

COAI welcomes the RoW Rules 2022 along with the launch of the Application Form on GatiShakti Sanchar Portal

25th August 2022, New Delhi: COAI, the leading representative body for the Indian telecommunications industry, welcome & congratulates the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) for introducing the “The Indian Telegraph Right of Way (Amendment) Rules, 2022” along with the launch of the 5G RoW Application Form on the GatiShakti Sanchar Portal.

The portal provides a collaborative institutional mechanism between all stakeholders including Central and State/UT Government(s), central land-owning authorities (Railways & Defence), Local bodies, and Service Providers to ease the Right of Way (RoW) applications and permissions for the deployment of the Digital Infrastructure- mobile towers and OFC in the country.

The existing Indian Telegraph Right of Way Rules, 2016 had certain challenges resulting lack of access to adequate street furniture for deployment, and restrictions on the installation of towers/small cells near educational institutes, hospitals, airports, defence establishments, religious places, etc. The Indian Telegraph Right of Way (Amendment) Rules, 2022 will help the industry in faster proliferation of Digital infrastructure, deployment of small cells, aerial fibre, and street furniture. There is a provision for small cells, electric poles, access to street furniture, etc. introduced for the easy and smooth deployment of 5G networks. The new amendments in charges introduced i.e. INR 1000 per KM for Aerial OFC, Rs 300 per annum for urban area and Rs 150 per annum for rural areas per street furniture and INR 1000 per pole for the establishment of poles, for installing the small cells will be seen as a big relief.

Appreciating the initiative, Lt. Gen. Dr. SP Kochhar, Director General, COAI, said, “We are thankful to DoT for introducing the much-awaited amendments in the RoW Rules, 2016 with so many positive factors for the telecom sector. As the country is set to witness the 5G technology, The Indian Telegraph Right of Way (Amendment) Rules, 2022 will ensure the speedy roll-out of the technology and make the dream of 5G enabled India comes true. Access to the existing infrastructure, deployment of new infrastructure, and the high cost involved in it were major challenges the telecom sector always came across which will now be eased down.

We are also elated to have 5G RoW application form on GatiShakti Sanchar Portal which is again a positive sign to speed up the installation process of digital infrastructure. We are sure that such initiatives will bring us a step closer to achieving the Digital India vision of Hon’ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, he further added.”

This is a significant stage toward making a robust mechanism to achieve the goal of “Broadband to All” as visualized in the National Digital Communication Policy-2018. As India is at the cusp of launching 5G innovation which requires network densification, RoW and the use of street furniture for the deployment of small cells will meet a significant role.

The country requires the densification of mobile networks for the enhancement of digital services and the forthcoming roll-out of 5G services in India. Mobile broadband has a significant impact on a country’s economic performance and social inclusion. The amendment in the RoW rules will help incorporate provisions on small cell deployment, and ensure uniform implementation of RoW rules across states, union territories, and municipal bodies. This will further reduce approval timelines for small cells to 15-30 days, and no SACFA approvals would be required for small cells.