xplore
Astro Tak	FailArmy	InFast	News State PUN HAR HIM	Sangeet Bhojpuri	XXTreme Jobs
Baby First	Fashion TV	InTrouble	News18 Bangla	Sangeet Marathi	Zee 24 Ghanta
Balle Balle	Fifa+	InWild	News18 Gujarati	South Station	Zee 24 Kalak
Best Action TV	Fight TV	InWonder	News18 India	Superhit Beats	Zee 24 Taas
Bhakti Play	Foodie Hub	Jack Hanna	News18 Jammu Kashmir	Tastemade	Zee Business
Billiard TV	Foodxp	Kaan Phod Music	News18 Kannada	TeluguOne TV	Zee News
Bloomberg Originals	Fully Faltoo	KCM	News18 Keralam	The Jungle Book	
Bloomberg TV	Good News Today	KidDo MATIX	News18 Odia	The Lallantop	
Boxing TV	GoUSA TV	Korean TV	News18 Punjab Haryana	The Movie Club	
CNBC Awaaz	Gusto TV	K-POP by CJ ENM	News18 Tamil Nadu	The Pet Collective	
CNBC Bajar	HD Travel	Maiboli	News24	Times Now Navbharat	
CNBC TV18	Heritage	Mastiii	News9 Live	Toon Goggles	
CNN News18	History TV18	MAVTV Motorsports Network	Nosey	Travelxp HD	

List of Channels on LG WebOS:

List of Channels on LG WebOS (As on 10-Apr-25)				
@K-MUSIC	CNBC TV18	IndiaTV Yoga	News18 Gujarati	TV9 Bharatvarsh
123 GO!	CNN News18	IndiaTVSpeedNews	News18 India	TV9 Gujarati
4k Travel	Color Blind	INFAST	News18 MP Chhattisgarh	TV9 Kannada
52 Channel	Comedy Tadka	INWONDER	News18 Tamil Nadu	TV9 Marathi
5-minute Crafts	Cowboy Movie	Jelly Jam	News18 UP Uttarakhand	TV9 Telugu
AajTak	Dabbang	Just For Laugh	News24 Live	YRF Music
ABP Ananda	Divya	K-ASMR	News9 Live	Zee 24 Taas
ABP Asmita	Divya Bhajan	K-POPCORN	Nightmare Network	Zee Business
ABP Majha	Docuvision	KungFu Action	OUTDOOR TV	Zee News
ABP News	E24 Live	La La Life	Pitaara Comedy	Zee Wion
Automotions	essential;	Maiboli	Pitaara Movies	
B4U Kadak	Euro News	Mango Mobile TV	Saam TV	
B4U Movies	Fight TV	Mastii	Saga Music Haryanvi	
B4U Music	Fit Dance	MMA TV	Saga-Music	
Baby First	Ghaint Punjab	Motor Racing	Slick Slime Sam	
Best Action TV	Good News Today	MTRSPT1	Smart Healthy Green Living	
Best Thriller	Heritage	Music Box TV	Space Series	
Bollywood 4U	Horror TV	NDTV Marathi	SportsGrid	
Bollywood TV	India Today	NDTV Profit	TeenVee	
Brat	India Yoga & Wellness Hindi	NDTV24x7	Telugu One	
Cartoon TV	India Yoga & Wellness Telug	NDTVIndia	Thalla TV	
Clubbing TV	IndiaTV Aap Ki Adalat	News Nation	Tolly TV	
CNBC Awaaz	IndiaTV News	News18 Bangla	TV9 Bangla	

ALL INDIA DIGITAL CABLE FEDERATION

CIN: U77414DL2014NPL268020

236, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase - III, New Delhi - 110 020

www.aidcf.com



Replies to your questions

1. **Name : Cloud TV** (*Smart TV OS, used by 20+ Indian OEM's*)
Country of Origin : MADE IN INDIA

2. **Brand Name(s) for Smart TV:**

CloudTV OS powers devices for more than 300 registered and white labeled TV brands in India.

3. **Model Name(s) and Size of Screen of Smart TVs:**

- Each OEM has their own model name ,
- Most popular sizes are 32" & 43" followed by 55 " and 65 "

4. **Operating System in use:** CloudTV OS (android based)

5. **Play store in use for downloading of FAST channels:** CloudTV App Store.

6. **Complete list of PRE-LOADED FAST channels** List is attached.

