



COAI

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LT. GEN DR. SP KOCHHAR (RETD.)

Director General, COAI

From DG's Desk

In the past few years, the Indian OTT market witnessed a surge in activity, from communications to entertainment services, and the trend is increasingly taking a toll on the network resources of the telcos. COAI has clarified that the OTT communication platforms are indeed classified as access services under the Telecommunications Act 2023, and that they be placed under the similar licensing framework, as TSPs are. To address the issues of non-level playing field and ensure adoption of principles of same service same rule, these competing and substitutable services should be included under Access Services Authorization under the new framework. OTTs have stressed that telcos operate solely at the network layer, while OTT's function exclusively at the application layer, which is fundamentally flawed and misinterprets the technical reality of modern IP communication.

In the 4G/5G era, TSPs deliver their services through applications that span the entire OSI stack, a comprehensive approach that ensures end-to-end service delivery, from physical infrastructure to user-facing applications with their service delivery on the application layer of the OSI stack. Thus, as per our understanding, OTT communication services are covered under the new telecom act.

On the TSP's front, following exhaustive deliberations and open house discussions on spam or unsolicited commercial communications, TRAI directed telcos to disconnect all telecom resources of unregistered telemarketers found making spam calls and to blacklist them for up to two years. We notified that the telecom service providers are currently working on bringing a few more models to address the issue of spam calls. COAI and its members are also part of the committee formed by the Department of Consumer Affairs to tackle the menace of pesky calls from unregistered telemarketers, which is working to prepare draft guidelines under the Consumer Protection Act 2019 to safeguard consumers from such UCC's. We believe that it will be helpful in addressing the menace of UCC substantially as it will put a deterrence on the unregistered telemarketers.

A decision has been taken to extend the ongoing pilot project for testing direct to mobile technology beyond the initial 19 cities. The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) mentioned that there is wide consensus among ministries that D2M technology will be beneficial for India. The pilot testing currently being run by Prasar Bharti will now be expanded to Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, from where much of the demand is expected to be generated in the event of a nationwide D2M rollout.

The tussle over the 6 GHz spectrum band between the telecom operators and technology firms has led the



Department of Telecommunications to delay its allocation to either. COAI brought into light that if 6 GHz band is not allocated to IMT, the country would have to account for around 60% higher annual cost to achieve the performance expected from 5G services, leading to delayed expansions and a significant increase in energy consumption, radio network costs, among others. 6 GHz being the only mid band spectrum where a contiguous bandwidth to the order of 300 to 400 megahertz per telecom service provider is possible and it must be made available for the rapidly evolving ICT demands towards 2030.

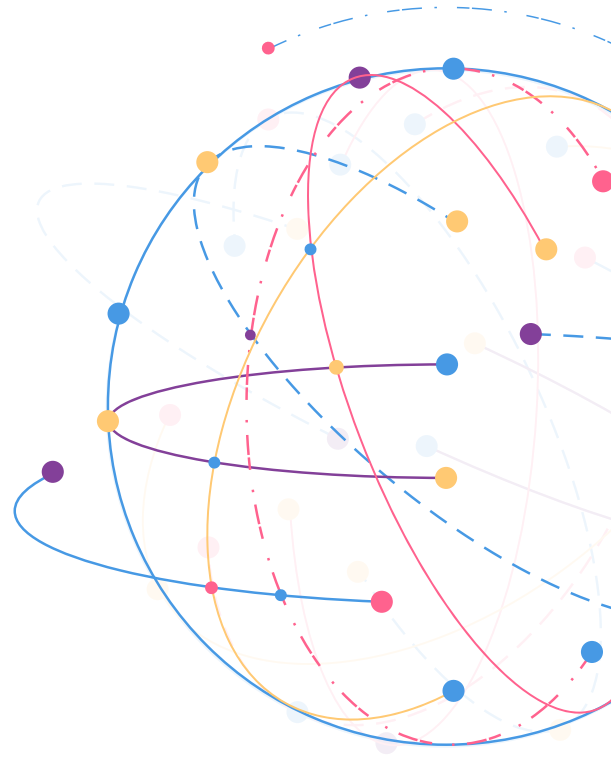
COAI continues extending support in the 6 GHz spectrum framework, OTTs and other telecom services to pave the way towards a global digital platform and services.

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



COAI

Latest Updates:



TRAI Consultation Paper on the Framework for Service Authorizations to be granted under Telecommunications Act, 2023

COAI has submitted both comments and counter comments to the Consultation Paper on **08.08.2024 and 16.08.2024** respectively. The Open House Discussion (OHD) on the Consultation Paper was held on 21.08.2024, wherein we submitted that no major overhaul is required, and that the Government should take measures to enhance ease of business and reduce compliance burden.

