

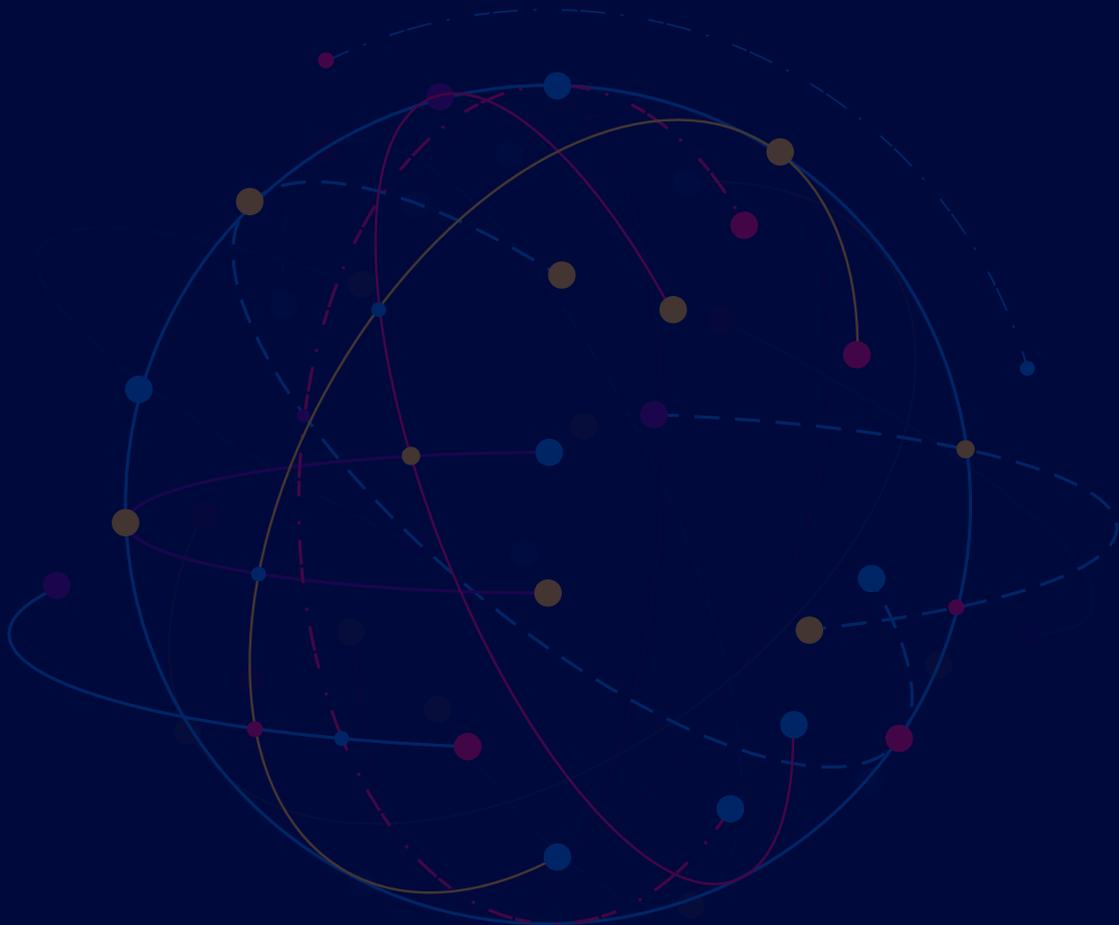


COAI ISSUE
JULY 2021
I-DIGEST

*News for you,
information that matters*

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LT. GEN DR. SP KOCHHAR (RETD.)

Director General, COAI

From DG's Desk

This month witnessed change in the top leadership at the Government level with two new ministers taking charge. We welcome our new Telecom Ministers Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw and Devusinh Jesingbhai Chauhan and the industry looks forward to their tenure with a hope that it will surely bring revolutionary changes in telecom industry.

