



COAI

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I-DIGEST

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information that matters*



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LT. GEN DR. SP KOCHHAR (RETD.)

Director General, COAI

From DG's Desk

Telecommunication provides a wide range of services making it an integral part of our day-to-day life. With its number of advantages, comes security threats that our customers need to be aware of when using telecommunication services.

Lately, many cases of fraudulent calls have been reported where fraudsters called people asking for certain OTPs or in the name of KYC verification and churned out personal information from them. To sync with our vision of spreading customer awareness, COAI through a public campaign urged the customers to be extremely vigilant, immediately report & ignore/block these numbers and not share their personal details with any unknown person. We, as an industry along with our customers, have to work together to make our spaces more secure than ever.

We would also like to bring to the attention the inevitable need of fundamental financial reforms in the sector that includes reduction in taxes, increased tenure, reduction in interest rate for deferred payment liability, reduction in audits and penalties for sector's sustained and orderly growth. These reforms will put the sector firmly on the path of sustained and orderly growth and to enable it to carry the aspirations of more than one billion Indians in delivering quality high speed broadband highways and play its designated role in reviving the economy. Only a robust telecom sector can play its designated role in ambitious programs launched by the Government.

Telecommunication industry will continue to stand up to the expectations of its customers providing world-class services throughout the nation.



COAI

Latest Updates:



Meeting of National Study Group – 5

The first meeting of NSG-5: Terrestrial Services for 2019-2023 study cycle, under the chairpersonship of Sr.DDG (TEC) was held on 6th August, 2021. During the meeting presentations were made by various stakeholders on achievements and work undertaken by NSG-5 in the last study cycle and on the ongoing activities in ITU-R Study Group-5 in the current study cycle of 2019-23.

Meeting with DDG- SA

A meeting of TSPs, handset vendors was held with DDG-SA on 9th August, 2021 to discuss the following issues:

- a) Support for Assisted GPS (A-GPS) and Observed Time Difference of Arrival (OTDOA) in handsets to ensure accuracy of LBS.
- b) Requirement of IMEI certificate for locally manufactured mobile devices, having IMEI, in line with requirement during import.
- c) Issues observed in Call Detail Records (CDRs) due to handset behaviour

Call Data Records (CDR) format with 22 fields

COAI made a submission to DoT on 20th August, 2021 on recent DoT instructions dated 20th July, 2021 on the subject. COAI requested DoT to provide extension of at least two months on the implementation of the aforementioned instructions till the nationwide lockdown gets uplifted. DoT is suitably considering the request.

Exemption on Periodic Site Inspection for Bulk Connections

COAI submitted a letter to DoT on 10th August, 2021

requesting DoT to temporarily exempt the mandated requirement of periodic inspection of bulk connections until situation normalizes in the country and after most of the companies reopen physically.

Allocation of Access Spectrum

COAI made a submission to Secretary, DoT on 12th August, 2021 urging the Government not to reserve or de-license any spectrum for use of independent/ individual private networks which has been identified or likely to be identified for use of IMT/commercial use.

Request for removal of Corona Pre-Call Announcements and Caller Tunes

COAI submitted a reminder letter to DoT on 19th August, 2021 requesting DoT to issue suitable orders regarding removal of Corona pre call announcements as well as caller tunes.

Meeting Request on Critical Industry Issues

COAI submitted a letter to Cabinet Secretary on 20th August, 2021 requesting for a meeting to discuss the following inter-ministerial issues which require an early resolution:

- a) Measures to improve the financial health of the sector.
- b) Not to reserve or de-license any spectrum for use of independent/ individual private networks which has been identified or likely to be identified for use of IMT/commercial use.
- c) Security and Financial concerns in respect of misuse of new OSP regime.
- d) Early allocation of E & V Bands to Access Service Providers.
- e) Bring the carriage distribution platform (DTH and Cable) under the Ministry of Communications.

Fake KYC Messages/Communication

COAI submitted a letter to DoT on 23rd August, 2021 on the recent menace regarding fake SMS/ communication for completing their KYC. COAI requested DoT for its urgent intervention in the matter by issuing Government Advisory to the customers of being careful of such fake communications and also sending a message to fraudsters of legal action that may be initiated against them. It was also conveyed that a strong message from the Government on this is essential to curb such fraudulent activities.

