



COAI

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I-DIGEST

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LT. GEN DR. SP KOCHHAR (RETD.)
Director General, COAI

From DG's Desk

The dependency on data has massively changed in the last two years, newer ways and innovations have been taking place around the world to connect people and share information. This positive switch in demand for data consumption directly signifies the importance of telecom sector. This also indicates that the focus of the telecom industry is shifting from being a voice-centric network to a data-centric network.

With 5G around the corner, there will be a lot of denser infrastructure required to deliver seamless services to people. The launch of the Gati Shakti Portal by the Government will help in this as it will act as a one-stop window for getting RoW clearances. 5G will require the use of street furniture and more sites will have to be deployed. The Gati Shakti portal will facilitate faster clearances thereby enabling faster rollout.

The recent launch of the 5G testbed by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, will open up opportunities for various other new-age technologies such as AI, AR, VR, etc. which will drive major innovations across industries. This initiative will help the telecom industry to cater to the products, solutions and prototypes in 5G.

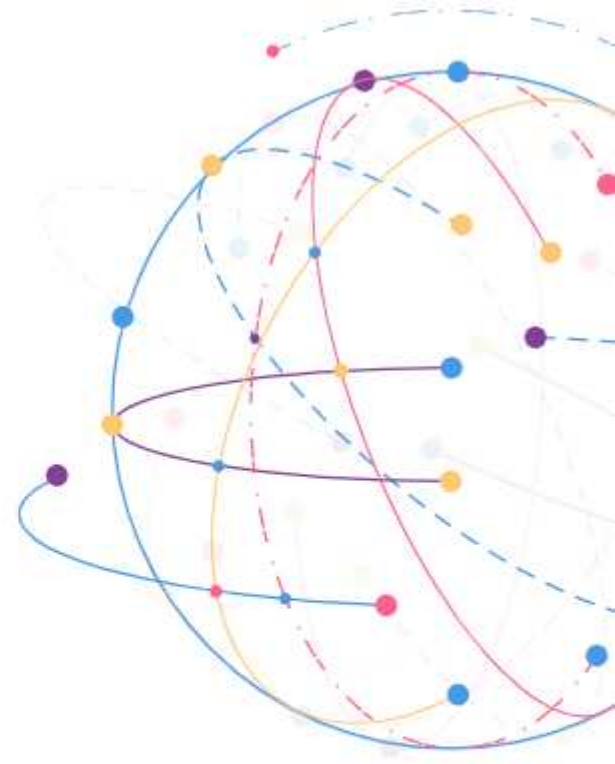
This month also witnessed the silver jubilee celebration of TRAI. In the last couple of years, TRAI has worked closely with the Government and service providers to create an ecosystem which is crucial, especially today, as the industry readies to usher in 5G era to catalyze the digital economy. COAI and its members will continue to work in alignment with TRAI to get regulations and recommendations which are beneficial not only for the sector but for the entire.

This is just the beginning, of India's path of Digital India vision. India's telecom industry will see a positive spillover in the upcoming years. Technology is no more specific to only one industry; every sector is now inter-connected for which a collaborative team player regulation will be executed with common platforms and solutions.



COAI

Latest Updates:



Adoption of TSDSI Security Standards – Transposed from 3GPP Release 15 & 16 – as National Standards by Telecommunications Engineering Centre (TEC)

COAI submitted a letter to TEC on May 13, 2022, on the subject wherein COAI requested TEC to adopt only the list of TS (Technical Specifications) as a national standard and drop the TRs (Technical Reports) as part of the National Standards adoption, as a best practice applied globally.

Amendment of Unified License for network coverage along international border

TSPs have been directed to optimise BTS sites to improve coverage in the international border areas for betterment of the mobile services. Unified License prescribes that radio signals emanating from BTS fade out when nearing or about to cross international border. COAI request DoT on May 5, 2022 to kindly amend the Unified License so that TSPs can implement and submit necessary compliance for improving coverage in the international border areas. The issue was discussed in a meeting with Secretary DoT on May 23, 2022, wherein DoT informed that they are reviewing the issue with MHA.

