



COAI

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I-DIGEST

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LT. GEN DR. SP KOCHHAR (RETD.)

Director General, COAI

From DG's Desk

India's first OTT platform was launched by Reliance Entertainment in 2008. Since then, the country has witnessed a surge in the number of operational OTT platforms, now exceeding 40. With the continuous improvement in Internet speed and coverage, these OTT platforms are not only leveraging the advancements of technology introduced by the telecom industry, but also, in some ways undermining the core purpose of technological progress. These OTT platforms consume a substantial portion of the bandwidth, keeping young consumers engrossed in content consumption often at the cost of engaging in more productive activities, which could otherwise contribute to the country's overall development.

OTT platforms have become the hallmark of the Digital era with around 46 providers of OTT in India streaming media over the Internet. They are exploiting the telecom networks to earn revenue and profits both from advertising and subscription fees. On the other hand, the telecom sector, being one of the most heavily taxed industries with nearly 30% of revenues contributed in taxes and levies, faces the challenge of generating required funds without passing the burden onto end users, as doing so would compromise the goal of affording digital access for all. So, OTT platforms should contribute their fair share to the TSPs in accordance to the amount of traffic they generate over the networks. At the same time, we also support the growth of startups, MSMEs and smaller indigenous OTT players. These smaller players with relatively low usage may not need to bear this cost. As we venture into next generation technologies like 5G Advanced and 6G where more bandwidth-heavy applications are expected to emerge further straining the network capacity, responsible contributions from all stakeholders are essential to ensure sustainability and continued advancement of India's digital future. When OTTs contribute fair share payments to TSPs, it is the consumers who will ultimately benefit. Such investments will improve the quality and reach of connectivity, enabling content providers to deliver their offerings more effectively, especially in underserved areas.

Moving to the northeastern states, there is a significant progressive growth in telecom infrastructure that will drive social, economic and digital progress in the region. The telecom industry is confident that if implemented in letter and spirit, these recommendations will provide further impetus to the proliferation of telecom and broadband services in the northeastern region of the country. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has recommended that electricity be provided to telecom sites as a priority and at industrial tariff rates. These constant measures would enable faster and more economic operations, eventually benefiting both the sector and consumer alike.

On a closing note, the government's focus on green technology is pivotal to the adoption of sustainable telecom



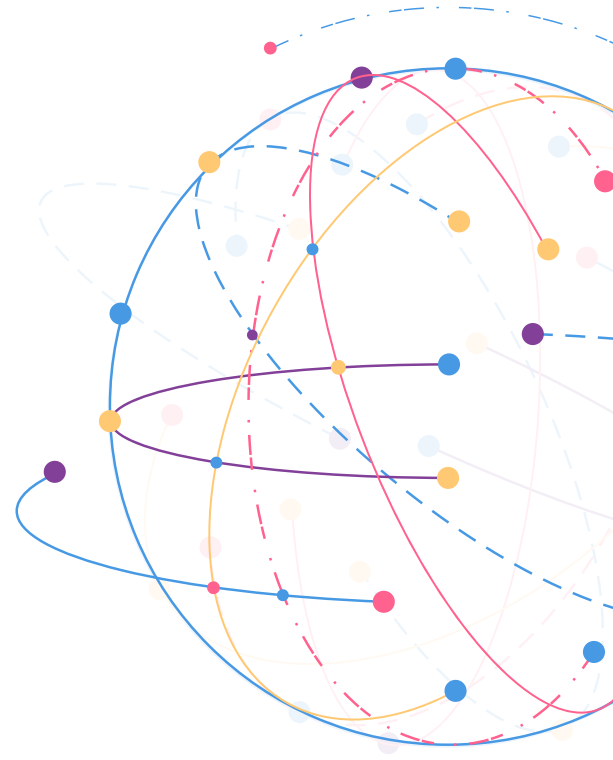
networks. As the telecom sector expands to meet growing connectivity needs, energy consumption also increases. Therefore, integrating greener technologies, such as fuel cells and hydrogen cells, into telecom infrastructure is essential. These green telecom networks not only support the industry's future growth but also align with global sustainability objectives. By adopting such innovations, the telecom industry can contribute to a more sustainable future, benefiting both the environment and the broader economy.

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



COAI

Latest Updates:



Draft Temporary Suspension of Telecommunication Service Rules, 2024

We submitted our response to the Draft rules to DoT on 30.09.2024. We had submitted that these rules are critical, and DoT should hold another round of Consultation with the stakeholders.