Adoption of TSDSI transposed standard for 3GPP Release-15 into national standards by TEC

TEC issued notification on 29th July, 2021 for Inviting Public Comments on the subject by 28th August, 2021. COAI submitted the following:

- a) The Government must continue with its technology neutral approach adopted till date.
- b) Operator trials on 5G are based on 3GPP Rel-15.
- c) 3GPP Rel-15 has a well-developed ecosystem for the operators and consumers.
- d) TEC to work with industry to ERs and GRs based on 3GPP Rel-15 are in place for the timely roll out of 5G networks and devices in India.

Draft Karnataka Telecommunication Infrastructure and Underground Optical Fibre Cable Rules, 2021

State of Karnataka had issued the draft RoW Policy on 23rd June 2021. COAI submitted its response on the draft Policy on 22nd July 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 Uttarakhand RoW Portal

A demo session was coordinated for industry representatives with Municipal Administration and Urban Development Department on 23.08.2021.

District Level Telecom Committee (DLTC) Meetings

Industry issues hindering telecom were taken-up by COAI with District Collectors/Magistrates during various DLTC meetings held at Rajasthan, Delhi, North-East, UP etc.

Security of Telecom Infrastructure

COAI raised the issue of security of Telecom Infrastructure during the 2nd SBC meeting of Delhi held on Friday, 16th July 2021. It was pointed out that despite obtaining all requisite permissions/clearances, mobile towers could not be installed due to public pressure. Chief Secretary directed Secretary (IT) to issue a letter to Home Department in the matter. A letter was issued by IT Department to Home Department to request them to direct Police Authorities to provide their support to tower installing agencies in case of any public nuisance issue while installing mobile towers.

This letter will be helpful in obtaining Police Protection, if required, during installation of Telecom towers. IT Department is further expected to issue the directions to Police Department in some time.

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. Further, COAI made submissions to Pr. Secretary, Power of all States/UTs across India to seek their support for the priority Grid supply on Industrial tariffs.

Meeting with IT Department, Himachal Pradesh

Industry meeting was held with IT Department, Himachal Pradesh on 25th August 2021 to resolve issues w.r.t roll-out of telecom Infrastructure. Issues like exorbitant RoW charges, pending OFC applications, etc were taken-up by COAI for resolution.

EMF Awareness Webinar for Mobile Communications and EMF Emissions

EMF Awareness Webinar for Mobile Communications and EMF Emissions led by Assam LSA and Delhi LSA were organised on 2nd August 2021 and 5th August 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 3rd SBC meeting of Telangana on 6th August 2021 and 2nd SBC meeting of Rajasthan held on 24th August 2021.

Circle Coordination Committee (CCC) Meeting

CCC meeting of Rajasthan was organised on 27th August 2021. Industry issues like pending NoC from local Municipalities/Power Dept., etc. were discussed. Action items were derived for further submission and action.

Extension for filing of compliance regarding Metering & Billing

Based on the request from COAI, TRAI on 11th August 2021 has granted extension of time to comply with requirements of Quality of Service (Code of Practice for Metering & Billing Accuracy) Regulations, 2006. Now the Audit report is to be submitted by 27th September and Action Taken Report by 31st December, 2021.

TRAI issued Recommendations on "Enabling Unbundling of Different Layers Through Differential Licensing"

On 19th August 2021, TRAI has issued the said recommendations vide which TRAI has recommended that a separate authorisation be created for access network provider to offer network services on a wholesale basis. Under this new authorisation, the access network provider would not be permitted to directly provide services to the end customers.

Effective measures to improve the financial health of the sector

COAI submitted a letter on 17th Aug 2021 to DoT, Ministry of Finance and to the Cabinet secretary seeking a relief package from Government to cover all types of levies, a new spectrum lease term, and easier terms for paying statutory dues.

Impact in SLAs of Quality-of-Service Parameters due to COVID-19 advisory

COAI has submitted a follow-up letter to TRAI on 03rd August 2021 requesting TRAI to not treat any deviations that may be observed in benchmark of the QoS parameters for all the services in upcoming Q3 June 2021 reports and reports for the upcoming quarters till the situation stabilizes.

Review of Financial Bank Guarantees submitted by Telecom Service Providers and inclusion of dues related to CAF and EMF penalties

COAI submitted a follow-up letter to DoT on 5th August 2021 requesting that a suitable clarification may kindly be issued to all the CCA offices so that the dues relating to CAF & EMF penalties etc. and other related matters, that are already sub-judice, are not included during the periodic review of the License Fee / Spectrum Usage Charges FBGs by the CCA offices.

