



**COAI**

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# I-DIGEST

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## LT. GEN DR. SP KOCHHAR (RETD.)

### Director General, COAI

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#### From DG's Desk

July marked significant developments in India's digital communications sector — not only as we celebrated 30 years since the first mobile call was made in the country, but also as we addressed key structural and regulatory challenges that define the sector's next phase of evolution.

COAI highlighted two critical policy imperatives this month. First, in light of the growing reliance on over-the-top (OTT) communication services, we reiterated our call for a unified regulatory framework that ensures "Same Service, Same Rules". The current regulatory gap allows OTT communication providers to offer voice and messaging services without being subject to the same compliance, traceability or lawful interception mandates that licensed telecom operators must adhere to. This inconsistency not only creates an uneven playing field but also raises substantial concerns around consumer safety, national security and privacy. The recent interception of terrorist activity in Pahalgam using satellite communication, underlines the criticality of secure and regulated communication systems. We firmly believe that OTT services must be brought under the ambit of the Indian Telecommunications Act, 2023, through a dedicated authorization regime to maintain consistency, ensure fairness and protect public interest.

COAI also welcomed the successful implementation of suffixes to SMS headers as mandated by the TCCPR 2025 amendment. All telecom operators have implemented the structured use of identifiers such as 'P' for promotional, 'S' for service, 'T' for transactional and 'G' for government messages. This initiative significantly enhances transparency, consumer trust and compliance, while reducing spam and fraudulent communications. However, we cautioned that a large portion of spam and scam traffic is now shifting to unregulated OTT channels, further underscoring the need for a unified consent and regulatory framework that spans all communication platforms.

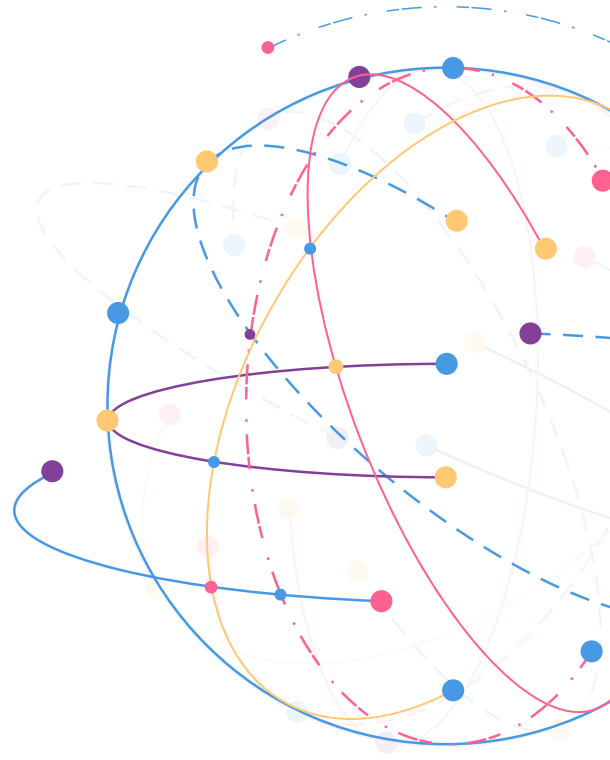
The draft National Telecom Policy 2025, currently open for public consultation, outlines a bold vision to achieve universal 4G coverage, deliver broadband connectivity to 100 million homes and generate over one million new jobs. As COAI prepares its formal recommendations, our focus will be on ensuring that the policy framework is pragmatic, investment-friendly and conducive to sustainable sectoral growth. As the apex industry association, we remain steadfast in our commitment to working collaboratively with the government to translate this ambitious roadmap into tangible outcomes for the industry and the nation.

As India charts its course towards 6G leadership and deeper rural connectivity, COAI will continue to advocate for a secure, fair and innovation-driven ecosystem that benefits all stakeholders. Our mission is clear: to strengthen India's digital frontiers and ensure that telecom remains a resilient pillar of our nation's growth.



# COAI

## Latest Updates:



### **State Broadband Committee (SBC) meeting of Rajasthan**

The 14th SBC meeting of Rajasthan got held on 21.07.2025, chaired by the State's Chief Secretary. Industry issues, like the absence of proper implementation of Right of Way (RoW) Rules 2024 and portal functioning, non-existent facilitation and on-ground support from Police for safety and security of Telecom Infrastructure and for the staff engaged in installation and operation of the communication network were highlighted. A formal industry submission has also been made.