7. **What is your process to verify the permission status of a channel before including it in your FAST service?**

On a overall level , we verify the antecedents of the Channel and their content strategy . We verify if the channel provided family friendly content and if the content is available on platforms like YouTube or Global FAST TV etc

8. **What internal systems are in place to ensure that all channels on your FAST service comply with the Programme Code and Advertising Code under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995? -**

As a Intermediary we do not have any direct control on the content but we do keep an eye on these channels to ensure that he family friendly nature of the content does not change

9. **How is compliance with content standards monitored — do you maintain a content recording/archiving system? –**

As a Intermediary we do not have any direct control on the content. We do not maintain any recording / archiving system

10. **How do you handle complaints regarding objectionable content or advertising ?**

We have provided a dedicated email for this purpose. Which is available on our Terms of Service page and within the App itself.

11. **What is the commercial arrangement between Smart TV Manufacturer and broadcasters/content owners for carrying FAST channels? –**

Revenue -Share deal between the content broadcaster/owner and the App/Platform. Percentage varies but is always majority in favour of broadcaster/owner

12. **Do you share advertising revenues with broadcasters, and on what terms? –**

Yes we do. Broadcasters are paid the majority of the advertisement revenue earned from Advertisements which are placed during the commercial breaks on their respective channels.

13. **What type of viewer data is collected through FAST services (e.g., watch time, channel preferences, demographics)? –**

- General analytics of the Application, its performance, session time is collected to monitor application performance or bugs.
- No PII based viewership data such as preferences and demographics is collected.

Pre-loaded FAST Channels

Republic Bangla	Bollywood Masala
Republic Bharat	Netradio Vision
Republic Kannada	Fast Music Rising
Republic TV	Fast Music Epic
Aaj Tak	Fast Music Lo-Fi
GNT	Tzik Music
India Today	Fast Music Synthwave
News 18 Kannada	FAST Music EDM
News18 Bangla	NH BollyRaga
News18 Bihar Jharkhand	NH BollyFlix
News18 Gujrati	NH BollyGold
News18 India	Terribly Tiny Tales
News18 MP Chattisgarh	Runn Thrillers
News18 Tamil Nadu	Superfine Films
News18 UP Uttarakhand	Runn Action
News9live	Cineshots Premiere
TV9 Bangla	Runn Short Films
TV9 Bharatvash	NuNu TV
TV9 Gujarati	Panic TV
TV9 Kannada	Zee News
TV9 Marathi	Zee Business
TV9 Telugu	Zee MP & Chattisgarh
Wion	Cooking Panda
Pocket Films	Crema TV
Chana Jor	Duck TV
Mahaa News	Motorvision
Mahaa Max	Party Tyme Karaoke
Mahuaa Play	Skwad Play
Mahuaa News	Smurfs
Rongeen TV	TG Junior
Al Jazeera	Toon Goggles
Divya TV	GameX QYou
Pitaara TV	Q Kahaniyaan
India TV Aap Ki Adalat	Q Toonz
India TV	RDC Movies
India TV Speed News	The Q

Dear Sir,

Please find below the response to the questions shared with us in the matter of Free Advertisement Supported Television (FAST):

1. **Name of TV Manufacturer:** Samsung India Electronics Pvt. Limited
Name of the OTT Application: Samsung TV Plus
2. **Brand Name(s) for Smart TV:** Samsung Smart TVs
3. **Model Name(s) and Size of Screen of Smart TVs:** 32" and above
4. **Operating System in use:** Tizen (A basic overview of Tizen is available [here](#))
5. **Playstore (or known by any other name) in use for downloading of FAST channels:** Samsung TV Plus is a secure OTT Application. It does not allow any modification or addition by the end-user. It is pre-installed on Samsung Smart TV Models from 2017 onwards, and on select models of Smart Monitors, Smart Refrigerators and Tablets. The Samsung TV Plus App is also pre-installed on Samsung Mobile Phones.
6. **Complete list of PRE-LOADED FAST channels/ applications for FAST channels:** As of September 5, 2025, Samsung TV Plus has over 150 linear channels ([link](#)).
7. **What is your process to verify the permission status of a channel before including it in your FAST service?** The majority of channels on Samsung TV Plus in India are already available on linear TV, DTH/ cable and OTT platforms, with established rights and permissions. We apply a careful verification process before onboarding any channel.
8. **What internal systems are in place to ensure that all channels on your FAST service comply with the Programme Code and Advertising Code under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995?** As an OTT platform, Samsung TV Plus follows a careful verification process to ensure compliance. This process ensures that every channel on Samsung TV Plus has gone through a due diligence process and is appropriate for Indian audiences. Samsung TV Plus controls all advertising content by itself, and does not depend on any of its content partners for the same. We follow and comply with the Guidelines for Prevention of Misleading Advertisements and Endorsements, 2022, under Consumer Protection Act, 2019 including guidelines issued by Advertising Standard's Council of India (ASCI). The advertisements running on channels available on Samsung TV Plus are similar (in most cases identical) to the advertisements running on DTH/ Cable platforms in India.
9. **How is compliance with content standards monitored — do you maintain a content recording/archiving system?** As an OTT application, we have a due diligence process to prevent inappropriate content on Samsung TV Plus. Further, most of the content on Samsung TV Plus is already available elsewhere in India. To the best of our knowledge, there is no requirement on OTT Platforms to maintain a content recording/ archiving system.
10. **How do you handle complaints regarding objectionable content or advertising?** We handle complaints and "Voice of Customer" through a structured review process by