Dispensation of need for certification of CDR/SDR copies by Nodal Officer

COAI took up the issue of dispensation of need for certification of CDR/SDR by nodal officer each time in the Court on May 5, 2022. It is mandated for TSPs to provide the CDR/SDR/CAF data to the designated LEAs / Competent authorities as per their requirement under Section 91 of Cr PC. When the case is posted for hearing in a court of Law (where such data is being used as evidence), the respective "Circle Nodal Officer / Alternate Circle Nodal Officer" of the TSP is called upon to appear in person in the Court as a prosecution witness. In most of the LSAs, hundreds of such certified copies of CDR / SDR data are requested by the LEAs for court submissions. This often leads to a very exhaustive and difficult activity for Nodal officers. COAI requested DoT to facilitate devising of a suitable act specifically for the "Telecom Sector" in line with the "Bankers Book Evidence Act. The issue was discussed in a meeting with Secretary DoT on May 23,

2022, wherein DoT stated that they are willing to accept this and have asked for a methodology to do the same. The issue will be discussed in the COAI legal Committee.

Simplification of SACFA Guidelines for Low Power BTS/ Small Cells

DoT has simplified the SACFA procedure for Small Cells on 9th May 2022. The requirement for a formal application for SACFA processing is done away with for Low Power BTSs; however, the TSPs rolling out the same shall register the details such as Geo-coordinates and technical parameters of such sites in the Saral Sanchar Portal. The registration fee is RS. 100/- per Small Cell. The fee for additional antenna has also been reduced to Rs. 100/-

Rationalization of EMF Exposure Norms

COAI made a submission to DoT on May 30, 2022 stating that while prevailing stringent EMF norms might have been implementable for 2G and 3G technologies, the same will not be feasible with 5G and beyond technologies, as these technologies will be primarily deployed in higher spectrum frequencies of C-Band and mmWave band. COAI requested DoT that the license condition pertaining to human-exposure requirements in India should be revised and aligned with the latest ICNIRP 2020 levels to be in line with international standards and the EIRP / transmit power limits to be revised accordingly.

Observations in TAF COP database received from LSA field units

COAI made a submission to DoT on May 30, 2022 regarding certain discrepancies observed by the TSPs in the database provided by the LSAs due to which the procedure listed in the DoT circular on TAF COP could not be followed. These observations were brought before the LSA field units during meetings held with them recently along with written submissions at few places. Vide the submission, COAI has requested DoT to plan a demo on the reverification process of TSPs to ascertain readiness status of each TSP including BSNL/MTNL, provide industry bulk API to all TSPs along with initiation of reverification exercise – would stop entry of any new industry bulk, otherwise this activity shall continue forever and ensure the TAF COP output is error free.

Acceptance of e-EPIC/Digital Voter ID card and Udhog Aadhaar for issuance of connections

COAI made a representation to DoT on May 31, 2022 stating that e-EPIC/Digital Voter ID Card and Udhog Aadhaar should be allowed as PoI & PoA for issuing mobile connections. COAI submitted that both these documents are widely known to public, issued and accepted now at various Government offices & establishments across the country, basis which subscribers often approach the TSPs to accept these for issuing connections. As the public at large is becoming more digital savvy, it becomes quite challenging to deny connectivity to subscribers approaching us with these digital documents as more and more people prefer to download and save only digital documents for all purposes.

CERT-In Directions relating to information security practices, procedure, prevention, response and reporting of cyber incidents for Safe & Trusted Internet

COAI made a submission to MeitY on May 31, 2022 on the above Direction highlighted certain issues given in the Direction that need to be discussed especially in view of the fact that the licensees are already adhering to various security conditions under the license. COAI also requested for an interaction with MeitY to discuss the Direction in detail and urged to hold the said Direction in abeyance till larger stakeholder consultation is conducted and the inputs suitably incorporated.

Meeting with Secretary DoT

A Meeting of COAI and its members was held on May 23, 2022 with Secretary DoT and other senior officials of the DoT and TEC. During the meeting, various industry issues were discussed.

