



COAI

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I-DIGEST

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LT. GEN DR. SP KOCHHAR (RETD.)

Director General, COAI

From DG's Desk

As we close September 2025, India's telecommunications landscape continues to witness unprecedented transformation, with technological self-reliance and digital infrastructure taking centre stage in our nation's growth narrative. At COAI, our commitment remains steadfast in fostering an ecosystem that not only drives innovation but also ensures sustainable progress for the industry and the country at large.

The global recognition of India's digital momentum gained further validation when GSMA Asia Pacific head, Julian Gorman, highlighted that India's digital economy is growing at a rapid pace - three to four times faster than the national economy. With projections indicating that the digital economy will contribute approximately 20 percent of India's total economic output, the telecom sector's role as the backbone of this transformation cannot be overstated. This accelerated growth trajectory has attracted worldwide attention and positioned India as a potential inclusive digital superpower.

However, our industry continues to navigate complex regulatory challenges, particularly around spectrum management and pricing policies. The Department of Telecommunications' review of TRAI's recommendations on satellite internet spectrum pricing has raised important questions about creating a level playing field between terrestrial and satellite communication services. DoT's concerns regarding TRAI's proposed additional charge of Rs 500 per year for urban subscribers highlight the ongoing need for balanced regulatory frameworks that promote innovation while ensuring fair competition.

Quality of Service remains a paramount concern, with DoT seeking industry feedback on state-wise service quality monitoring. The consultation recognizes the distinct geographical and operational challenges across different regions, emphasizing the need for localized approaches to service delivery. COAI's consistent advocacy for practical and implementable regulatory frameworks continues to be crucial as these discussions evolve.

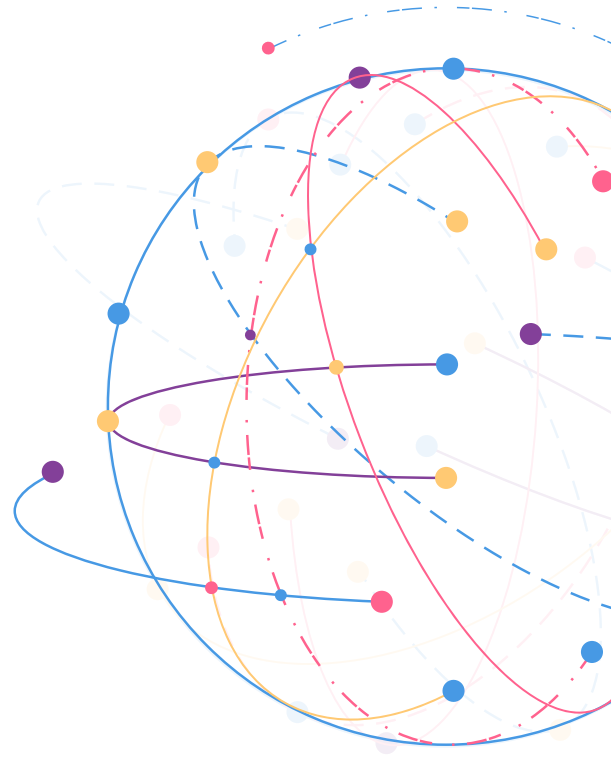
Cybersecurity has emerged as a critical focus area, with industry experts emphasizing the growing complexity of threats targeting telecommunications infrastructure. The evolving nature of nation-state sponsored cyber threats and advanced persistent attacks underscores the need for comprehensive security frameworks that go beyond traditional perimeter defences. The implementation of security-first approaches and continuous monitoring capabilities will be essential for maintaining trust in our digital ecosystem.

The upcoming India Mobile Congress represents another opportunity to showcase India's telecom manufacturing capabilities and strengthen international partnerships. The platform will align perfectly with our vision of transforming India from a service-oriented market to a production and innovation hub. COAI recognizes that the path ahead requires continued collaboration between industry and government to address emerging challenges while capitalizing on unprecedented opportunities.



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Latest Updates:



Regarding Implementation of the Legal Metrology (Indian Standard Time) Rules, 2025

a) COAI submitted a letter to DoT on 02.09.2025 highlighting industry submissions and requests regarding the implementation of the Legal Metrology (Indian Standard Time) Rules, 2025.

b) In this letter, we highlighted the technical, operational, and financial implications for the telecom industry.

Representation on Inclusion of Critical Issues in ToR for Technical Evaluation of D2M by Prasar Bharati

a) COAI submitted a letter to DoT on 18.09.2025 regarding the inclusion of critical issues in the ToR for technical evaluation of D2M by Prasar Bharati.

b) Through this letter, we requested DoT to kindly consider the following:

- The ToR for technical evaluation being finalized by Prasar Bharati should comprehensively cover all critical aspects in a transparent and inclusive manner.
- A stakeholder consultation under the aegis of DoT/TRAI should be conducted, involving all stakeholders, including telecom operators, device manufacturers, and content providers.
- Standards, good practices, and KPIs required for D2M performance evaluation, along with recommendations, should be developed by the TEC through an open consultative process.

