

## **COAI Press Statement on Call Data Records**

Various media reports have commented on a letter dated February 12, 2020 that COAI/ACT had written to, Secretary, DoT, on bulk CDR details sought by various LSA units. However, we wish to state that pursuant to our said letter, DoT has discussed the issue with us and explained the reasons for seeking the data. Being satisfied, we have cooperated with the DoT to source the information sought by the DoT to improve network quality and address call drops.

We are pleased to note that the DoT has in a statement issued today, reiterated its purposes behind such data requests. The DoT stated that its request for the anonymised CDRs, was in response to numerous public complaints regarding poor network (call drops, cross speech, congestion etc.) of the telecom service providers, causing irritation and inconvenience to customers. Complaints received related to specific routes about call drops and poor coverage, dark spots etc. in specified areas and times of day. The DoT has recently decided to leverage latest technologies and software, including big data analysis and has developed an application to identify and address various network problem issues such as call drops etc, though the analysis of CDR data. This is being carried out in the interest of providing better quality of telecom services to Indian citizens and mobile users.

**It is reiterated that the data is anonymised and does not contain the names of either the maker or receiver of the calls. Hence there is no threat of infringement of privacy of any person. Personal data and tracking of phone numbers are not sought.**

**The DoT has reiterated that the data sought does not contain personal information like names and addresses of the subscribers or the names of the persons to whom calls are made. In the case of a dump of data from a tower base station receiver (BTS) focus is not on any individual user but on the quality of the services to the subscribers while passing through that BTS area. The analysis applied on this data is to help it determine actual dark spots where calls were made repeatedly within less than 30 seconds of the call.**

The DoT further clarified that such data is being sought by the Department under the provisions of Rule 419 of Indian Telegraph Rules, 1951, that mandates the telegraph authority to get such data for telegraph (telecom) network/equipment. The SoP issued by the Department for seeking such data specifies that only an officer not below the rank of a Senior Administrative Grade officer, is authorised to seek this data. There are also oversight mechanisms exercised by a review committee chaired by the Head of the respective LSA.

The above reiterates that the data sought from the TSPs are as per the provisions of Rules and as per the due process stipulated in the SoP. As further protections to safeguard any threat to privacy of customers the data is anonymised and does not contain the personal information such as names etc. of any individual.

The TSPs are keen to point out that we work in close cooperation with the DoT on, among other things, issues pertaining to network quality especially on issues of RoW which have been plaguing the industry for many years. We are thankful to the DoT for their continuing efforts and focus on improving network quality of service especially related to RoW. We will continue to work actively with the DoT to ensure customers enjoy affordable and quality services.

**This is to be attributed to Mr. Rajan S Mathews.**

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