

TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA



E-NEWSLETTER



MAY 2022



Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi graced the occasion of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, held in New Delhi.

1. Recommendations

1.1 TRAI released recommendations on 'Auction of spectrum in frequency bands identified for IMT/5G' on 11th April 2022



The Department of Telecommunications sought recommendations from TRAI on matters related to the auction of spectrum in various bands for IMT/5G.

TRAI after completing the consultation process sent its recommendations to DoT which include Quantum of Spectrum to be auctioned, Band Plan, Block Size, Eligibility Conditions for participation in Auction, Interference mitigation in TDD bands, Roll-out obligations, Spectrum Cap, Surrender of Spectrum, and Valuation and Reserve Price of Spectrum. In addition, considering the importance of 5G in Industry verticals, recommendations relating to spectrum for Captive wireless private networks and Identification, Development & Proliferation of 5G Use Cases have been made.

The key recommendations are:

- All available spectrum in existing and new spectrum bands such as 600 MHz, 3300-3670 MHz, 24.25-28.50 GHz be put to auction.
- Recommended Reserve price for various spectrum bands for 20 years.
- Considering deployment of 5G network in 3300-3670 MHz, 24.25-28.50 GHz bands, easy network deployment-based roll-out obligations have been recommended for these bands.
- Rationalization of Spectrum Caps.

- Enabling framework created for private networks.
- A 5G dedicated Inter-Ministerial Working Group should be formed, for the uptake of 5G use cases in different verticals.
- Telecom Innovation Centers to be formulated in alliance with different academic institutions and ministries, specialized for the development of innovative solutions for 5G use cases and applications in different verticals/sectors.



https://traigov.in/sites/default/files/Recommendations_11042022.pdf

2. Consultation Paper

2.1 Consultation Paper on “Issues Relating to Media Ownership”

TRAI issued a Consultation Paper on “Issues Relating to Media Ownership” on 12th April 2022.



Media is an important pillar of democracy. It performs a vital role in the personification of constitutional goals and aspirations. Considering the importance of media in implementing the constitutional precept of freedom of speech and expression in letter and spirit, TRAI has sent various recommendations to the government on issues relating to media ownership. The last of such recommendations was sent on 12th August 2014. The Authority has received a reference from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting seeking reconsideration of the said Recommendations of 2014 and issuance of a fresh set of recommendations in the light of the emerging

changes in the media and entertainment industry, particularly with the advent of new digital technologies such as Over-the-top platforms (OTT).

In the light of this, TRAI issued this consultation paper which seeks views of stakeholders on need, nature, and levels of safeguards with respect to issues relating to media ownership, particularly cross-media ownership and vertical integration in the broadcasting sector.

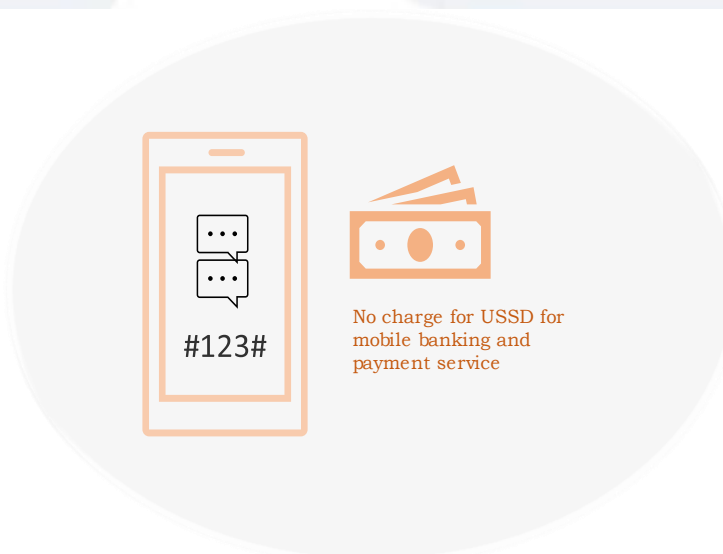
Consultation Paper is accessible on the below link.



https://traigov.in/sites/default/files/CP_IRMO_12042022.pdf

3. Telecom Tariff Order (TTO)

3.1 TRAI issued "Telecom Tariff (68th Amendment) Order, 2022 (02 of 2022)



TRAI issued "Telecom Tariff (68th Amendment) Order, 2022 modifying the Regulatory framework for USSD-based tariff on 7th April 2022.