TRAI CP on "Rating of Buildings or Areas for Digital Connectivity"

COAI has submitted a request letter to TRAI on 26th Apr 2022 seeking extension in timelines for submitting the written comments to the Consultation Paper. The due date for submission of comments was 4th May 2022 and counter-comments was 18th May 2022.

TRAI has considered our request and grants an extension till 15th June 2022 for the submission of written comments and counter comments up to 29th June 2022.

Modification of IP Cat-I registration clauses to enable implementation of Disaster Management related systems in the State of Kerala

DoT had scheduled an industry meeting on 28th April 2022 and asked to submit the inputs pertaining to this issue. A Joint Industry letter (COAI-DIPA) submitted to DoT on 4th May 2022 vide which we have requested DoT that rather than adding permanent additional load on telecom infrastructure for all times, irrespective of the fact whether there is a disaster or not, it may be far better for NDMA to use government buildings and street furniture for deployment of EWDS equipment.

Cloud Based Service offering by new licensees

COAI has submitted a letter to TRAI on 05th May 2022. Vide this letter we have highlighted to DoT that the Mobile Series and LRN codes have been allotted to an Access Service licensee to provide Internet Telephony Services. However, the said licensee does not have spectrum, access network and pan India license. This has raised serious concerns in the industry as internet telephony, through mobile series, is akin to Mobile Services and will compete directly with mobile service providers who have invested in spectrum, access network and all India licenses. This issue was also discussed in the monthly meeting held with Secretary, DoT, on 23rd May 2022.

Directions to address the issue of CLI Spoofing

COAI has submitted a letter to DoT on 9th May 2022. Vide this letter we have highlighted that DoT directions dated 13.04.2022 regarding addressing the issue of CLI spoofing is in contradiction to the existing Unified License conditions and requested to kindly amend the Unified License so that ILDO's can implement and submit necessary compliance for dropping incoming ILD calls with no CLI.

Transfer of USOF projects to BSNL

COAI has submitted a letter to DoT on 16th May 2022. Vide this letter we have requested DoT to kindly reconsider the decision of awarding USOF projects to BSNL on nomination basis without discovering the lowest possible rates, through exclusion of all other eligible Telecom Service Providers. We have submitted a letter to Secretary, DoT, on 25th May 2022 and have requested to grant us a meeting to discuss this issue in detail along with our members.

Parameters for IPDR and SYS LOG of NAT

COAI has submitted a letter to DoT on 16th May 2022. Vide this letter we have highlighted the technical limitations of existing equipment and imminent impact on network quality and customer experience in implementing the DoT instructions dated 16th Nov 2021 and requested for the below:

- a) The requirement of capturing destination IP address/port in the IPDR data may kindly be reviewed
- b) The "Destination IP Address/ Port no." should not be made as mandatory field of IPDR report format, as specified in the DoT instructions Dt. 16-11-2021.

This issue was also discussed in the monthly meeting held with Secretary, DoT, on 23rd May 2022. Member(S) will convene an industry meeting on this issue very soon.

Rationalization of Restoration & Access Charges in Maharashtra

Vide letter dated 20 May 2022 Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has reduced Access charges from 100,000 per KM to INR 1000/ per KM for the deployment of the OFC in the BMC area. COAI had been taking up this issue with BMC and the State of Maharashtra for the withdrawal of the Access Charges for the deployment of the OFC in alignment to the RoW Rules of 2016, since last year.

