

COAI welcomes the notification of RoW policy for Gram Swaraj and Panchayat Raj by the Government of Karnataka

New Delhi, 08th December 2021: COAI, the representative body for the Indian telecommunications industry, lauded the notification of RoW policy for Gram Swaraj and Panchayat Raj by the Government of Karnataka decision. These bye-laws are applicable to all Gram Panchayats in the State and includes Telecom Towers and OFC (Aerial & Underground).

As per the policy, One-time fee to meet administrative expenses for the installation of Telecom Tower & Aerial OFC deployment is INR 10,000/- per Application (Tower & Aerial OFC), whereas for deployment of Optical fiber it is INR 1,000/- per KM OFC (underground) and for deployment of Cell on Wheel (CoW) Micro Site/Small Cell, IBS) is INR 2,000/- per application. The policy encourage the deployment of Tower, Underground OFC, Aerial OFC, CoW) Micro Site, Small Cell, IBS, etc. that are essential to improve the digital connectivity across Gram Swaraj and Panchayat Raj area of Karnataka. This RoW policy will help to meet the National Broadband Mission Targets, increase the Broadband penetration, provide internet & Broadband services to the citizens, improve the connectivity and capacity and hence the Quality of the Service of the mobile services and develop a robust Telecom/Digital Infrastructure in the State.

Telecom industry has emerged as a saviour for many during the pandemic. With telecom reforms, this announcement will become the base for digital connectivity in the state and will go a long way for building a robust infrastructure. Today, as the country creates pathways for 5G and the following digital revolution, it is important to understand that seamless connectivity is the roadmap to our vision of 'Digital India.'

"We appreciate and thank the State Government of Karnataka for notification of RoW policy for Gram Swaraj and Panchayat Raj for the installation of mobile towers and deployment of OFC across the State. The decision announced is an indication of the state's intent for the much-needed infrastructural boost in the telecommunication sector. This is expected to further accelerate the journey towards digitally connected India and the Government's vision to provide benefit to individual consumers of the country. The service providers will be working closely with the state for the infrastructural enhancement of the state and create a digitally connected ecosystem" - said Lt. Gen. Dr. SP Kochhar, Director General, COAI.

Karnataka has **approx 69 million** subscribers with a **tele-density of approx. 103%** Karnataka has approx. **44K telecom towers and approx. 1.5 Lakh KM cumulative optical fiber cable**. To make Karnataka Digitally advanced under the 'National Broadband Mission' of India and 'Gati Shakti', Karnataka will need to have approx. **90K telecom towers and four times** more telecom optical fiber cable by December 2024.

Ever since the introduction of the 4G network in the country, there has been a tremendous increase in the number of mobile subscribers. Lakhs of mobile towers were installed for 4G networks across the country, which is still continuing.