Allowing denomination in multiples of Rs. 10 for Special Tariff/ Combo/ Plan Vouchers

COAI wrote to TRAI on 5th August 2021 for allowing denomination in multiples of Rs. 10 for Special Tariff/ Combo/ Plan Vouchers and doing away with the provision of mandatory colour coding of the vouchers.

Need for uniform timelines for the declaration of revenue related details by the TSPs

COAI submitted a follow-up letter to DoT on 6th August 2021 requesting to maintain uniformity in the timelines for declaration of price sensitive information/revenue related details to DoT as well as the Stock Exchanges as prescribed by SEBI.

Need to remove paper-based information to consumers and shift to digital modes

This is with reference to the various requirements, under various Regulations and Directions, of communicating certain information to the telecom consumers through physical mediums like newspapers and other such modes. COAI requested TRAI vide letter dated 6th August 2021 to repeal the redundant activities like Welcome Letter and mandatory hard copy of the bill etc.

Request for extension in timelines for implementation of Labelling of appropriate banner while blocking of websites

DoT vide its letter dated 6th August 2021 instructed all ISPs to implement the Labelling of appropriate banner while blocking of HTTP websites and asked to submit the compliance to DoT within next 3 weeks. COAI on 18th August submitted a letter to DoT requesting for an extension of additional 30 days to comply DoT requirements.

Device to Device eSIM transfer – Standard Procedure for User

COAI submitted a letter/proposal to DoT on 19th Aug 2021, requesting DoT to issue Guidelines highlighting the common process of eSIM migration from one device to another that need to be adopted by all the TSPs.

Location Routing Number (LRN) related issues arising out of fraudulent porting or due to any other reasons

COAI submitted a letter/proposal to DoT on 20th Aug 2021, requesting DoT to adopt the COAI proposal for addressing & resolving subscriber grievances arising out of fraudulent porting or due to any other reasons.

Regulations for Vessel Operation in India-Clarification(s) regarding activities relating to cable repair/installation operations carried out in Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)

1. In March 2021, Custom authorities had impounded the cable repairing vessel for almost 40 days without any show cause notice operating within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

2. Customs Department is taking the view that bringing of goods into the Indian Customs Waters qualifies as an import into India. Due to this development, the foreign vessel owners are now requiring the Indian telecom service providers to obtain all the necessary permissions from the Indian Authorities and fulfil all the vessel importation/ exportation formalities including payment of applicable customs duty, IGST, furnishing of the bond, etc. This will result into operational and financial difficulties to our members.

3. In this regard, we have submitted detailed representation to concerned officers in the Ministry of Finance as well as in DoT and have requested for the clarification.

Procedural issues in GST Compliance

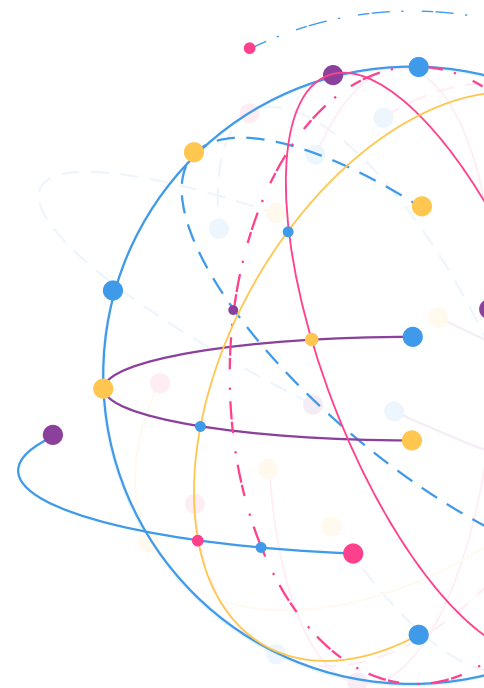
There are multiple procedural issues faced by the members while doing GST compliance. We have made a detailed representation highlighting issues and suggestions to the GST Council and to the concerned senior officers in the MoF / DoT for seeking clarity / resolution from the concerned authorities by way of necessary notifications and clarifications.

Following topics were included in the representation.