Additional track rent (one time or annually) charged in Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu Telecom Infrastructure Policy, 2022 was notified on 25.01.22 in alignment with the RoW Rules 2016. As per the policy, the One-time fee to meet administrative expenses for the installation of Telecom Tower deployment is INR 10,000/- per Application, whereas for the deployment of Optical fibre it is INR 1,000/- per KM OFC (underground & overground). In the Policy, it has been prescribed that no track rent (one time or annually) shall be charged. Recently, COAI wrote a letter to Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu (GoTN) on date 01 April 22 requesting to withdraw this charge and a letter to the Commissioner, Madurai Municipal Corporation dated 11 May 22 requesting to have a meeting with TSPs for outstanding payment reconciliation. Based on COAI letter **Commissioner Madurai has kept the proposed Trade Licence Fee Charges in abeyance.**

Meeting with AS(T), DoT regarding industry's issues

Meeting was held under the chairmanship of Additional Secretary, DoT and attended by Bihar State Officials, Bihar LSA, and representatives of COAI, DIPA, TSPs and IPs on 06th May 2022. Several issues were discussed regarding Deemed permission, Requirement of Registered Lease deed, High restoration charges, Inclusion of Authorities like RCD, RWD, WRD etc., RoW Pendency, Priority EB at Industrial Tariff, Safety and Security of Telecom Infrastructure. COAI and its members are working on the action points of the meeting.

Gujarat's notification of the Telecom Infrastructure Policy 2022

The Government of Gujarat notified Telecom Infrastructure Policy 2022. The bylaws announced by the government of Gujarat will be applicable in all the city areas, municipal councils, town municipal councils, town panchayats, etc. The policy looks after both the deployment of telecom towers as well as OFC (optical fibre cable), aerial and underground.

Daman & Diu's notification of the Telecom Infrastructure Policy 2022

The Administration of Daman & Diu notified the Right of Way Order, 2022 to be implemented in the Union Territory of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu. This order shall be administered by the Department of Information Technology, U.T. Administration of DNH & DD. The one-time administrative charges are in alignment with the RoW Rules, 2016 i.e a non-refundable fee of INR 1,000 /KM for OFC and Rs 10,000 per application for Mobile Towers to meet administrative expenses.

State Broadband Committee (SBC) meeting of Uttar Pradesh (UP)

SBC meeting of UP was held on 16th May wherein COAI has raised several industry issues/challenges wherein

COAI raised several issues regarding Implementation of Rs 1 per meter administrative charge across UP, Processing of RoW application, Policy Implementation challenges, Appointment of Nodal officers, Sealing of Sites, Use of Street Furniture etc.

State Broadband Committee (SBC) meeting of Sikkim held on 30.05.2022

SBC meeting of Sikkim was held on 30.05.2022 under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary (CS) of Sikkim wherein COAI has raised several industry issues/challenges like High Charges for using the Poles of the State DISCOMs for laying aerial fibre, High rentals to Est micro equipment, Request for self-Restoration by TSPs, Request for Priority Electricity Board connection at Industrial rates, Safety And Security, etc. CS directed the officials of the State Government, IT Department, LSA, etc to issue appropriate directions to support speedy roll-out of Telecom Infrastructure across Sikkim.

State Broadband Committee (SBC) meeting of Haryana

SBC meeting was held on 16.05.2022 wherein COAI has raised several industry issues/challenges like priority EB supply and tariffs at industrial/Favourable tariffs, etc. Hon'ble CS during the Haryana SBC held on May 16, 2022, requested to take up the matter regarding priority EB at Industrial tariff with Shri P K Das (Addl. Chief Secretary, Power). In this regard, a reminder letter was submitted to Addl. Chief Secretary (Power) and Chairman (HERC) on the above subject will be submitted by Friday (i.e. 03 June 2022).

Expedite RoW permissions in North-East

Industry meeting was held with DG(1), DoT on 21.05.2022 in Guwahati to understand the issues faced by the industry for the speedy roll-out of Telecom Infrastructure across North-East. Coordinated with LSA for speedy grant of pending permissions across 7 States of NESA.

RoW permissions in Manipur

COAI worked jointly with the Manipur Govt, NELSA LSA, DoT, and industry in making Manipur 1st State to Grant all RoW Permissions. Manipur has set the benchmark for all other States/UTs to follow. It's an important step toward making India Digitally advanced and achieving the goal of "Broadband for All".

RoW permissions in Meghalaya

COAI worked jointly with the Meghalaya Govt, NELSA LSA, and DoT to expedite the grant of permissions for RoW. Meghalaya Government took a giant step and accepts "Deemed Approval", 1016 RoW pending applications get immediate clearance.