We wish to seek guidance from and work closely with the ministry in order to turn Digital India vision into a reality. This is especially important with the digital economy set to be at the heart of a post-Covid-19 world, the importance of and reliance on digital communications networks is only set to turn greater as they will be crucial to help economy to rebound and grow stronger, while keeping the citizens connected.

As the industry readies to usher 5G and catalyse the digital economy, we look forward to working with the new leadership to improve the financial health of the sector and seek their crucial support for building the right infrastructure to revolutionize the sector.

The time is now opportune for the industry and the Government to work together for achieving the targets set in the National Digital Communications Policy 2018 regarding broadband for all the citizens.

With the 5G trials going on, the industry players are testing the use cases for Indian customers. In order to enhance telecom experience for users, 5G with its greater speed of transmission & lower latency can prove to be a game changer.

While preparing for the future, we also look up to our present frontline workers who are working with exemplary dedication in these unprecedented times in making digital work seamless. We once again thank them for perseverance.



COAI

Latest Updates:



Finalization of NFAP

COAI submitted a reminder letter to DoT on July 01, 2021 requesting to finalize and issue the NFAP at the earliest as it is an important document that earmarks spectrum for various usages in the country.

Request to Initiate Consultation to bring the Carriage Distribution (DTH & Cable) Platform under the Ministry of Communications

COAI made a submission to TRAI on July 05, 2021 mentioning that there is a need to create sharper focus and orderly separation between content and carriage by:

a) Assigning the DoT to be a single Department for all licensing requirement across the access platforms Mobile, Broadband, Cable and DTH.

b) Retaining Ministry of Information & Broadcasting as an umbrella body for all content regulation, management and appropriate censorship across all mediums with these platforms being covered under orderly rules to carry the same content.

COAI requested the Authority to initiate a Consultation Paper on this issue at the earliest.

Security and toll-bypass related concerns in revised Guidelines for Other Service Providers (OSPs) dated June 23, 2021

COAI submitted a letter to DoT on July 07, 2021 requesting to simplify the regulatory compliances, inspections and audits by various wings of DoT, which are extremely cumbersome for the TSPs to do the business. COAI also submitted that the liberalization and regulatory simplification of a section of telecom industry should not be carried out at the cost of national security, legitimate

revenue of TSPs, orderly growth of the sector and investor's confidence and therefore, requested DoT to revisit such dispensations to ensure level playing field.

Consideration of 3GPP Rel-15 and Rel-16 Specifications

COAI submitted a reminder letter to TEC on June 15, 2021 to ensure that the necessary ER and GR based on the 3GPP Rel. 15 and 16 specifications are in place for the timely roll out of 5G networks and devices and urged TEC to initiate public consultation on 3GPP Rel-15 and Rel-16 for adoption as National Standards for deployment of 5G networks. TEC has initiated consultation on 3GPP Rel-15 and has sought comments from the industry by August 28, 2021.

Reallocation of deactivated/disconnected cellular mobile telephone connection of a subscriber

COAI made a submission to DoT on July 22, 2021 requesting to relax the specified minimum period of 90 days for reissuance of disconnected/deactivated mobile numbers on account of non-usage/request of customer as the same will help service providers to cater to the increased demand and it will also be a citizen centric approach on part of the DoT.

Process approval for implementation of TAF COP:

COAI submitted a letter to DoT on July 27, 2021 recommending few suggestions that should be made part of the TAF COP process in order to address the issue of individual bulk and at the same time ensure that maximum number of mobile connections are regularized by undergoing re-verification. COAI requested DoT to approve the TAF COP process flow for conducting the PoC in AP, J&K, North East and Assam and allow a time period of 45 days to implement the suggested changes in backend & IT systems.

Clarifications on Various Issues with Respect to Subscriber Verification through D-KYC Process:

COAI made a submission to DoT on July 27, 2021 regarding the ownership of the PoS / PoS agent mobile number registered with TSP for onboarding of subscribers. In this regard, COAI requested DoT to kindly reconsider the provisions of the circular on the merit or alternatively:

- a) Extend the date of implementation till 31.10.2021 for onboarding of new PoS agents in compliance with the circular.
- b) Extend the date of implementation at least till 31.03.2022 for ensuring compliance with the circular for all existing PoS agents.
- c) Exempt COCP connections issued to TSP owned stores from the ambit of the circular.