### **State Broadband Committee (SBC) meeting of Andhra Pradesh**

The 8th SBC meeting of Andhra Pradesh was held on 22.07.2025, chaired by the Chief Secretary of the State. COAI raised industry issues like acceptance of Right of Way (RoW) Rules 2024 and portal implementation by Local Authorities, including but not limited to State departments of R&B, PRED, PRRD, CDMA & DTCP. A post SBC meeting submission has also been made, listing all major industry concerns, to the Chief Secretary.

### **Submission to Chief Secretary, Government of Telangana**

A letter was written to Chief Secretary, Government of Telangana on 01.07.2025, requesting support for alignment of State practices with the Right of Way Rules 2024, highlighting that it will enable infrastructure expansion in the State.

### **Letter to Chief Commissioner, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), Karnataka**

A submission was made to the Chief Commissioner, BBMP on 02.07.2025, requesting for streamlining the process for granting permission for RoW related applications, especially since the portal of the Palike (BBMP) is not being integrated. It was also requested for early resumption of RoW permissions and integration of the BBMP portal with the Central Right of Way (RoW) Rules.

### **Letter to Special Chief Secretary, Government of Telangana**

Submission was made to Special Chief Secretary, Government of Telangana on 04.07.2025, requesting intervention from his office to help in enhancement of Telecom infrastructure in the State, through support on (i) Uniform implementation of RoW Rules 2024 across the State, (ii) Reducing the monsoon ban period, and (iii) Inclusion of telecom under the IT sector in the State IT Policy. COAI also requested for suitable time for an in-person meeting along with members to share details on a possible collaborative approach to support telecom infrastructure growth.

### **Letter to Principal Secretary (Public Works Department), Government of Madhya Pradesh**

Submission was made to Principal Secretary (Public Works Department, PWD), Government of Madhya Pradesh on 15.07.2025, requesting for revision and rationalization of the PWD rates in line with actual telecom duct usage and implementation of the provisions of the RoW Rules. Further, the industry has requested for inclusion of HDD methodology in the approved deployment techniques and appropriate option(s) in financial instrument requirements and removal of supervision charges.

### **Letter to Chief Secretary, Tamil Nadu**

A letter was written to Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu on 17.07.2025, regarding repeated and deliberate Fiber Cuts in some important locations in certain districts. COAI requested to investigate into these incidents and support the industry by deploying additional security for monitoring high-risk fibre corridors. The industry requested facilitation with regard to coordination with local law enforcement agencies to deter such activities.

### **Uttarakhand State Broadband Committee (SBC) meeting**

The SBC meeting of Uttarakhand was conducted on 10.07.2025, under the chairmanship of the Chief

Secretary. Challenges related to implementation of RoW Rules, 2024 and portal integration issues were highlighted by COAI during the meeting.

#### **Alignment of DISCOMs pole Charges in Delhi**

Department of Power, Government of Delhi issued an order dated 24.06.2025, citing the Urban Development Department order duly approved by the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, which conveys that the Telecommunications RoW Rules, 2024, must be mandatory followed from 01.01.2025, without going through adoption process. All the DISCOMs in Delhi were directed to comply with the provisions of Right of Way (RoW), 2024, in true letter and spirit.

#### **Submission to Union Minister of Power on Energy Related Matters**

A submission was made to Hon'ble Union Minister of Power on 01.07.2025, highlighting the telecom industry's concerns and the support desired on power related matters like Industrial tariff, Smart Meters, GEOA implementation, among others.

#### **Submissions to Chairman, Uttar Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission (UPERC)**

A submission was made on 02.07.2025, to Chairman (UPERC) regarding Non-Alignment of Overground Infrastructure Charges, i.e., pole leasing charges by Private DISCOMs in the State of Uttar Pradesh. Another submission was made on 11.07.2025, that there should be no hike in electricity tariff for the period of FY 25-26.

#### **Submission and meeting with Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC) to direct DISCOMs on pole charges alignment**

A submission was made on 14.07.2025, to the Chairman (DERC) to direct DISCOMs to align pole leasing charges. Subsequently, a meeting was held with Secretary, DERC on pole leasing charges alignment on 23.07.2025, to share industry concerns and seek support on the matter.

#### **Submission made to DISCOMs of Delhi to align pole charges**

A submission was made to DISCOMs of Delhi on 15.07.2025, to align pole charges with the RoW Rules, 2024.

#### **Notification of Building Byelaws**

The Urban & Housing Department, Government of Bihar issued an "Addendum to Building Byelaws" on 18.06.2025, facilitating provisions for In-building Solutions in the State of Bihar.