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) on 20.05.2022 had issued a directorate to Chief Secretaries across India to accept Online applications through the GatiShakti Sanchar Portal to enhance broadband connectivity in the country.

Reduction in Way leave charges by Delhi

On COAI's request, Way leave charges were reduced by South DMC, North DMC, and East DMC from -INR 800/meter to -INR 200/meter.

Meeting held with Principal Secretary (IT), Nagaland

Industry meeting held with DoT and Principal Secretary (IT), Nagaland on 23.05.2022 to provide the speedy grant of RoW permissions to the industry. This meeting was helpful to enable a faster rollout of Digital telecom Infrastructure across Nagaland.

Launch of Sugam Sanchar Portal

COAI worked with the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), and the Government of India for the launch of 'Sugam Sanchar', a central RoW portal on 13.05.2022 and their efforts for the deployment of 5G in India.

The vision for this portal is to provide a collaborative institutional mechanism between all stakeholders including Central and State/UT Government(s), Local bodies, and Service Providers to facilitate the Right of Way (ROW) for the deployment of the Telecom/Digital Infrastructure in the country. The development of this portal will be helpful for the telecom service providers/IPs will be able to submit their applications for the deployment of telecom infrastructure.

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) on 20.05.2022 had issued a asked the Chief Secretaries across India to accept Online applications through the GatiShakti Sanchar Portal to enhance broadband connectivity in the country.

East DMC RoW Portal training session on 21.05.2022

COAI coordinated for a training session organised by East DMC for their RoW portal training on 21.05.2022. Industry issues w.r.t portal were shared with East DMC for resolution.

Manipur RoW Portal training session on 13.05.2022

COAI coordinated for a training session organized by Manipur for their RoW portal training on 13.05.2022. Industry issues w.r.t portal like Deemed approval certificate, regularisation of telecom tower, etc. were shared with the IT Department of Manipur for resolution.

State Broadband Committee (SBC) meeting of Andhra Pradesh (AP)

SBC meeting of AP was held on 17th May wherein COAI has raised several industry issues/challenges like **high Charges for using the Poles of the State DISCOMs for laying aerial fiber, allowing TSPs for self-restoration, requesting for Priority Electricity Board connection at Industrial rates, etc.**

GST- Input Tax credit on equipment installed on telecom tower

Some of the State Tax Authorities are proposing to deny ITC on telecom equipment including crucial network equipment viz. antenna, base stations, transmitters and other utilities like DG and batteries installed on towers by interpreting that such equipment is to be treated at par with telecom tower.

Denial of ITC on telecom equipment installed on telecom towers or other equipment like batteries, diesel generating sets etc installed in temporary shelters close to the telecom towers for running of the telecom equipment, therefore totally baseless and without any precedent.

Follow up representation made to the telecom ministry as well as to finance ministry. DoT has agreed to send their recommendations to MoF for the resolution of this issue.

RoW - Service Tax Liability

On November 30, 2018, notification was issued by the MoF, exempting service tax on services provided by way of granting permission of "right of way" by "local authorities" during the period from 01 July 2012 to 30 June 2017. This solved partially problem as the scope of exemption is limited to only local authorities. In addition to "local authorities", charges for ROW permissions are also collected by Central and State Government Departments like Railways, and PWD etc.

In this regard, DoT has sent recommendations to MoF requesting for clarification on this issue.



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News Wires:

5G network slicing may lead to flouting of net neutrality rules: COAI

The uniqueness of 5G networks tailoring to specific use cases will be in direct contradiction to net neutrality laws in India, if network slicing and differentiated experiences are offered on the network, said COAI director general SP Kochhar.

