

Telecom regulator issues regulations for number portability

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NEW DELHI: India's telecom regulator Tuesday issued draft regulations for mobile number portability (MNP), highlighting the rights, obligations and duties of service providers.

MNP allows users to switch operators without changing numbers.

"The draft regulations lay down the business process for implementing mobile number portability," the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) said in a statement here.

The guidelines have highlighted subscribers' eligibility for porting - switching operators without changing number - as well as the rights, obligations and duties of operators - both donors and recipients.

A donor is the operator from whose network the subscriber exits and the recipient is the user's new service provider.

According to the draft, a subscriber would be "eligible" to make a request for "porting" only after using his network at least 90 days.

The recipient operator, within five days of receiving a written request, has to carry out subscriber verification for acquiring the new user.

Once verified, the request will be forwarded to the donor operator for seeking its clearance.

Upon receipt of the porting request, the donor operator will verify and in turn communicate the details to the MNP service provider within two working days.

TRAI had first floated the consultation paper on MNP in July 2005 followed by the regulator submitting the recommendations in 2006 to the Department of Telecom (DoT).

Subsequently, DoT issued guidelines last August and envisaged geographical division of the country into two number portability zones, each consisting of 11 licensed service areas.

In March, two MNP service providers were selected - one for each zone - Syniverse Technologies (in north and western India) and MNP Interconnection Telecom Solutions (for east and southern India).

TRAI has sought comments from the stakeholders on these draft regulations by July 14.