



COAI

ISSUE
JUNE 2024

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CONTENT

3

From DG's Desk

5

COAI Latest Updates

8

News Wires

9

COAI Events



LT. GEN DR. SP KOCHHAR (RETD.)

Director General, COAI

From DG's Desk

This month marks a significant milestone with the newly elected government taking charge in its third term. COAI welcomed the formation of the new government and looks forward to working with it alongside all our stakeholders, to fulfill our nation's aspirations and work towards developing a Viksit Bharat.

In its third term, the government has allocated the Ministry of Communications portfolio to Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia and Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw retained the IT Ministry, besides getting the key Information and Broadcasting portfolio. We look forward to stability, consistency and effectiveness in governance to take the country closer to the vision 2047.

India's telecom industry has made some key developments in the year 2023, which includes nationwide roll out of 5G, historic Telecommunications Act 2023, the unveiling of the Bharat 6G Vision and the promotion of renewable energy through the Green Energy Open Access Initiative. Furthermore, the amendment of the Indian Telegraph Rules 2023 and the launch of the Chakshu application are set to bolster the industry facilitating faster network rollouts and boosting mobile broadband penetration. These initiatives collectively herald a promising future for India's telecommunications industry, positioning it at the forefront of global innovation and growth.

The telecom industry has been demanding 6 GHz radio waves essentially for the expansion of next generation services in the country. In this digital era, the responsible and efficient management of airwaves is more critical than ever, serving as the foundation upon which our interconnected world is built. Efficient spectrum management is essential for India's digital growth and security amidst rising wireless demand and technological advances. Further, there is no denying the fact that the high cost of commercial grid electricity tariffs remains a challenge in meeting the rising power demands to keep telecom towers up and running. Hence, it's high time for the government to rationalize electromagnetic field norms in line with the worldwide standards.

COAI has also highlighted the pressing issue of telecom theft across the country and urged the government to take stringent measures to curb this menace. Such crucial steps need to be taken for the telecom sector to function efficiently, prosper and contribute to the nation's journey towards a 'Digital India'. Ensuring robust infrastructure, sustainable practices and forward-thinking policies will empower the industry to support India's digital transformation and economic growth.



In terms of the Association's events, the Annual General Body Meeting of COAI was held on 11th June 2024, at Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi, wherein the leadership of COAI has been affirmed for the upcoming 2024-25 term. Mr. Abhijit Kishore, Chief Operating Officer, Vodafone Idea Limited, has been appointed as the Chairperson, while Mr. Rahul Vatts, Chief Regulatory Officer (India & South Asia), Bharti Airtel will serve as the Vice Chairperson.

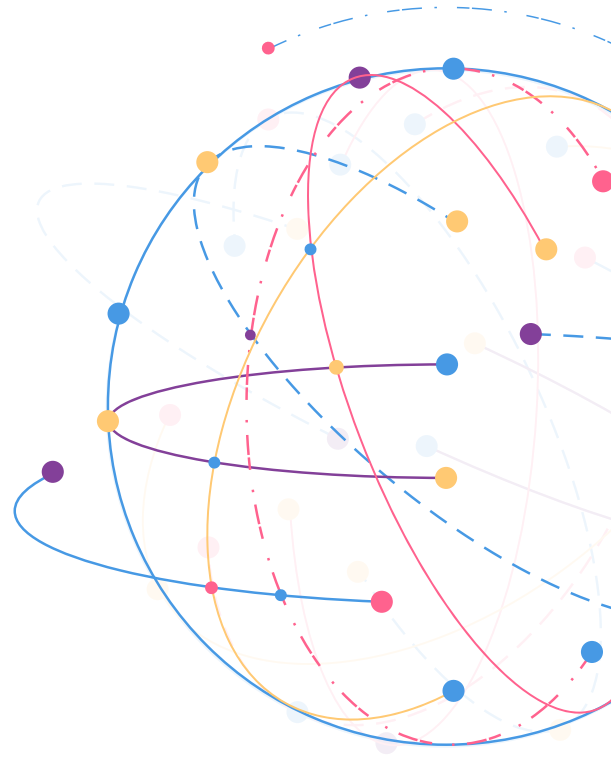
As we move forward, the focus remains on fostering innovation, sustainability and efficiency within the telecom industry and to achieve that it is necessary for the Government and the telcos to work together in unison for the betterment of the sector.