TRAI had earlier issued the Telecommunication Tariff (56th Amendment) Order dated 22nd November 2013 prescribing a ceiling tariff of Rs. 1.50 per USSD session for USSD-based mobile banking service. Subsequently, the Authority through Telecommunication Tariff (61st Amendment) Order, 2016 reduced USSD based tariff for banking and payment services ceiling from Rs.1.50 to Rs. 0.50 per session.

In order to review the existing regulatory framework for USSD-based tariffs, the Authority issued a draft Telecommunication Tariff (66th Amendment) Order on

24th November 2021 whereby proposing Nil charge for USSD sessions for mobile banking and payment services.

After the consultation with stakeholders, the Authority felt that to protect the interests of the USSD users and to promote digital financial inclusion, rationalization of USSD charges is required, therefore it has been decided that the subscribers shall not be charged for USSD for mobile banking and payment service. However, TRAI continues to watch this service and may review the charge after a period of two years.



https://traigov.in/sites/default/files/Regulation_07042022.pdf

4. Open House Discussion (OHD)

4.1 TRAI conducted Open House Discussion (OHD) for the Consultation Paper on “Ease of Doing Business in Telecom and Broadcasting Sector”



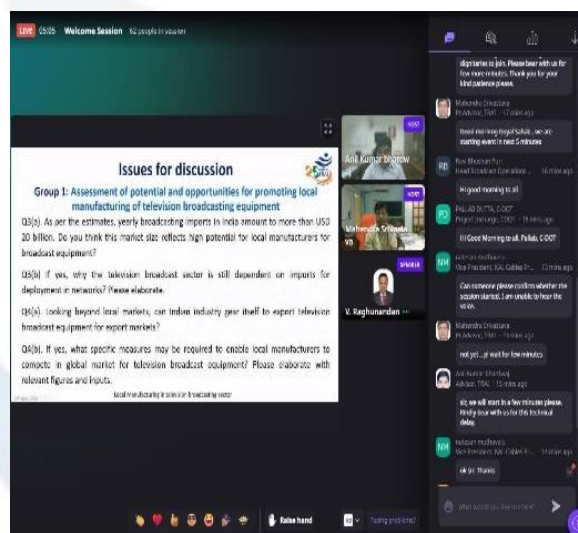
TRAI conducted this Open House Discussion on 21st April 2022 to deliberate issues on Ease of Doing Business in the Telecom and Broadcasting Sector. The consultation paper provides a comprehensive review of the processes of licenses/permissions spanning various Ministries/Departments including the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MIB), Department of Telecom (DoT), Wireless Planning and Coordination (WPC), Network Operations Control Centre (NOCC), Telecommunication Engineering Centre (TEC), Department of Space (DOS), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Ministry of Power (MoP) and the various compliances put forth by MIB, DoT and TRAI.

The OHD sought oral comments from the stakeholders on the 24 questions raised in the paper. The OHD took place for about 5 hours and there were more than 150 active participants from various verticals like the telecom,

broadcasting, and ICT sector involved in providing valuable inputs for the issues raised in the consultation paper. The key topics deliberated for simplifying the existing process are:

- Various processes carried out by MIB
- Processes/permissions carried out by DoT
- Permissions/clearances issued by the other wings of DoT, namely WPC, NOCC, and TEC
- Processes by DOS, MeitY and MoP, pertaining to the telecom and broadcasting sector
- The compliance put forth by MIB, DoT – CCAs, LSAs and TRAI. The comments from the stakeholders were to incorporate all such compliances in an online portal

4.2 TRAI conducted an Open House Discussion (OHD) through video conferencing on the Consultation Paper on “Promoting Local Manufacturing in the Television Broadcasting Sector” on 28th April 2022



TRAI conducted an Open House Discussion (OHD) on 28th April 2022 on the consultation paper titled “*Promoting Local Manufacturing in the Television Broadcasting Sector*” on a Suo-motu basis.

The consultation process was initiated to seek stakeholders’ inputs regarding underlying challenges as well as enabling measures that can facilitate the local manufacturers in the television broadcasting sector to meet domestic demand and pave the way for export-oriented growth.