Request for Deposition of Oral Evidence by Nodal Officers of TSPs through Video Conferencing

COAI submitted a letter to the DGP, Police, Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, on 27.09.2025, requesting that Nodal Officers of TSPs be permitted to depose oral evidence through video conferencing.

Stakeholders Meeting by South Central Railway for New Railway Line – Vikarabad to Krishna

An online meeting was organized by Railway Authorities on 18.09.2025 with key stakeholders to discuss the preparation of the Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the proposed new railway line between Vikarabad and Krishna. The line passes through Vikarabad and Narayanpet districts. Members and COAI attended the meeting.

Submission to Chairman, Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC)

A submission was made to the Chairman, KERC, on 18.09.2025, requesting issuance of a clarificatory circular directing DISCOMs to provide electricity connections to telecom towers

without insisting on occupancy/completion certificates for buildings. It was highlighted that such clarification will remove regulatory ambiguity, uphold statutory compliance, and ensure uninterrupted telecom services for the public.

Internal Meeting with Members in Karnataka on Network Deployment Challenges

An internal meeting was held on 19.09.2025 to discuss industry concerns related to damage caused to telecom infrastructure by local government authorities. Other important issues discussed included selective permissions by BBMP (the Municipal Corporation of Bengaluru), non-migration of its portal to the common platform. Further, deliberation happened on non-acceptability of acknowledgments issued from the Rural Development & Panchayat Raj (RDPR) Department's portal by the Panchayat Development Officer (PDO), and pending of nominations of nodal officers at the district level.

Submission to Additional Chief Secretary, Rural Development & Panchayat Raj Department (RDPR), Government of Karnataka

A submission was made on 25.09.2025 requesting the RDPR Department to circulate the proposed changes in Right of Way (RoW) charges among all relevant stakeholders, inviting for comments and suggestions within a reasonable timeframe. It was also requested that a joint consultation meeting with stakeholders be convened to deliberate on the key provisions.

Submissions to State Electricity Regulatory Commissions Requesting Industrial Tariff

Submissions were made to the Electricity Regulatory Commissions of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Ladakh, Lakshadweep, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Puducherry, Rajasthan, Telangana, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal during the month. The submissions reiterated the industry's request to extend electricity to the telecom sector under the Industrial Tariff category.

State Broadband Committee (SBC) Meeting of Assam

The 14th SBC meeting of Assam was held on 16.09.2025 under the chairmanship of the Principal Secretary, IT. COAI highlighted issues regarding the implementation of RoW Rules, as offline applications are still being accepted by the PWD.

State Broadband Committee (SBC) Meeting of Meghalaya

The SBC meeting of Meghalaya was held on 25.09.2025 under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary. COAI raised concerns

about the requirement for additional RoW permission from village headmen and reiterated the industry's request for extending electricity to Telecom under industrial tariff category.

Submission to Chandigarh Administration on Mobile Tower Regularization

A submission was made on 30.08.2025 to the Chief Secretary, Chandigarh, requesting support for the regularization of mobile towers in the Union Territory.

Bihar Right of Way Portal Facility

All the departments in Bihar, responsible for issuing RoW permissions, have now made the online application facility available on the Central e-Services portal of the DoT.

Chandigarh Broadband Committee Meeting

The Chandigarh Broadband Committee meeting was held on 03.09.2025 under the chairmanship of the officiating Chief Secretary, where COAI highlighted key issues concerning its members.

Industry Meeting with Ministry of Power

An industry meeting was convened on 04.09.2025 with the Joint Secretary (Distribution), Ministry of Power, to discuss electricity-related matters.

Industry Meeting with Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas

An industry meeting was held on 26.09.2025 with the Deputy Director General (E&S), Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, to discuss industry concerns—particularly the high charges levied by oil and gas entities for allowing telecom service providers to cross pipelines when laying telecom lines/fiber.

Haryana Right of Way Rules Implementation Challenges

A letter was submitted on 04.09.2025 to the Chief Secretary, Haryana, highlighting challenges in the on-ground implementation of the Right of Way Rules, 2024 in the State.

Delhi Aerial Optical Fiber Cable (OFC) Disruption

A submission was made on 09.09.2025 to the Chief Secretary, Delhi, seeking intervention to stop disruptions to aerial OFC following instances of DISCOMs removing permitted installations.

Gujarat State Broadband Committee (SBC) Meeting

The Gujarat SBC meeting was held on 15.09.2025 under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary, where COAI raised concerns regarding portal functionality, insistence on offline applications by certain authorities, and tower regularization in GIDC areas.