Samsung Customer Care. Concerns can be raised by viewers through Samsung TV Plus Platform itself. These are logged via our support channels and assessed by our internal teams. If the content or the channel is found to be non-compliant, we work with the partner to take corrective action, including removal as required. For advertising, we comply to the Guidelines for Prevention of Misleading Advertisements and Endorsements, 2022, under Consumer Protection Act, 2019 including guidelines issued by Advertising Standard's Council of India (ASCI).

- 11. What is the commercial arrangement between Smart TV Manufacturer and broadcasters/content owners for carrying FAST channels?** Samsung TV Plus operates a FAST (Free Ad-supported Streaming TV) model. Channels are typically carried under a combination of Ads inventory sharing and revenue sharing agreements, depending on the partner or content type.
- 12. Do you share advertising revenues with broadcasters, and on what terms?** Yes. Advertising Revenues from channels on Samsung TV Plus are typically shared and distributed according to the agreed-upon share between Samsung TV Plus and the content partner.
- 13. What type of viewer data is collected through FAST services (e.g., watch time, channel preferences, demographics)?** Samsung TV Plus collects anonymized and aggregated viewing data from its platform. This includes metrics such as total viewership, average watch time, device type, session duration and engagement trends for channels and content.

10/31/25, 11:30 AM

RE: [External Mail]Re: Meeting with TV Manufacturers to Deliberate upon Authorization of Free Ad-Supported Streaming TV(FAS...

RE: [External Mail]Re: Meeting with TV Manufacturers to Deliberate upon Authorization of Free Ad-Supported Streaming TV(FAST) Channels Distribution -regarding

Manish Jain <manish1@xiaomi.com >

Wed, 01 Oct 2025 2:17:52 PM +0530

To "Harish Kumar Roy"<sobpl-moib@nic.in>

Cc "Gaurishankar Kesarwani"<adbpl-moib@gov.in>,"Shiv Ram Meena"<usbpl-moib@gov.in>

Dear Sir,

Please note that Xiaomi Technology India Private Limited ("**Xiaomi**") does not own or operate the FAST channels made available in India. It is being operated by Xiaomi Technologies Singapore Pte. Ltd. ("**Xiaomi SG**"). Xiaomi SG has an arrangement with a service provider by the name of Amagi ("**Amagi**") who onboards the content service provider and pushes the content on to XTV+

1. Name of TV Manufacturer: *Xiaomi Technology India Private Limited ("**Xiaomi**") is not a manufacturer of TVs. The TVs are manufactured by TTE Electronics India Private Limited and Dixon Technologies (India) Limited. Xiaomi merely purchases the finished products from the aforementioned manufacturers for further distribution.*
2. Main Brand Name(s) for Smart TV: *Xiaomi*
3. Model Name(s) and Size of Screen of Smart TVs: *All sizes*
4. Operating System in use: *Google TV and Android TV*
5. Play store (or known by any other name) in use for downloading of FAST channels. - *No, we can only download Xiaomi TV+ (the FAST platform) from Play Store available on the Smart TV*
6. Complete list of PRE-LOADED FAST channels/ applications for FAST channels. *Xiaomi does not onboard any FAST channels. The arrangement is between the content provider and Xiaomi SG. However, there is only one FAST channel as on date on the TV devices in India, i.e., Xiaomi Tv+.*
7. What is your process to verify the permission status of a channel before including it in your FAST service? *Amagi carries out the necessary verification before it is onboarded, post which the content is pushed onto XTV+.*

8. What internal systems are in place to ensure that all channels on your FAST service comply with the **Programme Code and Advertising Code** under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995? *As stated above Xiaomi SG operates XTV+, all compliance in that regard are managed by Xiaomi SG. However, specific to the Indian territory only those channels that are allowed to be broadcasted in India are made available through XTV+.*
9. How is compliance with content standards monitored — do you maintain a content recording/archiving system? *Xiaomi does not carry out any such monitoring or recording/archiving. As stated earlier the FAST channel is provided by Xiaomi SG and the content therein is also pushed by Amagi.*
10. How do you handle complaints regarding objectionable content or advertising? In case of an Indian customer, there are 2 options:
(1) the customer may write to the grievance redressal officer, who will then forward the complaint to Xiaomi SG, or; (2) the customer may leave a feedback/write directly to Xiaomi SG and the latter will then directly take up the matter
11. What is the commercial arrangement between Smart TV Manufacturer and broadcasters/content owners for carrying FAST channels?
Xiaomi is not a manufacturer. They are merely distributors of the TV devices in India. There is no direct arrangement between the TV manufacturer and the content provider. The arrangement is between Amagi and the content service provider. Amagi has an agreement with Xiaomi SG which will broadcast the content through XTV+
12. Do you share advertising revenues with broadcasters, and on what terms?
Xiaomi does not receive any share of revenue from the FAST channels on XTV+.
13. What type of **viewer data** is collected through FAST services (e.g., watch time, channel preferences, demographics)?
Watch time, channel performance, channel favorites, anonymous device ID. No demographic information is collected.

