

Information Note to the Press (Press Release No. 40 /2018)

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India

Report on Public Wi-Fi Open Pilot Project- An initiative of TRAI.

New Delhi, the 5th April, 2018: Chairman TRAI presented the Report on Public Wi-Fi Open Pilot Project to the Hon'ble Minister of State for Communications (Independent Charge) today. The Authority had brought out a Consultation Paper on "Proliferation of Broadband through Public Wi-Fi Networks" with a view to examine the need of encouraging public Wi-Fi networks in the country from a public policy point of view, discuss the issues in its proliferation and find out solutions for the same. Subsequently, the Authority came out with its Recommendations on "Proliferation of Broadband through Public Wi-Fi Networks" which were sent to DoT on 9th March, 2017. The Authority feels that the availability of broadband services at a very low cost and in every corner of the country is the basic requirement of the Digital India. The Wi-Fi is a technology that can easily meet this requirement.

2. The Recommendation envisages a WiFi network architecture that supports one time authentication requirement, interoperability across different Wi-Fi networks, ease of payment through any instrument and above all inexpensive service.

3. In order to demonstrate a proof of concept for interoperability, the Authority conducted a pilot trial of the framework mentioned in the Recommendations. The pilot commenced on 16th October, 2017. A number of entities had registered with TRAI for participating in the pilot as Public Data Offices (PDO), App Providers and Software/Hardware Service provider. The vision of this initiative was to establish an Open Architecture based Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (**WANI**), such that;

- (a) Any entity (company, proprietorship, societies, non-profits, etc.) should easily be able to setup a public Wi-Fi Access Point.



- (b) Users should be able to easily discover WANI compliant SSIDs, do one click authentication and payment, and connect one or more devices in single session.
- (c) The experience for a small entrepreneur to purchase, self-register, set-up and operate a PDO must be simple, low-touch and maintenance-free.
- (d) The products available for consumption should begin from “sachet-sized”, i.e. low denominations may be INR 2.00.
- (e) Providers (PDO, PDOA, Access Point hardware/software, user authentication and KYC provider, and payment provider) are unbundled to eliminate silos and closed systems. This allows multiple parties in the ecosystem to come together and enable large scale adoption.

4. The Pilot was launched with the following objectives:

- (a) Demonstrate that unbundling of services reduces rework, speeds up development and hence is the most effective way to tackle this complex problem.
- (b) Prove that Multi-provider, Inter-operable, Collaborative model increases the overall innovation in the system, dismantles monopolies and encourages passing of benefits to end user.
- (c) Test the specifications in real life conditions, and suggest improvements.
- (d) Jointly develop a business model that fairly allocates value to each provider.
- (e) Fine tune the technology and finalize the specifications based on pilot.
- (f) Test out integrated payment methods such as coupons (purchased using cash by user or gifted to user), credit/debit cards, net banking, e-wallets, and UPI.

5. The report elaborates the purpose, planning, outcomes as well as the way forward. For any clarification/information, Sh. U. K. Srivastava, Pr Advisor (NSL) may be contacted at Tel. No.: +91-11- 23233291.


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Secretary, TRAI