Right of Way Review Meeting with 10 States

A review meeting on RoW issues was held on 22.09.2025 for the States of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, under the chairmanship of the Administrator (DBN), DoT. Representatives from the industry, State Governments, and LSAs participated.

Letter to DoT dated 08.09.2025 regarding clarification of Applicable Gross Revenue (ApGR) definition

COAI submitted that revenues from non-licensed activities such as handset/device sales, OTT, and third-party bundled services should be excluded from AGR, as only licensed telecom activities fall within its scope. Despite DoT's clarification (17.07.2023) and TRAI's recommendations (18.09.2024), such revenues continue to be treated as "ancillary," leading to regulatory overreach and burden on TSPs. We proposed a fair valuation approach for bundled offerings, certified by statutory auditors, ensuring that only licensed components are included in AGR.

Letter to TRAI dated 09.09.2025 requesting redirection of

consumer complaints to the Telecom Consumer Complaints Monitoring System (TCCMS) portal

We requested TRAI to upload all complaints directly to the TCCMS portal rather than forwarding them via email or other channels. As the TCCMS portal, operated by TRAI's CA Division, is already functional, using it would automate processes, reduce duplication, and significantly improve efficiency and timeliness of complaint resolution.

Issuance of Hold Option for Credit Note

Vide notification dated 23.09.2025, GST Network (GSTN) introduced a "hold" option for credit notes on the Invoice Management System (IMS) on the GST portal. Entities can now hold any credit note for up to 60 days. This enhancement is expected to improve operational efficiency for the industry.

Data Centres Policy

COAI flagged concerns regarding the Data Centre Connectivity Framework via a letter dated 05.09.2025 to the Joint Secretary, MeitY.

Key issues raised:

- a) Reiterated industry apprehensions about the existing regulatory structure governing data centre connectivity.
- b) Highlighted that unauthorized deployment of dark fiber networks could lead to security vulnerabilities, regulatory non-compliance, revenue loss, and unfair competition.
- c) Urged the introduction of procedural safeguards to ensure secure, reliable, and compliant connectivity in line with TRAI's recommendations dated 17.02.2025.

TEC Draft Standard for Schema and Taxonomy of an AI Incident Database

The Convergence & Broadcasting (C&B) Division of TEC convened meetings on 22.08.2025 and 02.09.2025 to address member concerns regarding the proposed draft standard. Targeted primarily at broadcasting organizations, the draft is set to be introduced as a new work item under the ITU and discussed within National Working Group 21 (NWG-21).

Regulation on OTT

The Draft Guidelines for the Prevention and Regulation of Unsolicited and Unwarranted Business Communication, 2024, have been withdrawn by the Department of Consumer Affairs. The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) is expected to issue revised guidelines in due course. Meanwhile, industry submissions on enhancing consumer protection against spam and fraudulent communications, in light of recent JCoR recommendations, remain under active deliberation with MeitY, TRAI, and DoT.

Telecommunications (Telecom Cyber Security) Amendment Rules, 2025

COAI's previous submissions on the proposed amendments to the Draft Telecom Cyber Security Rules remain under consideration by DoT ahead of finalization. As reported on 11.09.2025, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs has expressed support for implementing these rules in coordination with banks and NBFCs. Engagement with DoT continues, particularly on the maintenance, operation, and integration of Mobile Number Verification (MNV) platforms by the industry.

CERT-In Cyber Security Comprehensive Audit Policy Guidelines

The industry raised concerns over duplicative compliance requirements under CERT-In's Cyber Security Audit Guidelines and the Draft Telecom Cyber Security Rules, 2024 (and 2025 Amendment). COAI has sought clarity on the scope of "Reasonable Security Practices" and questioned the need for additional vendor audits, citing risks of regulatory overlap and increased compliance burden. An industry-wide draft submission dated 04.08.2025 has been circulated and is under review for member inputs before submission to DoT.



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News Wires:

In response to TRAI's release of revised Quality of Service (QoS) norms for access and broadband services on August 2, COAI issued a statement expressing concern that the new regulations would increase compliance costs for service providers without delivering proportional benefits to consumers. COAI represents private-sector telecom operators Reliance Jio, Vodafone Idea, and Bharti Airtel.

Storyboard 18



Speaking at the COAI Dialogues 2025 in New Delhi, Julian Gorman of GSMA said, "India's digital progress is really attracting more and more of the world's attention. India has already demonstrated its capacity for world-changing innovation at a population scale. Now, as it solidifies its position as a telecom superpower, it can become an inclusive superpower."

ANI News



COAI appealed to the government against TRAI's recommendations and mentioned that TRAI's recommendations are non-transparent, unfair and unjustifiably low.

Financial Express





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