Adoption of TSDSI transposed Standards for Radio Interface Technology (named 5Gi) towards IMT 2020 into National Standards by TEC:

COAI submitted the letter with industry inputs on July 30, 2021 mentioning that the Government must continue with its technology neutral approach adopted till date and should ensure that any national standard adopted for India ensures benefit the consumers, Government and the industry. Efforts may be made for global harmonization of 5Gi standards by making it part of 3GPP.

Interactive session with Industry and Academia on 5G Ecosystem:

DoT organized a virtual session on the subject on July 29, 2021 to accelerate deployment, proliferation and applications in 5G services in the country. In this regard, COAI submitted the presentation to DoT which contained inputs on 5G market statistics, its ecosystem in India, 5G standards and 5Gi device ecosystem.

Right of Way (RoW) policy for the Laying of OFC and installation of Telecom towers for Karnataka

State of Karnataka had issued the draft RoW Policy on June 23, 2021. COAI submitted its response on the draft Policy on July 22, 2021, highlighting the key aspects such as administrative charges as per DoT RoW rules of 2016, Self-Restoration by the TSPs/IPs, Deemed written approval, Penal provisions in case of intentional fibre cuts, Security of the Telecom Infrastructure from any damages etc.

Industry's training for Goa RoW Portal

A demo session was coordinated for industry representatives with Municipal Administration and Urban Development Department on 22.07.2021.

Rural Connectivity across Tamil Nadu

An industry meeting was coordinated with the Additional Secretary , TN (E&ITD), Tamil Nadu w.r.t initiatives being taken and review of the way forward regarding connecting the unconnected villages.

Rationalisation of restoration charges

Representations were submitted to central agencies like MoRTH , MoD , MoUD and AAI for formation of RoW policy in alignment with RoW Rules, 2016. Meetings were also sought with the above agencies to take the discussion forward. Chief Secretary of Maharashtra, Delhi, UP & AP were also engaged on the issue of rationalisation of Exorbitant Restoration charges, exceedingly high Aerial OFC laying charges & for removal of additional charges.

State Power Secretary to provide EB on Industrial tariffs

COAI submission was made to Secretary, Ministry of Power for the priority Grid supply on Industrial tariffs for providing mobile & Broadband services. COAI also made submissions to Pr. Secretary, Power of all States/UTs across India to seek their support for the priority Grid supply on Industrial tariffs.

Rationalisation of Way Leave Charges

On COAI's request, SDMC reduced Way leave charges for OFC laying from approx. INR 800/ meter to INR 200/meter

Alignment of Telecom Infrastructure Policy of Ministry of Defence (MoD)

On COAI's request, an industry meeting was arranged with Ministry of Defence, under the Chairmanship of Dr. Ajay Kumar Defence Secretary on July 16, 2021 to discuss industry's issues and request for early notification of RoW Policy of MoD in alignment of RoW Rules, 2016.

Gujarat Policy

COAI's submission was done to Chief Secretary, Gujarat for early notification of Gujarat RoW Policy in alignment with RoW Rules, 2016.

EMF Awareness Webinar for Mobile Communications and EMF Emissions

EMF Awareness Webinars for Mobile Communications and EMF Emissions led by Goa LSA and Karnataka LSA were organised on July 3, 2021 and July 23, 2021 respectively to debunk the prevailing EMF myths w.r.t installation of Telecom Towers.

State Broadband Committee (SBC) Meeting

COAI raised industry concerns in the 2nd SBC meeting of Delhi on July 16, 2021.

Circle Coordination Committee (CCC) meeting

CCC meeting of MPCG was organised on July 15, 2021. Industry issues like Pending NoC from local Municipalities/Power Dept., etc. were discussed. Action items were derived for further submission and action.