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



COAI

Latest Updates:



Support for acceptance of Evidence of Nodal Officer of Telecom Companies through Video Conference (VC) under Section 65 B of the Indian Evidence Act

COAI submitted letters to MP, Gujarat & Chhattisgarh High court on 05.06.2024, 18.06.2024, 20.06.2024 respectively requesting support to consider allowing Nodal Officers of TSPs to provide evidence in Court Cases through VC (Video Conference) and excuse the requirement of their personal appearances for the same.

Request for Consultation with the Industry during the Formation of Draft Rules under the Indian Telecommunications Act of 2023

COAI submitted a letter to DoT on 14.06.2024 requesting DoT to hold an open consultation (like done during Telecom Bill stage) with our industry members and include their inputs during the various stages of the formation of rules.

Requesting further Extension in the timeline for Submission of EMF Self certificates and abeyance of 5G Site testing

COAI submitted a letter to DoT on 24.06.2024 requesting further extension in the timeline for submission of EMF Self Certificates and abeyance of 5G site testing.

Request for a complete ban on Illegal 6 GHz Wi-Fi CPEs being made available in the Indian market

COAI submitted a letter to DoT on 25.06.2024 requesting DoT to kindly intervene in the matter and take strict measures to put a complete ban on sale of Wi-Fi products operating in the 6 GHz band, whether offline or online through e-commerce websites/platforms, through an appropriate notification to sellers of such products in the country.

TRAI Consultation Paper on Revision of National Numbering Plan

TRAI released the Consultation Paper on 06.06.2024 wherein the last date to submit the response is 04.07.2024. COAI has submitted a letter to TRAI on

27.06.2024 requesting to extend the timeline by 8 weeks in order to respond to the CP.

Study Paper on "Opportunities for AI in Communication Networks"

TEC released the Study Paper as a part of the Annual Action Plan for the year 2024-2025, wherein the last date to submit the response/comments on the same is 05.07.2024. Members to revert on the same with inputs.

Implementation of NSDTS's Trusted Telecom Portal Phase - II

A letter was submitted by COAI to NSCS on 04.06.2024 on the implementation of the NSDTS Trusted Portal Phase -II for Evaluation of Trusted Source and Trusted Products, highlighting key operational and other issues pertaining to NSDTS.

Based on the letter submitted by COAI, NSCS scheduled a meeting on 20.06.24 to discuss all the issues related to NSDTS Certification and also operational issues.

100-day program for the new Government

We submitted inputs for the 100-day program for the new Government wherein we have listed the important issues which are critical to the growth and sustainability of the Telecom Sector.

Letter to TRAI on Flash Calls

We submitted a letter to TRAI informing them about the temporary blocking of international numbers that are found to be generating missed calls to Indian Mobile subscribers.

TRAI Consultation Paper on Critical Services in M2M Sector

On 24.06.2024, TRAI issued a Consultation Paper on the Issues Related to Critical Services in the M2M Sector, and Transfer of ownership of M2M SIMs. The final date for submission of comments and counter comments is 22.07.2024 and 05.08.2024 respectively.

State Broadband Committee Meetings (SBC):

Rajasthan 10th SBC on 24.6.2024: 10th SBC of Rajasthan convened on 24.06.2024. The meeting was chaired by Chief Secretary Mr Sudhansh Pant, IAS along with other state official and DoT. Issues like notifying new RoW policy incorporating all amendments, regular conduction of DLTC meeting, GST related issue, High charges etc were raised by COAI. Post SBC submission shall be given to CS soon.

Puducherry 4th SBC on 25.6.2024: 4th SBC of Puducherry was conducted and Chaired by Chief Secretary Govt of Puducherry. Issues like Pondicherry LCO Issue, OFC Permission kept hold on newly laid roads, Timeline for payment OFC permission, Regarding Permission for new tower, Regarding Regularization of existing Towers, Utilization of Government Building and other issues were raised.

9th SBC of Assam on 24.06.2024: The 9th SBC of Assam was organised on 24.06.2024 under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary of Assam. Issues regarding Amendments to the state Right of Way policy regarding the private property intimation provision were raised.

6th SBC of Odisha on 25.06.2024: The 6th SBC of Odisha was organised on 25.06.2024 under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary of Assam. Issues regarding online permissions to be accorded for Right of Way for BMC region were raised.

SBC Andaman & Nicobar on 12.06.2024: The SBC of Andaman & Nicobar was conducted on 12.06.2024 under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary. Issues regarding permissions for arial OFC and CANI Cable landing station in Neil Island were raised.