TRAI Consultation Paper on Review of Telecom Consumer Protection Regulations (TCPDR), 2012

COAI submitted comments and counter comments to the Consultation Paper on 16.08.2024 and 23.08.2024 respectively, wherein we specified that color coding of the vouchers should be done away with and more flexibility should be provided with regard to validity of vouchers.

TRAI Consultation Paper on Issues Related to Critical Services in the M2M Sector and Transfer of Ownership of M2M SIMs

COAI submitted comments to the Consultation Paper on 16.08.2024. It was submitted that list of Critical M2M services should be finalised and the same should be provided on Licenced spectrum band.

Submission made to Chief Secretary, Government of Telangana regarding charges by HGCL

COAI sent a letter to the Chief Secretary, Government of Telangana on 16.08.2024, regarding Exorbitant Charges levied by Hyderabad Growth Corridor Limited (HGCL), requesting the Chief Secretary for intervention and to take up the case with the concerned HGCL authorities to grant the requisite RoW permissions to our member(s) in line with the DoT's RoW rules.

Submission made to Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu on Fiber Cuts in Chennai

Letter to the Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu

was submitted by COAI on 14.08.2024, regarding fiber cuts impacting communication services in Chennai . Urgent intervention was sought for issuance of suitable instructions to the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) officials not to resort to such coercive action(s) without any prior notice to the Telecom Service Providers. Further, Industry requested for a meeting to share more details on the matter.

Letter to Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu regarding State Electricity Commission's tariff

A letter has been written to the Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu by COAI on 14.08.2024, regarding the increase in Electricity Tariff charges in the State. It was mentioned in the letter that the new tariff increase announced will create huge adverse impact on the industry and it was requested to reduce the increase in tariffs for the telecom sector.

Submission made to Chief Secretary, Govt of Karnataka on RoW permissions

A letter was submitted to the Chief Secretary, Government of Karnataka on 27.08.2024, reiterating the industry concerns related to the Right of Way permissions hampering telecom infrastructure deployment, especially in Bengaluru. A request for an in-person meeting has also been made to discuss the issues in detail.

Letter to Managing Director, Karnataka Innovation and Technology Society (KITS)

Letter to the Managing Director of Karnataka Innovation and Technology Society (KITS) written on 14.08.2024, requesting that no coercive action be taken on the laid out OFCs by any local authority, like BBMP, BESCO, etc., as such actions adversely impact the telecom facilities accessible to the public and the resulting disruption in telecom services may create uncertainty among the masses.

Letter to Hon'ble Chief Minister, Maharashtra requesting meeting to discuss RoW issues

A submission was made to the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Maharashtra on 09.08.2024, requesting to grant an in-person meeting to discuss the Right of Way related issues, especially policy and guidelines not being implemented in letter and spirit by the local authorities. The submission also highlighted the industry's long standing request for rationalization of charges for regularization and property tax on mobile towers, stopping of coercive action on telecom infrastructure by local authorities without prior intimation to our members and issues related to pending Security Deposit.

Letter to Chief Secretary, Government of Telangana on State RoW Policy

A letter was written to the Chief Secretary, Government of Telangana on 09.08.2024, requesting alignment of the Telangana State RoW policy with the amendments made by the Government of India, including the charges for various kinds of permissions, allowing permission to lay overhead OFC, deployment of own poles for the purpose, formation of 5G working committee for creating a facilitative environment for faster 5G deployment in the State and rationalization of high restoration charges.

Letter to Chief Secretary, Government of Rajasthan on high RoW charges levied by the Krishi Upaj Mandi

A letter has been written to the Chief Secretary, Government of Rajasthan on 08.08.2024, regarding the high RoW charges levied by the Krishi Upaj Mandi (a local authority) and intervention has been requested on getting these rates aligned with the DoT amendments notified in 2022 and rationalized.

11th SBC Meeting of Rajasthan

The 11th State Broadband Committee (SBC) meeting of Rajasthan was convened on 23.08.2024, chaired by the Chief Secretary, Government of Rajasthan. Issues like GST charging mechanism by Development Authorities, Regularisation, High RoW Charges levied by Krishi Upaj Mandi and other important issues were taken up by COAI.

5th SBC Meeting of Union Territory of Lakshadweep

The 5th State Broadband Committee (SBC) meeting of the Union Territory (UT) of Lakshadweep was held on 20.08.2024, chaired by the Advisor to the Administrator, UT of Lakshadweep. The UT officials and Additional DGT, Kerala LSA participated in the same in addition to COAI.