Draft Digital Communications Policy for the next five years – NTIPRIT

We submitted our response to NTIPRIT on 11.09.2024 suggesting various reforms which are needed to be taken by the Government to build a resilient and inclusive digital communication ecosystem that drives economic growth and innovation. A meeting with NTIPRIT was held on 24.09.2024 to discuss the same.

TRAI Draft Telecom Tariff Order (Seventieth Amendment) – PM-WANI

The comments on the draft TTO were submitted with TRAI on 06.09.2024 and Counter Comments on 13.09.2024. We submitted that due to low and affordable data tariffs and better data speeds provided by TSPs, the public Wi-Fi has lost its relevance. We further submitted that the rates at which PDOs are provided connection should not be at par with the rates at which retail FTTH is provided.

Registration of M2MSP on Saral Sanchar Portal

We submitted a letter to DoT informing that majority of the M2MSPs have registered themselves on the Saral Sanchar portal. However, few M2MSPs still have to register themselves on the portal. Hence, we have requested DoT vide our letter submitted on 24.09.2024 for extension of timeline for their registration.

Submission to Deputy Chief Minister, Karnataka

A submission was made to Deputy Chief Minister, Karnataka on 12.09.2024, requesting for an in-person industry meeting. The industry has been facing multiple challenges since long time which are adversely impacting the growth of telecom infrastructure in the state. Industry main concerns are delay/non-issuance of

necessary RoW permissions, coercive actions/disruption of existing laid optical fiber cables, levying of property Tax on Towers by civic agencies etc.

Submission to Chief Commissioner, Bengaluru Municipal Corporation (BBMP)

Letter to Chief Commissioner, BBMP, was submitted on 24.09.2024 requesting to reconsider the tax assessment, exempt telecom towers from property tax, in alignment with the applicable provisions of the Telecom Act.

Reminder letter written to Chairman, Electricity Regulatory Commission, Kerala and Rajasthan

A reminder letter submitted to respective Chairman, of ERC Kerala on 12.09.2024 and of ERC Rajasthan on 16.09.2024, reiterating industry request of state adopting The Electricity (Promoting Renewable Energy Through Green Energy Open Access) (Second Amendment) Rules 2023, issued by Ministry of Power. It was cited that 14 states and UTs have already adopted these amendments.

Reminder letter is written to Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (JERC)

A reminder letter is written to Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (JERC), for the state of Goa and the Union Territory of Puducherry on 16.09.2024, request adoption of The Electricity (Promoting Renewable Energy Through Green Energy Open Access) (Second Amendment) Rules 2023, issued by Ministry of Power, which will facilitate the industry imbibing Green Energy Open Access.

Letter to Chairman, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB)

A Letter was submitted to Chairman, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board on 16.09.2024, requesting for an in-person meeting with Industry. The industry wishes to apprise the Board about the challenges in fulfilling the MPCB directions for transition of the existing DG sets, especially considering the criticality of the services provided by this industry.

Submission to Chief Secretary, Government of Rajasthan

A submission was made to Chief Secretary, Govt of Rajasthan on 06.09.2024 as follow up, on the support requested during 11th SBC Meeting, which was attended by COAI in-person. We detailed out the support required on issues related to high charges notified by Krishi Upaj Mandi, regularization and permission for telecom infrastructure in the state, high restoration rates post deployment of OFCs, coercive action(s) by state Revenue Department, facilitating deployment of telecom infrastructure by making available reasonable rates of common ducts, review of the additional charges being levied for multicable on poles, faster refund of security deposits and the industry's energy related issues etc.

DO letter to new Chief Secretaries of Bihar, Delhi, Kerala and West Bengal

Congratulatory DO letter(s) were written to the new Chief Secretary taking charge in the state of Bihar, Delhi, Kerala and West Bengal.

State Broadband Committee (SBC) meeting of Andhra Pradesh

The 6th SBC of Andhra Pradesh was convened on 24.09.2024. The meeting was chaired by Chief Secretary and was attended by state level officials and DoT LSA. Industry issues about forest approvals, security deposits refund delays etc. were highlighted by COAI.

Compliance to DG set norms under the directions issued by Commission for Air Quality Management for NCR (CAQM)

A meeting was held on 28.08.2024 under the Chairmanship, Member Secretary, CAQM, which was attended by members and COAI. The industry shared various challenges currently being faced for complying the Direction no. 76 of the Commission. The industry requested for support on specific issues related to Piped Natural Gas availability and delayed provisioning of new connections. Details shared by members were subsequently shared with the Commission.