J&K 5th SBC Meeting: J&K 5th SBC meeting was held on 12.06.2024 under the chairmanship of the Shri Atal Dulloo (Chief Secretary, J&K). Issues regarding RoW permission validity, priority EB connection and adoption of pole charges of Rs 100 per annum by PDD and PWD were highlighted.

COAI Submission post J&K 5th SBC meeting: A submission was made post J&K 5th SBC meeting to Chief Secretary, J&K on 26.06.2024, reiterating the industry points highlighted during the SBC meeting.

Chandigarh 4th SBC Meeting: Chandigarh 4th SBC meeting was held on 12.06.2024 under the chairmanship of the Shri Rajeev Verma (Advisor to Administrator, Chandigarh). Issues related to RoW Policy alignment were highlighted.

MoD-Issue regarding validity of granting RoW permission

A letter to DGDE is written on 17.6.2024 to include this validity of issuing RoW permission clause in the MoD policy dated 18.01.2024, to avoid such issues and ensure uniformity and clarity across all Military Stations/Cantonments.

Amended RoW policy Notified by Govt of Kerala dated 07.06.2024

Amended policy is notified by Govt of Kerala, main point is one Time contribution in CM fund that was INR

75,000/ per KM has been reduced to INR 5000/ KM and other notifications.

COAI letter to Deputy Chief Minister, Chhattisgarh

COAI letter dated 03.06.2024 is written to Deputy Chief Minister, Chhattisgarh Request for Safeguarding Telecom Infrastructure in the State of Chhattisgarh.

Green Open Access session for Rajasthan LSA was organised by COAI on 14.6.2024

An informative session on Green Energy Open Access was organised by COAI for the Rajasthan LSA officers. The presentation was given by Dharmender Khajuria ji, Chairman TIC. A Question Answer session was also conducted to resolve the queries.

Letter to request for Notification of Amended Nagaland Right of Way Policy for Telegraph Infrastructure Installation

A letter was sent to the Chief Secretary, Government of Nagaland on 13.6.2024 requesting for the early notification of amended Nagaland Right of Way Policy for installation of Telegraph Infrastructure.

Draft Regulation on Green Energy Open Access by BERC

Bihar Electricity Regulatory Commission (BERC) has issued the Draft Bihar Electricity Regulatory Commission (Green Energy Open Access) Regulations, 2024. BERC has requested stakeholders to forward their suggestions/comments/objections on the draft regulations by 27.6.2024

DG Set Compliance for Haryana

COAI has submitted a letter on 03.06.2024 to Haryana State Pollution Control Board requesting for the exemption/relaxation on retrofitting of DG sets for telecom industry.

HP State Level Coordination Committee meeting (SLCC)

A State level Coordination committee was held with Shri Mukesh Respwal (Director, IT) on 17.04.2023. COAI highlighted RoW issues on alignment to Amended RoW Amendment Rules, 2016, Restrictive processing of RoW application by Shimla Municipal Corporation, and High Restoration Charges.

Draft Regulation on Green Energy Open Access by DERC

Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC) has issued the Draft Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (Green Energy Open Access) Regulations, 2024. DERC has requested stakeholders to forward their suggestions/comments/objections on the draft regulations by 02.07.2024.

Meeting with UP LSA for Kumbh Mela preparation

A meeting scheduled by NBM with industry on 14.06.2024 to review the progress of network status and future plans for the Kumbh Mela 2025.

Letter to UPECL on Regularisation

A letter has been submitted to MD, UPECL on 14.06.2024

regarding their support in Regularisation of the existing mobile towers in Uttar Pradesh

Time of supply for payment of GST on spectrum payments –

The GST authority in one state issued notices to TSPs questioning why GST should apply to the entire spectrum purchase amount, regardless of payment options chosen by operators.

COAI engaged with the Government at various levels to seek clarity on the timing of GST payments for spectrum allocation services, particularly when operators opt for instalment payments under the DoT's deferred payment option.

We are pleased to inform that through Circular No.-222/16/2024-GST dated 26th June 2024, the Government has clarified the GST payment terms:

- For full upfront payments, GST is payable upon payment or due date, whichever is earlier.
- For deferred payments in instalments, GST is payable when instalment payments are due or made, whichever is earlier.

This clarification provides significant relief to the industry, facilitating improved cash flow management and reducing litigation.

Denial of Input Tax Credits on ducts and manholes used in network of optical fiber cables (OFCs).