Faceless assessment by Customs

Various discussions were held with the concerned officers with regard to issues faced under Faceless assessment by Customs. COAI is happy to inform that Vide Circular Number 14/2021, Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC) have addressed the following key issues.

- Enhancement of Facility Levels
- Expediting assessment process
- Re-organization of FAGs
- Automated generation of examination orders.
- Anonymized escalation

In addition to the above, for chapter 5C (8517-8531) which is related to "Communication and related equipment", number of Nodal Commissioners and FAG from Zones have been reduced from 10 to 7. Government has removed Kolkata, Mumbai Zone 1 and Thiruvananthapuram.

This will facilitate in easing the compliance.

TRAI allowed for conducting Consumer Education Workshops (CEWs) via digital/online mode for next two quarters

On COAI's request, TRAI has issued a letter dated July 14, 2021 regarding allowing the TSPs to conduct CEWs via digital/online mode for the next two quarters i.e., up to 31st Dec 2021.

Reduction in Regulatory Levies – License Fee Contribution

COAI submitted a follow-up letter to DoT and Ministry of Finance (MoF) on July 19, 2021 and July 20, 2021 respectively. Vide the said letter COAI has requested DoT/MoF that License Fee should be brought down to 1% at the earliest.

Review of Performance Bank Guarantees (PBGs) and Financial Bank Guarantees (FBGs) provided by the TSPs

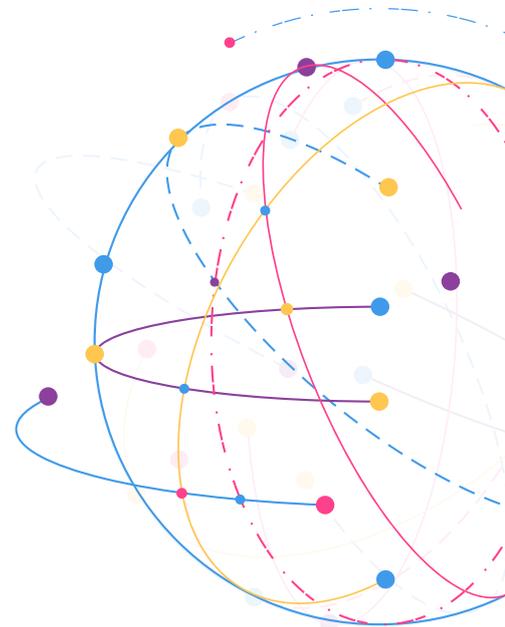
COAI submitted a follow-up letter to DoT on July 13, 2021. Vide this letter, COAI requested that, once the Rollout obligations are completed, PBGs should be returned to the TSPs at the earliest and going forward the submission of PBG by TSPs should be done away with. Similarly, going forward, the submission of FBG by TSPs should be done away with OR DoT may kindly consider reduction in FBG from 2 qtrs to 1 qtr.

Allowing deductions of lease line / bandwidth charges and the charges paid by one TSP to the other TSP as pass-through charges

COAI submitted a follow-up letter to DoT on July 05, 2021, requesting to allow deductions of lease line / bandwidth charges and the charges paid by one TSP to the other TSP as pass-through charges.