Letter to Chief Secretary, Government of Madhya Pradesh on action pending with MPSEDC

A letter was written to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madhya Pradesh on 27.08.2024, requesting intervention with respect to non-generation of the deemed permission beyond the 60 days' timeline - an action pending with the Madhya Pradesh State Electronics and Development Corporation (MPSEDC).

Government of West Bengal meeting on amendment to MoHUA guideline

On 20.08.2024, the West Bengal State Government held a meeting with the telecom industry, to discuss the industry viewpoint on the recently released draft amendment of the MoHUA guidelines of the State. The industry presented

its views on the draft amendments and a formal submission is underway.

COAI comments on the Draft Right of Way Rules 2024

COAI submitted industry comments on the draft Right of Way Rules 2024 issued by the Department of Telecom, Government of India on 09.08.2024. Subsequent to the submission, the department conducted a series of meetings to discuss the industry inputs. Final notification of these rules is expected soon.

Letter to Secretary DoNER on TRAI recommendations for NE region of India

A repeat submission was made to the Secretary, DoNER on 13.08.2024, regarding support on implementation of the TRAI Recommendations for the development of telecom infrastructure in the NE Region.

COAI submission to the Chief Secretary, Government of Assam on Crisis Management

A submission was made to the Chief Secretary, Government of Assam on 29.07.2024, regarding the State Order on efficient crisis management and maintaining Cell-on-Wheels (CoW) equipment by TSPs.

Digital Infrastructure deployment review meeting by Telecom Secretary

Review meetings on RoW related issues for All States/UTs under the 04 Zones (North, East, West and South) was held in August month under the chairmanship of the Telecom Secretary for infrastructure deployment related issues. State government officials and LSAs were present and COAI highlighted the industry issues.

Letter to Chief Secretary, Uttar Pradesh post SBC meeting

A COAI submission was made to the Chief Secretary, Government of Uttar Pradesh on 05.08.2024, on the industry support points requested, post the UP State Broadband Committee (SBC) meeting held under his chairmanship on 22.07.2024.

Submission to Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) for alignment of Ministry's Policy with the DoT RoW Rules, 2016

A COAI submission was made on 05.08.2024 to the DDG, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG), for alignment of the Ministry's Policy with the DOT RoW Rules, 2016.

Streamlining OFC Installation in Forest areas of Chhattisgarh

A COAI letter was submitted to the Additional Chief Secretary, MoEF&CC, Chhattisgarh on 14.08.2024, requesting for her support in issuance of necessary directions for streamlining Forest Land Diversion Process for Optical Fibre Cable Installation in the State, which will help in faster telecom infrastructure deployment.

Letter to return/modify the submitted proposals on Forests application portal (Parivesh)

A COAI letter was submitted to the Director General, Forests & Special Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change on 14.08.2024, for his support to the industry and issuing necessary directions for allowing the User Agency (applicant) to have the option to return/modify the submitted proposals on Parivesh portal.

Letter to Secretary, Ministry of Power (MoP) for support on Notification of Electricity Metering Regulations

A COAI letter was submitted to Secretary, Ministry of Power (MoP) on 20.08.2024, requesting to direct Central Electricity Authority (CEA) for the notification of the Metering Regulation so that Low Tension (LT) consumers, i.e., below 11KV, may be able to avail the Green Energy.

Implementation of Green Energy Open Access Rules (GEOA), 2023 by Union Territories

A COAI letter was submitted to Secretary, Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission for UTs (for State of Goa and UTs) on 23.08.2024, regarding implementation of the Green Energy Open Access (GEOA) Rules, 2023.

5th SBC Meeting of Ladakh Union Territory (UT)

The 5th State Broadband Committee (SBC) Meeting of the Ladakh UT was held under the chairmanship of the Advisor to the Hon'ble LG Ladakh on 06.08.2024. COAI constructively participated in the meeting.

Daman Diu & Dadra Nagar Haveli (DD & DNH) UT Broadband Committee meeting

The Broadband Committee meeting of DD & DNH UT for the 1st Qtr. of 2024-25 was held under the chairmanship of the Advisor to the Hon'ble Administrator, UT of DD & DNH on 12.08.2024. COAI highlighted issues like Policy amendment, challenges in Aerial OFC laying and Electricity related support required by the sector.

Relaxation in Submission of Document/s for Tower Permission in Punjab

Subsequent to the Hon'ble Punjab & Haryana High Court order dated 24.07.2024, wherein the expression "approved" which was mentioned in the interim order dated 24.11.2022 was deleted, the Punjab State Government's Department of Industries and Commerce issued an order on 08.08.2024, whereby the department has written to all Administrative Secretaries/Deputy Commissioners in Punjab to process the applications related to Roof Top Towers on the buildings as per court decision. This provides a big relief to the industry.