A reminder submission to Chairman Central Electricity Authority (CEA) on Metering Regulations

A reminder submission was made on 10.09.2024 to Chairman, CEA regarding early notification of metering regulations for LT consumers connected on less than 11 KV voltage. This important support will enable the industry to adopt the Green Energy in actual way on-ground and contribute in nation's commitment on Carbon emission.

COAI Submission to Chief Secretary Jharkhand on Pole charges

A submission was made to Chief Secretary, Jharkhand on 09.09.2024 regarding exorbitant charges for installation of pole by Dhanbad Municipal Corporation (DMC).

State Broadband Committee (SBC) meeting of Jharkhand

The SBC Meeting of Jharkhand State was held under the

chairmanship of CS on 24.09.2024. COAI highlighted the industry issue(s) of High pole charges by Jharkhand Vidyut Bitran Nigam Ltd and Dhanbad Municipal Corporation.

State Broadband Committee (SBC) meeting of Gujarat

Gujarat SBC meeting was held under the chairmanship of the state Chief Secretary on 05.09.2024. Various industry challenges were highlighted by COAI, including regularisation issues in areas under Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation, state RoW Policy's implementation issues and Electricity related support.

Issuance of amendment to Gujarat Telecom Infrastructure Policy, 2022

The Government of Gujarat on 30.08.2024 has issued an amendment to Gujarat Telecom Infrastructure Policy, 2022. The amendments are partially aligned with the amended Indian Telegraph RoW Rules, 2016. COAI highlighted the variance during the SBC meeting.

Submission to Himachal Pradesh Draft Green Energy Open Access (GEOA) regulations

COAI submission made to Himachal Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission (HPERC) on 02.09.2024, as a response to the draft Himachal Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission (Terms and Conditions for Green Energy Open Access and Banking) Regulations, 2024. Industry requested HPERC for implementation of GEOA Rules, 2023, issued by Ministry of Power on 23rd May 2023.

COAI Reminder submission to Haryana Electricity Regulatory Commission (HERC) on GEOA Regulations

A COAI reminder letter was submitted on 13.09.2024 to the Haryana Electricity Regulatory Commission (HERC) regarding adoption of GEOA Rules in the State of Haryana.

COAI Submission to CS Uttarakhand on Transformer Capacity Augmentation Charges

A submission was made to Chief Secretary, Uttarakhand on 05.09.2024, requesting for amendment in Uttarakhand Electricity Regulatory Commission's regulations on Transformer Capacity Augmentation Charges.

COAI submission to Ministry of Environment Forests & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) on Forest proposals

A submission was made to Director General (MoEFCC) on 13.09.2024, requesting for simplification of processing of RoW proposals of OFC laying in Forest Area.

Meeting on Punjab RoW issues

A meeting was held on 18.09.2024 under the chairmanship of Principal Secretary, Department of Industries and Commerce, Government of Punjab, to review industry issues relating to prevalent Telecom Policy of the state.

EMF Awareness session held by Northeastern LSA

To debunk the myths around Electromagnetic Exposure

from Mobile Towers and to empower the officials of various government departments including IT Department, Police Department, Municipalities, NGOs etc. of Northeastern States, the Northeast LSA, DoT organized an "Awareness Programme on EMF Exposure" (in Hybrid Mode), which had the presence of medical expert, on 17.09.2024. COAI supported with logistics.

Response to query raised by Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA)

COAI responded on 26.09.2024 to the queries raised by ASDMA, post earlier submission made by us, requesting the Authority to withdraw the mandate of keeping stock of CoW.

Letter to DoT on the revision of SOP in respect of CDRs summoned by LEAs

COAI submitted a letter on 24.09.2024 to DoT on the Implementation of certain provisions of the Telecommunication Act, 2023 and also the repeal of Indian Evidence Act and Criminal procedure Code by Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam and Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Adhinyam, respectively and also requesting for the revision of SOP in respect of CDRs summoned by the LEAs

Letter to TRAI on Whitelisting on URLs

COAI submitted to letter to TRAI on 13.09.2024 on the Industry Approach regarding the implementation of Whitelisting of APKs/URLs/Callback numbers requesting TRAI to support the implementation by issuing a Press Release, highlighting the above process being adopted by the industry.

Draft Guidelines for the Prevention & Regulation of Unsolicited and Unwarranted Business Communication 2024

COAI submitted the inputs on the suggestions received by DoCA from stakeholders on the said Draft Guidelines on 30.08.2024

Inputs/suggestions on the matter "Access to mobile number related identifiers database to Banks and LEAs

This is with reference to the meeting held on 29.08.2024 at CEIB on the agenda "Access to mobile number related identifiers database to Banks and LEAs. In this regard, COAI submitted its inputs/ suggestions on the above matter on 05.09.2024.