[Read more](#)



Mumbai civic body cuts OFC laying access charges to Rs.1,000 per km

The industry will keep pushing for its other demand of lowering the charges to zero, COAI's director general SP Kochhar said. [Read more](#)



Telecom industry urges 'significant' reduction in 5G spectrum prices, cites viability

The Cellular Operators Association of India is pitching for a 'significant' reduction in 5G spectrum prices recommended by sectoral regulator TRAI to ensure a 'viable business' case. The association flagged that it would take the telecom industry at least five years to realise profits on the huge investments that would go into 5G roll-outs. [Read more](#)



5G to open infinite possibilities, propel growth

India's 5G subscription will reach 350 million by 2026 accounting for 27% of all mobile subscriptions. By 2025, India will need 22 million skilled workers in 5G centric technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), robotics and Cloud Computing. [Read more](#)





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News Wires:

Rajasthan LSA organizes webinar on 'Awareness for Mobile Tower Myths'

Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Jaipur License Service Area (LSA) organized an awareness webinar on "Awareness for Mobile Tower Myths and Tower Frauds". [Read more](#)



TRAI completes 25 Years, COAI and other industry member send congratulations

DG COAI, congratulated TRAI on completing 25 years of service and growth of the sector, which is integral to India's path of Digital India vision. [Read more](#)



COAI Applauds Gujarat's Telecom Infra Policy 2022

The Government of Gujarat in its new policy for the telecom infrastructure has said that the applicant will have to pay Rs. 1,000 per kilometre for OFC and Rs. 10,000 per application for the telecom tower deployment. [Read more](#)



COAI Events

“25 years of TRAI”

TRAI – Telecom Regulatory Authority of India completed 25 years of its existence. TRAI has organized events with two parallel themes to mark the occasion. The seminar on “Collaborative Regulations: Co-creation and Sharing of Infrastructure in synchronization with Gatishakti” was organized to mark the importance of collaborative efforts from different regulatory bodies to be able to provide the best infrastructure to the end consumer.



“EMF Emissions from Mobile Towers – Rajasthan LSA”

Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Jaipur License Service Area (LSA) today organized an awareness webinar on “EMF Emissions and Telecom Towers”. This session was organized as part of the Department of Telecommunication’s public advocacy program to make the general public aware of the need for mobile towers and dispel myths around EMF radiation and address unfounded fears of citizens by presenting credible scientific evidence.

A slide titled "World Telecommunication and Information Society Day". It contains a list of historical events:

- World Telecommunication Day has been celebrated annually on 17 May since marking the founding of ITU and the signing of the first International Telecommunication Convention in 1865.
- In November 2005, the World Summit on the Information Society called upon the General Assembly to declare 17 May as World Telecommunication Society Day in honor of the engineers of ICT and the wide range of issues related to the information society.
- The General Assembly adopted a resolution in March 2008 stipulating that World Telecommunication Society Day shall be celebrated every year on 17 May.
- In November 2005, the ITU Conference in Antalya, Turkey, decided to celebrate both events on 17 May as World Telecommunication and Information Society Day. The Member States and Sector Members to celebrate the Day Annually by organizing appropriate national programmes with a view to stimulating reflection and exchange of ideas on the theme adopted by the Council and drawing the various aspects of the theme with all partners in society.

A small video inset in the top right corner shows a man speaking.

COAI Events

"The Launch of Gati Shakti Sanchar Portal"

Lt. Gen. Dr. SP Kochhar, Director General, COAI, said, "The launch of Gati Shakti – Sugam Sanchar Portal is a milestone that will enable the Government's vision for 'Digital India'. It provides a platform to process for both the Authorities and Industry to apply for ROW approvals for laying Optical Fibre Cables (OFC) and erecting mobile towers, and small cells on street furniture, etc. to submit their applications to various agencies of the State/UT Governments and local bodies. It is an important step towards making a robust mechanism to achieve the goal of "Broadband to All" as envisaged in the National Digital Communication Policy-2018".



"5G Rollout – Role of Street Infrastructure and small cells"

National Broadband Mission and Department of Telecommunications of India organized a workshop on 5G Rollout – Role of Street Infrastructure and Small Cells for the Eastern States. Addressing the same, Mr. Vikram Tiwathia said, "5G is important because it has the potential to give a serious uptick to all welfare activities like education, etc. We will use the broadband network to build existing assets."





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