

The background of the image is a professional radio broadcast studio. In the foreground, a large, professional broadcast microphone is mounted on a boom arm. To the right, a glowing orange 'ON AIR' sign is visible. The background is softly blurred, showing studio equipment and warm lighting. The 'corpbiz' logo is overlaid in a white circle in the upper left quadrant.

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TRAI issues Press Release Regarding its Recommendations on "Issues related to Community Radio Stations"

On 22nd March 2023, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) released its Recommendations on 'Issues related to Community Radio Stations'.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB), through its references issued on 11th November 2021 and 17th January 2022, requested the Authority to provide its recommendations under sections 11(1)(a)(ii) and 11(1) (d) of the TRAI Act, 1997 on the following mentioned issues -

- Inclusion of not-for-profit companies, registered under Section 8 of the Companies Act 2013, in the list of eligible organisations.
- Increasing permission period from the current period of 5 years to 10 years.
- The maximum duration of advertisement per hour of broadcast on CRS.
- Number of CR Stations operated in each district of operation by Not-For-Profit organisations operating in multiple districts.

In this regard, the TRAI issued a consultation paper as of 21st July 2022 for the purpose of seeking comments from the stakeholders on the issues related to CRS. The last date of submission of comments was 17th August 2022, and counter-comments were on 31st August 2022, which were extended up to 31st August 2022 and 14th September 2022, respectively, at the request of some stakeholders. TRAI received 13 comments and 3 counter-comments from stakeholders. These comments are available on TRAI's website. In this regard, an Open House Discussion was also held on 11th November 2022 via online mode.

After considering all comments/counter-comments received from stakeholders during the consultation process and further analysis of the issues, the Authority has finalised its recommendations. The salient features of the recommendations are provided as follows -

- Non-for-profit companies established under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013, are already covered in the extant eligibility criteria for CRS.
- The existing criteria prescribed in MIB guidelines barring specific types of entities for setting up Community Radio Stations are equally applicable to Section 8 companies.
- Reiterates recommendations regarding disqualifying religious bodies from owning broadcasting channels, including Community Radio Station, as mentioned in its 'Recommendations on Issues relating to entry of certain entities into Broadcasting and Distribution activities' dated 12th November 2008.

- The initial permission period should be increased from five (5) years to ten (10) years.
- Present policy guidelines for extension/ renewal of CRS license are adequate and should continue to be the same.
- Community Radio Stations will be required to obtain continued service reports from the SDM of the concerned District for grant of license extension.
- The advertisement duration on a CRS should be increased from seven (7) minutes per hour to twelve (12) minutes per hour.
- Not-for-profit organisations operating in multiple districts should be allowed to set up multiple CRS in their area of operation.
- An organisation should be allowed to set up a maximum of six CRS nationwide.
- An organisation seeking to set up multiple stations should submit an undertaking confirming that the programs will be prepared locally and not sent from other CRS.
- MIB may actively pursue with Central and State Governments to sponsor more programmes on CRS to help CRS in its sustainability.
- All the universities of Central/ State Governments may be provided budgetary support to establish and operate Community Radio Stations. MIB may actively pursue providing license/ spectrum for such universities.
- All the processes for granting CRS should be made online through a single window system.
- SACFA clearance should be granted within one month of application.
- Grant of a WOL license should also have a prescribed period, preferably within one month of application.

Official Notification Attached [Here](#)



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