Himachal Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission (HPERC) Draft Green Energy Open Access (GEOA) Rules, 2024

HPERC issued the Draft Regulations, 2024, titled "Terms and

Conditions for Green Energy Open Access and Banking". COAI is working on making a formal submission on the same with the support of members.

Meeting with Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR (CAQM) on Compliance to Direction # 76

A meeting was held with Member Secretary, CAQM on 28.08.2024, to discuss the current issues related to Diesel Generator (DG) supply side and new Piped Natural Gas (PNG) connection faced by the telecom industry.

Uttar Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission (UPERC) Draft Green Energy Open Access (GEOA) Rules, 2024

Draft Uttar Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission (Terms and Conditions for Green Energy Open Access and Banking) Regulations, 2024 have been issued for the stakeholders to share suggestions/comments/objections on. COAI has made a formal submission with the support of members.

Meeting with National Broadband Mission Director

DDG and Director, COAI met the Mission Director on 27.08.2024, discussing the recent development of submission related to Draft Right of Way Rules 2024 and also highlighted the current industry challenges.

Consultation Paper on Revision of National Numbering Plan

TRAI had released a Consultation paper on Revision of the National Numbering Plan on 06.06. 2024. COAI submitted its response to the Consultation Paper on 01.08. 2024 and further, submitted Counter Comments on the same on 15.08.2024.

Draft Environment Compensation

COAI submitted a letter to Member Secretary of CPCB on 12.08.2024, related to draft Environment Compensation (EC) pricing of metal and sharing of global benchmark prices of metal under E-waste Management Rule 2022.

ComSec Scheme Clarification requested

Letter submitted to Secretary, DoT by COAI related to ComSeC scheme on 23.08.2024, requesting for clarification and support.

Revision of TEC Test Procedure for Measurement of Electromagnetic Field from Base Station Antenna

COAI submitted response to the Minutes of the TSTP Meeting (held in July) as shared by TEC on 02.08.2024. Regular meetings are being held with members to discuss and deliberate on the industry's inputs to TEC. The DCC meeting was scheduled on 30.08.2024, wherein COAI participated.

Dispense off the requirement to obtain Wireless Operating License (WOL) for MWA/MWB spectrum

COAI submitted a letter to DoT to dispense off the requirement to obtain Wireless Operating License (WOL) for MWA/MWB spectrum on 21.08.2024.

Draft Standard for Mitigation of Interference in Radio Altimeters from 5G Base Stations operating in C-Bands

COAI submitted its response to TEC on the Draft Standard for Mitigation of Interference in Radio Altimeters from 5G

Base Stations operating in C-Bands on 14.08.2024.

Disruption in Aadhaar authentication for Subscriber Verification/Acquisition

COAI submitted its response to UIDAI regarding Disruption in Aadhaar authentication for Subscriber Verification/Acquisition on 09.08.2024.

Telecom Act allows for licensing OTTs apps: COAI

COAI issued a statement outlining this interpretation of the Act in response to tech firms' pushback against licensing requirements for online services.

[Read more](#)



Calls, messaging apps must comply with rules for nation's security like telcos, COAI says

Telecom operators expect internet calling and messaging apps like WhatsApp, Google meet and Telegram to comply with rules in the same manner as all service providers do.

[Read more](#)



In-depth: Will India's bet on 5G, 6G- driven digital twins pay off?

DoT digital twin-focused initiative is likely to provide a fillip to Indian telecom operators fifth-generation or monetisation efforts and enable industries to leap into the industry 4.0 era.

[Read more](#)



TRAI orders telcos to disconnect all unregistered telemarketers making spam calls

Following exhaustive deliberations and Open House Discussions (OHDs) on spam or unsolicited commercial communication and SMSs, TRAI directed telcos to disconnect all telecom resources of unregistered telemarketers found making spam calls.

[Read more](#)



DoT defers allocation in 6 GHz spectrum band

The tussle over the 6 GHz spectrum band between the telecom operators and technology firms has led the DoT to delay its allocation to either.

[Read more](#)



COAI Events

ET Telecom Open RAN Summit

ET Telecom conducted Tech Series 2024 - on Open RAN bringing technology heads, industry officials to discuss the technology and telecom industry's shift to Open RAN. India's telecom industry is betting big on Open Radio Access Network - O RAN as they look to lower network deployment costs with 5G. The objective of the event was to have an interoperability standard for RAN elements such as non-proprietary white box hardware and software from different vendors, making it possible for vendors across to come together and fast forward technology adoption. Telecom carriers worldwide are tilting to open architecture to increase network efficiency and save cost.





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