

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has come into being as a consequence of the opening up of the telecommunication sector to private operators. It was set up under the TRAI Act of 1997.

TRAI is an important topic of the [UPSC Syllabus](#). Students preparing for the IAS Exam or any other Government Exam should read about this topic for Science & Technology as well as Indian Polity.

What is TRAI?

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) was set up in order to have a suitable environment for the growth of the telecommunications industry in the country and be a part of the global information society. It is a statutory body and regulates the telecommunications sector in the country.

TRAI Structure

- TRAI shall have, in addition to its chairman, at least two and at the most six members, all appointed by the Central Government.
- The members should have special knowledge of, or professional experience in telecom, industry, finance, accountancy, law, management and consumer affairs.
- Only those senior or retired Government officers can be appointed as members who have served for at least three years as secretary/additional secretary to the Union or State Governments.

Telecom Disputes Settlement Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT)

- The powers of the TRAI have been considerably diluted by the TRAI (Amendment) Ordinance, 2000. Now the regulation of telecom services is to be done by TRAI and the newly set up Telecom Disputes Settlement Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT).
- They will also adjudicate disputes, dispose of appeals, protect interests of service providers and consumers, to promote and ensure orderly growth of the telecom sector.

The composition of TDSAT is also changed to include the chairman and not more than two whole-time members and not more than two part-time members to be appointed by the Government. The TDSAT has been given the mandate to adjudicate disputes:-

(i) between a licensor and a licensee;

(ii) between two or more service providers;

(iii) between a service provider and a group of consumers.

The Union Government, State Government, any local authority or any individual can approach the TDSAT for adjudication on issues related to disputes between parties mentioned above.

The chairperson and members of this tribunal are to be appointed by the Government of India in consultation with the Chief Justice of India.

Powers and Functions of TRAI

The Powers and Functions of TRAI are mainly:

- To recommend the need for and timing of introduction of new service providers and terms and conditions of the license to a service provider;
- To ensure technical compatibility and inter-connect between different service providers and regulate their revenue-sharing arrangements;
- To ensure compliance with terms of license and revaluation of the same for non-compliance;
- To lay down and ensure a time period for providing long-distance and local distance circuits;
- To facilitate competition and promote efficiency in operations to promote the growth of telecom services;
- To protect consumers' interest, monitor quality of services, inspect equipment used in networks and make recommendations about such equipment;
- To maintain a register of interconnect agreements and keep it open for inspection and to settle disputes among the service providers in this respect;
- To give advice to the government on any matter related to the telecom industry. Levy fees and charges for services and, ensure that universal service obligations are complied with; and
- To perform any such other administration and financial function as may be entrusted to it by the Central Government.

UPSC Questions related to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)

Who is the chairman of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India?

Dr. Ram Sewak Sharma is the current chairman of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India.

Is TRAI a statutory body?

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) is a statutory body set up by the Government of India under section 3 of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997.

Related Links

[Polity Notes for UPSC](#)

[NCERT Notes for UPSC](#)

[UPSC Current Affairs](#)

[Polity MCQs](#)

[PIB Summary](#)

[5G: RSTV - In Depth](#)