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## TRAI faces flak, website hacked

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In what could snowball into a major issue, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India faced flak for making public names and e-mail IDs of one million people who have submitted their comments on net neutrality.

TRAI had on 27 March floated a consultation paper on putting in place a regulatory framework for over-the-top (OTT) services and 24 April was the last date to submit comments.

Though the mistake by TRAI is being attributed to oversight rather than

malice, the fact that an organisation that claims to be the country's telcom regulator could be so utterly careless and clueless about how the internet works is baffling and embarrassing. The details are still posted on TRAI's website despite the backlash from the media and people on social media.

"We won't be posting the link here to prevent further spread of private information but it shouldn't be hard to find for someone who's interested.

We are yet to hear from TRAI regarding this blunder," said one of those who had written to the regulator.

According to a report, a few hours after TRAI revealed the e-mail IDs of those who had written to the organisation, its website was hacked by a group calling itself AnonOpsIndia, which claimed on Twitter today that it had taken down the trai.gov.in website through a distributed denial of service or DDoS attack.

With the email IDs and the contents of the emails that people sent to TRAI now published in plaintext on their website, spammers are likely to have a field day, as not only do the emails have the

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IDs but also the phone numbers and other details in the signatures of some of the people.

"I understand that it is the duty of the TRAI to make everything that they have received public since it is a public consultation after all," said Rajya Sabha MP Rajeev Chandrashekhar. "Still, there is an obligation on them to not reveal personal details like my email address or my phone number," he added.

Lawyer Apar Gupta, who has been an active participant in the Save The Internet campaign, said publishing email addresses in clear text potentially leads to risks such as spamming and harassment of people who have participated in this consultation. "Even if these details were to be provided publicly, they shouldn't have been published in a manner where they could be scraped easily by any email marketer," he said.