The OFC network constitutes a very significant portion of the total input cost in the telecom sector. GST authorities in some parts of the country were disputing input tax credit on OFC ducts and manholes on the grounds that these are immovable property other than Plant and Machinery. The authorities are ignoring the fact that the ducts and manholes are movable, as they are often relocated.

COAI engaged with the Government at various levels to seek clarity on this issue.

Vide Circular No.-219/13/2024-GST dated 26th June 2024, the Government has clarified that

- Ducts and manholes are basic components for the optical fiber cable (OFC) network used in providing telecommunication services.
- Availment of input tax credit is not restricted in respect of such ducts and manhole used in network of optical fiber cables (OFCs), either under clause (c) or under clause (d) of sub-section (5) of section 17 of CGST Act.

This clarification provides significant relief to the industry, facilitating improved cash flow management and reducing litigation.



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News Wires:

Modi 3.0: Telcos seek 6 GHz spectrum band, non-commercial power tariff

Telecom operators have been demanding the 6 GHz radio waves essentially for the expansion of next generation (5G) services in the country.

[Read more](#)



Spectrum symphony: Orchestrating the melody of finite resources

Efficient spectrum management is essential for India's digital growth and security amidst rising wireless demand and technological advances.

[Read more](#)



COAI elects Vodafone-idea's Abhijit Kishore as Chairperson, Airtel's Rahul Vatts as Vice-Chairperson for FY25

These leadership changes are effective from June 2024, the association said.

[Read more](#)



Prioritize 6 GHz spectrum for 5G, roll out fair share data network usage norm: COAI to Centre

The apex telecom industry body has also requested the government to look at the industry's long-standing issue about spectrum pricing and related revenue concerns.

[Read more](#)



Telecom equipment theft could be responsible for poor call network

The Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) urges Government intervention in telecom equipment theft affecting mobile network quality in India.

[Read more](#)





COAI

News Wires:

Industry leaders expect PM Modi-led new government to take country closer to 'Vision@2047'

DG COAI said the new government will steer the next phase of growth and strengthen the continuity in policy and reforms.

[Read more](#)



Modi 3.0: Jyotiraditya Scindia becomes new Telecom Minister

The government in its third term, has allocated the Ministry of Communications portfolio to Jyotiraditya M. Scindia. He has also been appointed as the Minister of Development of Northeastern Region, according to the Press statement issued by Rashtra Pati Bhawan on June 10, 2024.

[Read more](#)



Spectrum Auction, telecom Act rules, key task for Jyotiraditya Scindia:

"We look forward to working with him to advance further policy reforms and spearhead pioneering initiatives that will elevate the digital revolution to the next level, integrating a variety of technological innovations", said DG COAI.

[Read more](#)



5G Spectrum auction outcome to boost connectivity: COAI

COAI, which represents incumbent telecom carriers, said that it "eagerly anticipates the successful completion of 5G spectrum auctions."

[Read more](#)



No 5G yet at airports, DoT asks telecom operators to put more in-building solutions for uninterrupted network

While 5G services are barred right now due to security concerns at the airports, the government has reportedly asked telecom operators to put more in-building solutions in the airports so that customers have uninterrupted network. [Read more](#)



Telecom & IT industry bodies hail policy continuity under PM Modi

"The country in policy making, governance approach and key priorities across Finance, Commerce, MeitY and Environment Ministry are critical to investor confidence and growth.

[Read more](#)



COAI Events

COAI Executive Council Meeting No. EC 23-04 and Annual General Body Meeting held on 11th June 2024 at Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi

COAI concluded its Executive Meeting 23-04 and Annual General Body Meeting (AGM) for the Financial Year 2023-24, with the announcement of its leadership for the term 2024-25, effective June 2024. Abhijit Kishore, Chief Operating Officer, Vodafone Idea Limited will be the Chairperson, while Mr. Rahul Vatts, Chief Regulatory Officer, Bharti Airtel, will be the Vice Chairperson of the Association. Lt. Gen. Dr. SP Kochhar, Director General, COAI, expressed his heartfelt gratitude to Mr. P.K. Mittal for his support and leadership and welcomed Mr. Abhijit Kishore to COAI.





Contact Us

Address : 14, Bhai Veer Singh Marg, New Delhi – 110 001

Phone : +91 - 11- 23349275 | Fax: +91 - 11 - 23349276

Email : contact@coai.in | Website: www.coai.in

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