Urgent need to adapt the EMF TSTP with 5G technology and its alignment with ICNIRP 2020 guidelines

This is with reference to the COAI submitted earlier letter on the request for review of the current Indian EMF Norms and Testing Methodology in line with WHO-recommended ICNIRP 2020 guidelines. In this regard, COAI submitted a letter to DoT on 12.09.2024 reiterating Industry's request for ICNIRP 2020 adoption.

COAI submission on recent Media Reports regarding expansion of trials of Direct to Mobile (D2M) Services in India

This is with reference to recent media reports about the decision, taken in an inter-ministerial consultation, regarding expansion of trials of Direct to Mobile (D2M) Services beyond 19 cities into tier-II and tier-III cities. In this regard, COAI submitted a letter to MIB dated 13.09.2024 advocating that such services should only be deployed following spectrum assignment through auctions.

COAI Inputs to National Study Group-5 on DRAFT NEW REPORT ITU-R M [IMT-2030TECH PERF REQ]

This is in reference to the 7th meeting of the National Study Group-5 (NSG-5) which was held on 16.09.2024. In this regard, COAI observations pertaining to the aspect of submission of TPR values as an India submission to the ITU-R#47 meeting of WP5D was submitted on 20.09.2024.

Suggestions and issues in MRO module of Saral Sanchar Portal

This is with reference to the introduction of online MRO module in Saral Sanchar Portal to automate the end-to-end process for complying to the Minimum Roll Out obligations (MRO), in accordance with the respective Notice Inviting Application (NIA) for auctioned spectrum. In this regard, COAI submitted a letter to DoT on 21.09.2024 seeking necessary amendments in the portal for the industry to comply to the MRO compliance norms within the timelines.

Letter to DoT on Communication Security (ComSec)

COAI submitted a brief summary on 06.09.2024 of the meeting based on the 30.08.2024 meeting with Member(S) and higher officials outlining our concerns and status on the issues.

Letter to DoT on PPP-MI order 2017:

COAI submitted industry inputs on the PPP-MI order 2017 on 27.09.2024 stating our concerns towards the notification issued by DoT.

Letter to TEC requesting for extension on ILAC and discontinuation of MTCTE certificate

COAI submitted a letter to TEC requesting for ILAC extension for six month and discontinuation of MTCTE certificate.



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News Wires:

Enforce traceability, user privacy norms on internet calling and messaging app: COAI

The government should enforce traceability and user privacy rules on WhatsApp, Telegram, Google Meet as well as other calling and messaging apps along with telecom operators as such platforms provide similar services using internet network

[Read more](#)



Economical costs to make 5G RedCap "Killer use case" in India: Industry

DG COAI said that the market forces will decide for themselves which technology they should adopt. However, consider the price sensitiveness of India, it is necessary to "economise the prices of assets" and other components. [Read more](#)



Telcos want PM- Wani Public Hotspots programme to be disbanded

The roll-out of Public Wi-Fi hotspots is moving at a slow pace, with fall in average data usage per Wi-Fi hotspots to a few MBs, even as telcos focus on expansion of wireless internet services in rural areas.

[Read more](#)



Telecom sector must get a fair share

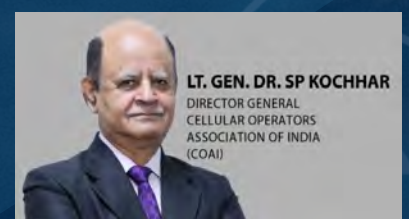
The Indian telecom industry has found itself at the centre of a heated debate on fair-share contributions from LTG platforms to TSPs.

[Read more](#)



Revolutionizing healthcare via telecom- Through telemedicine and beyond

The telecom industry has always been at the forefront of the technological advancements. From the early days of 2G and 3G and to more recent 4G, each generation has brought about a significant shift in the way we communicate, work and live. [Read more](#)



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COAI

News Wires:

A telecom puzzle: Data boom beyond metro cities

As data usage rises in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, telecom companies wrestle with infrastructure and pricing challenges. [Read more](#)



Prasar Bharti opposes allotment of broadcasting spectrum to telcos

Prasar Bharti has raised objections for the broadcasting spectrum in the sub-600 MHz band to be allocated to telecom services. This comes at a time when the DoT is working to update the national frequency allocation plan (NFAP). [Read more](#)





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