The OHD on 28th April 2022 saw rich participation from various stakeholders with close to 100 participants registered for the online event from all over India. Apart from service providers and their associations, the participants consisted of technology providers, independent industry observers, etc.

The participants agreed that the consultation paper has nicely brought out the underlying issues on the subject and opined that there is a need for additional

measures for promoting local manufacturing especially for network equipment and set-top boxes.

5. Telecom Subscriptions

5.1 Telecom Subscription Data as on 31st March 2022.

Particulars	Wireless	Wireline	Total
Urban Telephone subscribers (Million)	624.23	22.88	647.11
Rural Telephone subscribers (Million)	517.86	1.96	519.82
Total Telephone subscribers (Million)	1142.09	24.84	1166.93
Overall Tele-density (%)	83.07	1.81	84.88
Share of Urban Subscription (%)	54.66	92.12	55.45
Share of Rural Subscription (%)	45.34	7.88	44.55
No. of Broadband Subscribers (Million)	761.05	27.25	788.30

Active wireless subscribers on the date of Peak VLR in March 2022 were 1021.29 million.

In March 2022, 9.64 million subscriber requests were made for MNP. By the end of March 2022, a total of 689.76 million consumers have availed the MNP facility since its implementation.

5.2 TRAI released an invitation of expression of interest for empanelment of auditors to carry out audit of Digital Addressable Systems on 6th April 2022.

5.3 **Pilot studies at Namma Metro, Bengaluru, and Deendayal Port, Kandla, Gujarat for deploying 5G using street furniture.**

Namma Metro, Bengaluru

TRAI started a Pilot of “Deployment of Small Cell and Aerial Fiber on Street Furniture at Namma Metro, Bengaluru on 7th April 2022 at Bengaluru. Pilot is being conducted jointly by Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation (BMRCL), M/S RJIL, BSNL, and COAI under the supervision of TRAI.



The pilot aims to put in place the enabling Regulatory and Policy framework much ahead of actual deployment of 5G networks in higher frequencies which are known for its support to ultra-high speed but poor coverage. Poor coverage at high frequencies will necessitate large number of 5G Small Cells to be deployed to cover a whole area. Use of street furniture already available in Metro stations and routes like, poles etc. can be used for mounting 5G Small Cells obviating the need for erecting new towers.

Present 4G networks are somewhat constrained in supporting quality services in Metro trains due to high speed and capacity limitations. But 5G networks, supported by Small Cell are tailormade to solve this problem. 5G Small Cell network will also help BMRCL in testing next-generation applications like HD Video Surveillance, Real-Time Passenger Information System, Future Railway Mobile Communication System (FRMCS), etc.

A working group has been constituted to conduct this pilot which has members from all stakeholders including, Min. of Urban and Home Affairs (MoHUA), Dept. of Tele. (DoT) and Telecom Eng. Centre (TEC).

Deendayal Port, Kandla, Gujarat

TRAI in association with the Deendayal Port Authority (DPA) launched a pilot named “5th Generation (5G) Small Cell and Aerial Fiber deployment using Deendayal Port Street Furniture” at Deendayal Port, Kandla, Gujarat.



The pilot will help in understanding challenges in 5G small cell deployment at Indian ports. Hundreds of 5G Small Cells are needed to be installed in a square KM of the area to provide good coverage. Use of Street furniture already available at ports like poles etc. can be used for mounting these 5G Small Cells, obviating the need for erecting thousands of new towers. This will not only ensure faster deployment of 5G but also unlock the true potential of underutilized street furniture at ports. Ports, using these highly reliable 5G networks will be able to launch Enterprise Solutions which will in turn help them to compete with the best of international ports. Vodafone, Airtel, RJIL, BSNL along with Indus Towers will be jointly working on this pilot with Deendayal Port Authority (DPA). A working group has been constituted to conduct this pilot which has members from all stakeholders including Dept. of Tele. (DoT) and Telecom Eng. Center (TEC).

Similar pilots have already been started by TRAI at the Delhi Airport and Smart City Bhopal.


Full details of the Directions/Orders/Consultation Paper/Report, Subscription Data, etc mentioned in this newsletter are available on TRAI website

www.trai.gov.in

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