

**Minutes of the 15th Task Force meeting, held on 16th August 2012, for
implementation of DAS in Cable Television Networks**

The 15th meeting of the Task Force on the implementation of DAS in Cable Television Networks was held on 16.8.2012 under the chairmanship of Additional Secretary.

2. After welcoming the members, Additional Secretary requested Advisor to make a presentation on the progress made since the last meeting of Task Force. The main highlights of presentation made by Advisor are as under:

- i. 49,208 STBs in the week ending 3rd August and 35,449 in the week ending 10th August have been seeded.
- ii. Against the estimated total requirement of 133 lakh STBs in the four metros (114 lakh by national level MSOs and 19 lakh by independent MSOs), about 42.50 lakh STBs have been seeded till 10th August giving a percentage achievement of about 32. About 11 lakh STBs per week are now required to be seeded to achieve the target in the four metros.
- iii. A meeting with independent MSOs of Delhi was held on 13th August. This was attended by 9 out of 10 registered MSOs of Delhi. Following major issues which had emerged during the meeting were highlighted:
 - o No agreements have been signed as yet – Rigid attitude of aggregators
 - o LCOs not seeding STBs
 - o Publicity campaign must be launched
 - o TRAI must call independent MSOs also for dialogue

It was also mentioned that MSOs have been asked to submit weekly seeding reports without fail and provisional permission granted to Swami Cable needs to be reviewed as he has neither replied the show-cause notice nor supplied the data.

- iv. TRAI has given extended time limit up to 21st Aug to complete agreements between Broadcasters and MSOs. Though no agreement has yet been signed but national level MSOs are hopeful that agreements would get signed before 21st Aug at least with major aggregators. Agreements with independent MSOs would be possible only after deals are finalised with national MSOs.
- v. 2nd meeting of the sub-group was held on 8th Aug. Representatives of NBA & IBF could not attend the meeting. Following suggestions made by the members of the sub-group were mentioned:
 - o Black out with synchronised ads on all TV channels must start immediately as seeding is not picking up

- Ads from Govt, including print, must be given as public is apprehensive about the switch over date to digitisation.

It was pointed out that following action is being taken:

- NBA and IBF have been told to come up with black out advt.
 - DAVP has submitted 3 TV spots. Minor changes are being made in these spots and final spots would be ready for broadcast by 21st August.
 - AIR has increased broadcast of radio jingles to at least 8 times (from 6) a day.
 - Radio jingles have been sent to AROI for broadcast on Private FM channels. Details on channels and frequency of ads being collected.
 - Draft of print Ad has been prepared. It was discussed with representative of FICCI for finalisation.
- vi. Out of 52 applications, letters of registration have been issued to 46. 4 applications are under submission and 2 are under scrutiny as replies to shortcomings in applications have been received from them.
- vii. Action is being taken by the Ministry on following issues:
- a. Launch of Video advt. on all TV channels.
 - b. Data collection in the software already launched.
 - c. Follow up on the black out advt.
 - d. SPV proposal discussed with IFD – suggestions made by IFD need to be carried out.
 - e. Meeting of officers of 38 Phase II cities i.e. municipal commissioners/ collectors in Vigyan Bhavan in September.
3. Thereafter, the representative of MSOs alliance informed that one national level MSO has already signed agreement with one major broadcaster. One national level MSO has also concluded commercial deal with one sports broadcast but agreement is yet to be signed.
4. The representative of IBF mentioned that one broadcaster has signed agreement with four MSOs (not one as mentioned by the representative of MSOs Alliance). He added that a number of agreements would be signed today.
5. The representative of COFI said that it is not true that LCOs are not seeding STBs. She added that the fact is that MSOs are not giving STBs to LCOs. On the query by Additional Secretary she mentioned that Hathway, Incable and Digicable MSOs were not giving STBs. Additional Secretary mentioned that it is not in the interest of any MSO not to supply STBs as all of them, except Digicable, have sufficient STBs in stock. Therefore any such specific complaint may be sent to the Ministry for necessary action.

6. The representative of Consumer forum mentioned that he has a feedback from the consumers wherein those consumers who have taken STBs are comparing themselves with those who have not taken STBs as yet and are unhappy that they were made to pay unnecessary. However it was clarified that eventually everyone has to buy STB. Therefore those who have got STBs are better off as they are already getting digital signal.
7. On a query from Additional Secretary, the representative of BECIL mentioned that Arasu Cable has not yet opened the commercial bid for Chennai.
8. The representative of CEAMA mentioned that about 3 lakh STBs have already been supplied and the supply of remaining 3 lakh STBs would be completed by mid October 2012. On a query he stated that about 6000 STBs are being produced per day.
9. The representative of the CII mentioned that on the advice of the Secretary Broadcasting, an interactive programme of DAS has been planned on 30th August 2012 in Delhi. She mentioned that TRAI chairman has confirmed his participation in the programme. Additional Secretary suggested involving all the stakeholders particularly some broadcasters who are neither the member of IBF nor NBA, FTA channels and the people having strong local channels.
10. While concluding the Additional Secretary made following suggestions:
 - i. The broadcasters/ MSOs may sign the agreements but if they don't want to disclose the rates, they may submit the copies of these agreements to TRAI with the request not to disclose till all agreements are signed. When TRAI announces rates unilaterally after 21st August, this would not result any disadvantage to those who had already signed.
 - ii. National level MSO were asked to supply the list of LCOs who are not seeding STBs. The list from only one MSO for Delhi has been received. All the MSOs must supply this list immediately.
 - iii. LCOs must be advised to cooperate in the digitisation process.
 - iv. It is in the interest of all the stakeholders to project the correct data of number of subscribers so that with the increase in the cable subscribers, even the State Governments may consider reduction in taxes.
 - v. A meeting of all the 26 channel aggregators may be called in the Ministry.
11. The Meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair.
