

Comments on 3rd Phase of Private FM Radio Broadcasting

- (i) Para : 4.2.3 & 4.5 of the Consultation Paper pertaining to Channel spacing

Channel spacing is the minimum frequency separation between two adjacent carriers for optimum utilization of the spectrum. Taking various factors into account, CCIR in its Rec. 412-3 has considered a channel spacing of 100 KHz as optimum. The commonly used channel spacing are 200 KHz in North America, 100KHz in EBU countries and 86 KHz in Africa. In India, a channel spacing of 100 KHz is being used for network planning in the country. For the purpose of frequency assignments within a city, however, a spacing of 800 KHz and in few cases 700 KHz (also) has been used keeping in view the interference potential between 2 channels within the same city and cost of the combiners. In future phases, however, the use of 400 KHz spacing within a city is being contemplated for which a second aperture is being provided on all the new towers that are being constructed for Private FM Broadcasting. In the meantime, it will be prudent to carry out experiments and collect elaborate data of interference by using 400 KHz spectrum within the city.

- (ii) Para : 4.6.3 of the Consultation Paper pertaining to side mounted antennas

The earlier versions of side-mounted antennas used to suffer from the limitation of bandwidth. The modern designs have, however, made advances in this direction and are capable of handling the entire broadcast band of FM with a return loss of 20 dB. These type of antennas provide a cost effective solution to the needs of private broadcastres especially in lower category of cities. As a matter of fact, number of such antennas have been used by BECIL in Phase-III.

- (iii) Para : 4.6.16 of the Consultation Paper regarding adequate space in towers

As mentioned in earlier paragraph, all the new towers that are being constructed for private broadcasting are being provided with a second aperture. This aperture would come handy when the number of broadcasters in a city increases in future.

- (iv) Para : 4.6.12, 4.6.18 and 4.7(4) of the Consultation Paper pertaining to the formation of Consortium & System integrator

Formation of Consortium of private broadcasters within the city was not mandated under the policy of Private FM Phase-II. The very fact that integration of channels by setting up Common Transmission Infrastructures in all the cities has been successfully done by BECIL in Phase-I as well as in Phase-II, is itself a proof that formation of Consortiums is not required. It is, however, necessary that the agency carrying out system integrator is such which is not only in a position to

coordinate/mediate between the broadcasters but also has close liaison with Prasar Bharati and Ministry of Information & Broadcasting. Moreover, it has been experienced during execution of Common Transmission Infrastructures during Phase-I and Phase-II that BECIL's status as a Central Govt. PSU has received special attention and support from various Govt. agencies like Power supply, water supply, Municipal Corporation, State Authorities, Octroi, Custom Authorities etc., which proved helpful in successful completion of the Common Transmission Infrastructures. As such BECIL, with its proven track record, is best suited to be the system integrator for Phase-III also.