Telecom

Infrastructure Policy Alignment with RoW Rules, 2016



Telecom Infrastructure Policy Alignment with RoW Rules, 2016

Policies notified & Aligned			Draft Policies Released, notification pending	Policy Under Discussion
S.No	State	Notified / Cabinet Approval Date	State	State
1	Jharkhand	04th Dec 2015	Andhra Pradesh	Gujarat
2	Rajasthan	06th Feb 2017	Karnataka	
3	*Tripura	08th Sep 2017	Delhi	
4	Odisha	14th Sep 2017	Kerala	
5	**Haryana	06th Oct 2017	Daman Diu and DNH	
6	Assam	16th Feb 2018		
7	Maharashtra	18th Aug 2018		
8	*Tamil Nadu	21st Feb 2018		
9	Arunachal Pradesh	15th Jun 2018		
10	Uttar Pradesh	15th Jun 2018		
11	Uttarakhand	26th Nov 2018		
12	Meghalaya	20th Dec 2018		
13	Madhya Pradesh	08th Mar 2019		
14	Nagaland	02nd Dec 2019		
15	Manipur	9th Jun 2020		
16	***Bihar	19th Aug 2020		
17	**Goa	20th Aug 2020		
18	Sikkim	12th Nov 2020		
19	J&K	27th Nov 2020		
20	Mizoram	7th Dec 2020		
21	Punjab	7th Dec 2020		
22	West Bengal	Cabinet approved on 22nd Dec 2020		
23	Andaman & Nicobar	Cabinet approved on 18th Jan 2020		
24	Himachal Pradesh	9th February 2021		
25	Telangana	19th February 2021		
26	Puducherry	22nd February 2021		
27	Chandigarh	1st March 2021		
28	Chhattisgarh	13th March 2021		
29	Lakshadweep	7th June 2021		
30	Ladakh	5th July 2021		

***G.O Only (Detailed Policy is under discussion)**
****Policy notified with some clause not aligned with RoW Rules, 2016**
*****TSPs to be included in DTC**



COAI

News Wires:

Radiation from cell phone towers causes no harm: DoT official

"On the basis of extensive research on EMF signals, it has been established that mobile tower radiation does not cause any injurious health issues," said Harvesh Bhatia. [Read more](#)



Industry players roll out Wishlist for new IT and telecom minister

Ashwini Vaishnaw has his plate full with the impending 5G rollout as well as other focus areas like improving the financial health of the sector. [Read more](#)



India's biggest 5G challenge: Ensuring that it does not lead to new cybersecurity woes

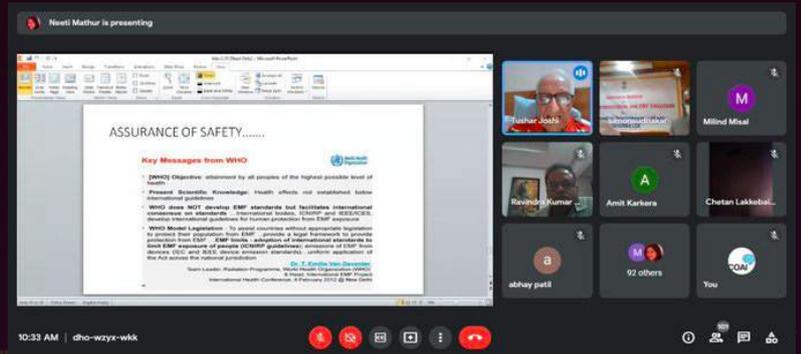
India is at the cusp of a digital revolution that has the potential to radically transform our daily lives. The revolution will be powered by 5G and simply put, would involve the transmission of large amounts of data over high speeds. [Read more](#)



COAI Events

EMF Awareness, Jaipur Date: 3 July 2021

DoT organized an awareness webinar on EMF radiations from Telecom Towers in Jaipur, where eminent speakers shared their views on the common fears of the public. "More towers mean less #EMF radiations and we urgently need more towers," said Dr. T.K. Joshi, Advisor to Health Minister, Government of India.



Event: 5G India Congress, 2021 Date: 15 July 2021

Lt Gen. Dr. SP Kochhar, DG, COAI at the '5G India Congress, 2021' conference presented by Accenture, in association with Nexgen Conferences Pvt. Ltd. "5G is a technology that will empower all other sectors if enabled properly," said DG COAI at the event.



Event: EMF Awareness, Karnataka Date: 23 July 2021

An EMF Awareness Session was organised by the Karnataka LSA wherein officials and healthcare experts debunked myths around the harmful effects of radiation emitted from Mobile Towers. Sh. H K Verma, Sh S K Verma and Dr Chinnababu Sunkavalli were eminent speakers at the EMF meet.





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