#### **Notification of Right of Way Rules 2024 by State of Kerala**

Kerala State's Electronics and Information Technology department, vide their order dated 17.07.2025, notified adoption of the RoW Rules, 2024, under the Telecom Act, 2023, across the State. The same shall be applicable to permissions for Right of Way for telecom network in the State.

#### **Notification of Right of Way Rules, 2024 by Mizoram**

The Government of Mizoram notified the Right of Rules,

2024, under the Telecom Act, 2023, vide a notification dated 23.07.2025, superseding the State's previous Right of Way policy.

#### **Income Tax Bill, 2025**

The Draft Income Tax Bill, 2025 has been tabled in the Parliament. Discussions are ongoing for the next steps regarding the Income Tax Rules and Forms attached in the bill.

#### **Meeting on IMS**

A meeting was held with SVP (Services) in GST-N on 31.07.2025, to discuss issues pertaining to IMS and ITC Accumulation.

#### **Industry's submission on consolidated Self-Certification for 5G-Relaxed sites as per new TSTP issued by TEC**

COAI submitted a letter to DoT on 01.07.2025, requesting to expedite the consideration of approval of the site-wise certification approach for the identified 5G Relaxed sites in the NEP portal.

#### **Submission of incremental SDR data for all numbers**

COAI submitted a letter to DoT on 02.07.2025, citing operational challenges on the instructions by DoT to mandate TSPs to submit incremental SDRs.

#### **TRAI CP on Assignment of Microwave Spectrum in 6 GHz (lower), 7 GHz, 13 GHz, 15 GHz, 18 GHz, 21 GHz Bands, E-Band and V-Band**

COAI submitted its comments and counter comments on the TRAI CP on Microwave spectrum on 02.07.2025 and 16.07.2025, respectively.

#### **Request for reconsideration of DoT's OM on Direct spectrum allocation for CNPN based services**

COAI submitted a letter to DoT on 21.07.2025, requesting to reconsider its decision to conduct demand survey to assess the demand for the direct assignment of spectrum to CNPNs.

#### **Letter to DoT on Concerns Regarding D.O. issued to State Government on Utilization of BSNL Resources**

COAI submitted a letter to DoT on 27.06.2025, requesting DoT to ensure that all licensed TSPs, including private operators, are extended equal opportunity to offer their services to State Government departments and agencies based on merit and performance.

#### **TRAI Consultation Paper on the Regulatory Framework for the Sale of Foreign Telecom Service Providers' SIM/eSIM Cards for the use in M2M/IoT Devices meant for Export purposes**

TRAI issued the CP on 04.07.2025, and the response to the same is to be submitted by 01.08.2025. COAI is working with members on the same.





# COAI

## News Wires:

### Telcos roll out suffix on SMS headers to identify spam, share concern over gaps in OTTs

All telecom service providers (TSPs) have implemented the promotional ('P'), service-related ('S'), transactional ('T') and government ('G') communications suffix system on SMS headers, as mandated by the Telecom Commercial Communication Customer Preference Regulations (TCCCPR) vide its Amendment to the TCCCP Regulation dated 12th February 2025," COAI Director General, SP Kochhar said in a statement. [Read more](#)



### COAI reappoints Abhijit Kishore as Chairperson, Rahul Vatts as Vice Chairperson

COAI, the industry body for the digital communications sector in the country, said on Wednesday that Abhijit Kishore, Chief Operating Officer, Vodafone Idea Ltd, will once again hold the position of Chairperson, while Rahul Vatts, Chief Regulatory Officer, Bharti Airtel, will be the Vice Chairperson. [Read more](#)



### 30 Years of 1st Mobile Phone Call in India

Lt. Gen. Dr. S.P. Kochhar, Director General, Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI), said, "Relentless efforts from the government and the industry have ensured the reach of digital connectivity, even to villages that once remained off the digital grid. India's fastest rollout of 5G in the world has been nothing short of transformative. Today, over 85 per cent of India's population and over 99 per cent of the districts in India enjoy access to 5G services, powering innovations from remote education to telemedicine and smart agriculture." [Read more](#)



### Bring OTT communication services under regulatory framework

In the statement titled 'Strengthening India's digital frontiers', COAI noted that it is crucial for law enforcement agencies to have timely access to communication data. The weakest link in the current communications security chain lies in Over-The-Top (OTT) communication services, which provide voice and messaging capabilities similar to traditional telecom networks but largely escape regulatory oversight," SP Kochhar, Director General of COAI, said.

[Read more](#)





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