Thanks and Regards,

Manish Jain
Associate Director - Government Relation, CSR and Product Compliance
Xiaomi Technology India Private Limited
Building Orchid, Block E, Embassy Tech Village
Marathahalli Outer Ring Road, Devarabisanahalli, Bengaluru 560103
Contact- +91 9810467072
Email :manish1@xiaomi.com

10/31/25, 11:30 AM

RE: [External Mail]Re: Meeting with TV Manufacturers to Deliberate upon Authorization of Free Ad-Supported Streaming TV(FAS...

From: Harish Kumar Roy <sobpl-moib@nic.in>
Sent: Monday, September 1, 2025 4:20 PM
To: contact <contact@mait.com>; info <info@ceama.in>; sg <sg@ceama.in>; anil1.mehta <anil1.mehta@havells.com>; Manish Jain <manish1@xiaomi.com>; sonumehra <sonu.mehra@westwayelectronics.com>; vineetn <vineet.n@samsung.com>; Shalini <Shalini@ceama.in>; rajeshbhat <rajesh.bhat@dolby.com>; ganeshkumar <ganesh.kumar@dolby.com>; akshatbhatnagar <akshat.bhatnagar@havells.com>; sharatcl <sharat.cl@samsung.com>; kuldeep <kuldeep@mait.com>; abhaysharma <abhay.sharma@sony.com>; umakantvashish <umakant.vashish@sony.com>
Cc: Gaurishankar Kesarwani <adbpl-moib@gov.in>; Shiv Ram Meena <usbpl-moib@gov.in>
Subject: [External Mail]Re: Meeting with TV Manufacturers to Deliberate upon Authorization of Free Ad-Supported Streaming TV(FAST) Channels Distribution -regarding

[External Email] This message originated from outside of XIAOMI. Please treat this email with caution. If you have any questions about email security, please forward the email to misec@xiaomi.com for feedback.

Sir,

Please refer to the meeting held on 29.08.2025 regarding Free Ad-Supported Streaming Television (FAST) services. In this regard, some information/details are required in the matter so as to have a better understanding of the issue.

2. Accordingly, the Ministry has formulated some queries which are attached herewith. It is requested that the requisite information/ details may please be provided expeditiously.

Regards,

Section Officer(BP&L)
M/o Information and Broadcasting
Shastri Bhawan
Room No.110, 'A' Wing
New Delhi-110001
Tele No.011-23386884

From: Harish Kumar Roy <sobpl-moib@nic.in>
To: "contact" <contact@mait.com>, "info" <info@ceama.in>, "sg" <sg@ceama.in>
Cc: "Shiv Ram Meena" <usbpl-moib@gov.in>
Date: Tue, 26 Aug 2025 11:54:58 +0530
Subject: Meeting with TV Manufacturers to Deliberate upon Authorization of Free Ad-Supported Streaming TV(FAST) Channels Distribution -regarding

Sir,

I am directed to attach a formal communication no. 2/1/2025-BP&L-Part-I dated 26.08.2025 on the above cited subject for information and necessary action please.

Regards,

25

10/31/25, 11:30 AM

RE: [External Mail]Re: Meeting with TV Manufacturers to Deliberate upon Authorization of Free Ad-Supported Streaming TV(FAS...

Section Officer(BP&L)
M/o Information and Broadcasting
Shastri Bhawan
Room No.110, 'A' Wing
New Delhi-110001
Tele No.011-23386884

#/*****本邮件及其附件含有小米公司的保密信息，仅限于发送给上面地址中列出的个人或群组。禁止任何其他以任何形式使用（包括但不限于全部或部分地泄露、复制、或散发）本邮件中的信息。如果您错收了本邮件，请您立即电话或邮件通知发件人并删除本邮件！ This e-mail and its attachments contain confidential information from XIAOMI, which is intended only for the person or entity whose address is listed above. Any use of the information contained herein in any way (including, but not limited to, total or partial disclosure, reproduction, or dissemination) by persons other than the intended recipient(s) is prohibited. If you receive this e-mail in error, please notify the sender by phone or email immediately and delete it!*****/#