

Extension of Mandatory Testing timelines to aid Industry: COAI

New Delhi, 23rd June 2023: COAI, the apex industry body for the digital communications sector in the country, welcomed the decision of the Telecommunication Engineering Centre, Department of Telecommunications, Government of India, to extend the implementation timelines of the Mandatory Testing and Certification of Telecommunication Equipment (MTCTE) Phases 3 and 4, via the amendment notification issued by the TEC today.

As per the amendment, the implementation date for mandatory certification of 12 products (ERs) covered under MTCTE phases 3 and 4, have been extended from 1st July 2023 to 1st January 2024, i.e., by 6 months.

Further, the implementation date for mandatory certification of 32 products (ERs) covered under MTCTE phases 3 and 4, have been extended from 1st July 2023 to 1st October 2023, i.e., by 3 months.

The last date for acceptance of test reports issued by International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) accredited labs from non-border sharing countries has also been extended by 6 months for technical parameters – from 30th June 2023 to 31st December 2023.

These extensions would aid the industry which has been facing significant challenges in the operationalization of Phases 3 and 4 of the MTCTE, primarily owing to issues like non-availability and limited capability of testing labs, absence of defined timelines for testing procedures, and lack of benchmarks for both testing charges and certification charges. The delays and complexities of these procedures could potentially impact the implementation schedules of the 5G rollouts and fiberisation targets of India.

Lt. Gen. Dr. S.P. Kochhar, Director General, COAI, stated on the development, *“COAI appreciates this positive decision made by the DoT and TEC, taking into consideration the industry’s earnest submissions and keeping in mind the critical challenges faced by the sector towards compliance on the earlier notified timelines of phases 3 and 4 of the MTCTE. We believe that the Government has found merit in our submissions and taken a practical decision based on the ground realities in regard to the Testing and Certification ecosystem for telecom equipment in the country. We thank the Government and assure our complete support and all requisite efforts to ensure that the revised timelines are met effectively.”*

The industry highly values the need for the Testing and Certification guidelines to be instrumental in ensuring appropriate quality and security standards of the equipment being deployed in the networks. It is essential to enhance consumer trust, promote competition and encourage innovation in the industry.

About COAI

Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) represents the leading Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) and telecom equipment vendors in India. COAI is dedicated to the advancement of mobile telephony and broadband in the country through development and provision of world-class infrastructure, products and services; for delivering the benefits of innovative and affordable mobile communication services to the people of India. The association works closely with Ministries, Policy Makers, Regulators, Financial Institutions and Technical Bodies towards these objectives. (www.coai.in)