

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Access to Information) Regulation, 2005

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Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Access to Information) Regulation, 2005

In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-sec. (1) of Sec. 36 read with Secs. 11 and 12 of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997 (24 of 1997), the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India hereby makes the following Regulation, namely :

1. Short title, extent and commencement :-

(i) This Regulation may be called the "Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Access to Information) Regulation, 2005" (3 of 2005).

(ii) It extends to the whole of India.

(iii) It shall come into force on the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

2. Definitions :-

In this Regulation, unless the context otherwise requires,

(a) "Act" means the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997 (24 of 1997);

(b) "Information" means information obtained or received by the

Authority from a service provider under the Act. Such information may include records, documents, etc., whether in printed, electronic or any other form.

(c) All other words and expressions used herein but not defined shall have the same meanings respectively as assigned to them in the Act.

3. Request for confidentiality and decision thereon :-

(1) A service provider furnishing any information to the Authority under the Act, may make a request in writing to keep that information or a part thereof confidential, in which case he shall also furnish a non-confidential summary of the portion sought to be kept confidential. Such a request shall be accompanied by the reasons for keeping the information confidential, and the information or the part thereof shall also be marked as confidential.

(2) Where the Authority is of the opinion that it is necessary or expedient to disclose the information in public interest, it shall do so in the light of the provisions of Regulation 6; provided that where the Authority proposes to reject the request of the service provider, it shall inform him in writing the reasons for doing so, and give him an opportunity to make a representation against the same within a period stipulated by it. On consideration of his representation, if any, the Authority shall take a final decision. Where the Authority rejects the request of the service provider, it shall communicate to him in writing the reasons for doing so, at least 7 days before making the disclosure.

4. Seeking Access to Information :-

A service provider seeking access to information of another service provider shall make a request in writing to the Authority, with a copy to the service provider whose information is being sought. Such a request shall clearly state the purpose and the reasons for which the information is required.

5. Rejection of Request for Disclosure :-

On receipt of a request under Regulation 4, the Authority shall examine whether the information sought is exempt from disclosure under Regulation 6, or is covered by one of the grounds of refusal contained in Regulation 7. If the Authority is of the view that the information is so exempt, or is covered by one of the grounds for refusal, or the request is not reasonable or genuine, or has not been made for legitimate purpose, or is not in public interest, the

Authority shall reject the request. The Authority shall communicate in writing the reasons for rejection of the request to the service provider who had sought access to information.

6. Exemption from disclosure of Information :-

Information covered by any of the following categories shall be exempt from disclosure under the provisions of the Regulation :

- (i) trade and commercial secrets and information protected by law;
- (ii) Commercially and financially sensitive information, the disclosure of which is likely to cause unfair gain or unfair loss to the service provider; or to compromise his competitive position.

7. Grounds for refusal of access to information :-

Without prejudice to the provisions of Regulation 6, the Authority may refuse access to information where:

- (i) the request is too general in nature; or
- (ii) the information required is so voluminous that its retrieval would involve disproportionate diversion of the resources of the Authority; or
- (iii) the information has already been published, or is likely to be published'soon, or is regularly published from time to time.

8. Form of Information :-

The Authority shall provide the information in the form it considers proper.

9. Severability :-

If the Authority refuses access to information on the ground that it is exempt from disclosure, then the Authority may give access to that part of information which is not exempt, and which can reasonably be severed from the other part which is exempt.

10. Information required for law enforcement :-

Nothing contained in this Regulation shall apply to information lawfully required by a Government agency or required in connection with enforcement or administration of law.

11. Fee :-

A fee of Rs. 500 per page shall be charged for providing information under this Regulation.

12. Explanatory Memorandum :-

This Regulation contains at Annexure an explanatory memorandum that explains the background and reasons for issuance of this Regulation.

13. General :-

In case of any doubt with regard to the interpretation of any provision of this Regulation, the decision of the Authority shall be final.