- GSTR- 1, GSTR-3B & e-way bill
- Input Tax Credit & Reconciliation
- Capital Goods
- Refund of GST
- Annual Returns (Form GSTR-9)
- Departmental actions

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	04 th Dec 2015	Andhra Pradesh	Gujarat
2	Rajasthan	06 th Feb 2017	Karnataka	
3	*Tripura	08 th Sep 2017	Delhi	
4	Odisha	14 th Sep 2017	Kerala	
5	**Haryana	06 th Oct 2017	Daman Diu and DNH	
6	Assam	16 th Feb 2018		
7	Maharashtra	18 th Aug 2018		
8	*Tamil Nadu	21 st Feb 2018		
9	Arunachal Pradesh	15 th Jun 2018		
10	Uttar Pradesh	15 th Jun 2018		
11	Uttarakhand	26 th Nov 2018		
12	Meghalaya	20 th Dec 2018		
13	Madhya Pradesh	08 th Mar 2019		
14	Nagaland	02 nd Dec 2019		
15	Manipur	9 th Jun 2020		
16	***Bihar	19 th Aug 2020		
17	**Goa	20 th Aug 2020		
18	Sikkim	12 th Nov 2020		
19	J&K	27 th Nov 2020		
20	Mizoram	7 th Dec 2020		
21	Punjab	7 th 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	22 nd February 2021		
27	Chandigarh	1 st March 2021		
28	Chhattisgarh	13 th March 2021		
29	Lakshadweep	7 th 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**



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News Wires:

Telecom Lobby sees India Lagging in 5G Unless Airwaves cost less

India risks lagging in the rollout of the super-fast fifth-generation wireless networks unless the government makes airwaves cheaper in an upcoming auction, a local telecom industry body said, citing the financial stress in the sector. [Read more](#)



COAI warns mobile users against fraud messages, calls relating to KYC details

Mobile operators' association COAI on Friday warned the public not to respond to fraudulent messages and calls relating to KYC documents, and urged users to stay "aware and cautious". COAI cautioned that mischievous elements are sending fake messages and calling people, threatening to block SIM cards. [Read more](#)



Fixing Floor Prices critical amid financial stress in telecom: COAI

Industry body COAI on Tuesday contended that floor price fixation is absolutely critical and need of the hour, given the "major financial stress" in the telecom industry. [Read more](#)



COAI seeks cut in levies, other relief measures; says telecom among most heavily taxed sectors

Industry body COAI has urged the government for financial reforms in the telecom sector, making a strong pitch for cuts in levies, doubling the tenure of auctioned radio wave holdings, along with a 7-10-year moratorium for spectrum payments, to address viability concerns. [Read more](#)



'Awareness Webinar on EMF Radiation'

The West Bengal unit of Department of Telecommunications (DoT) organized an 'Awareness Webinar on EMF Radiation.' This session was organized as a part of DoT's public advocacy programme to dispel unfounded myths and misconceptions around Electromagnetic Frequency (EMF) Radiation and make the general public aware of the need of cellular towers for seamless connectivity. [Read more](#)



COAI Events

Awareness webinar on EMF Radiation

The Assam Licence Service Area (LSA) unit of Department of Telecommunications (DoT) organized an "Awareness Webinar on EMF Radiation". This session was organized as part of DoT's public advocacy programme to dispel myths around Electromagnetic Frequency (EMF) radiation and address unfounded fears of citizens by presenting credible scientific evidence.

An expert panel comprising of senior officers from telecom department along with a doctor addressed the growing concern among consumers related to EMF radiation. They also highlighted the myths and misinformation around the health hazards connect with it.



Webinar on Cybersecurity organized by PHDCCI

PHDCCI organised a webinar on 'Cybersecurity: Towards a safe digital world in COVID. Ms. Vertika Misra ADG COAI was a part of the expert panel. Discussions on the need of cyber security both in the govt. and private sector took place. Key points of discussion also included the need for research for the creation for hardware in the space of cyber security.



6th anniversary of the Digital India Mission, CNBC-TV18, in partnership with NxtGen

Celebrating the 6th anniversary of the Digital India Mission, CNBC-TV18, in partnership with NxtGen, brought to its users a series of actionable discussions on the key sectors that are utilizing Digital Technology to scale their businesses whilst bringing convenience to consumers during these unprecedented times through the marquee initiative - Digital India Vision 6.0. The campaign culminated into a grand virtual summit on August 19th, 2021, convening all key stakeholders across sectors to delve into larger conversations around greater collaboration within digital ecosystems essential to tackling the challenges of our fast-changing world.





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