

## **Information note to the Press (Press Release No. 38/2021)**

For Immediate Release

### **Telecom Regulatory Authority of India**

#### **TRAI releases recommendations on “Licensing Framework for Satellite based connectivity for low bit rate applications.”**

**New Delhi, 26<sup>th</sup> August, 2021** – The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has today released the recommendations on **“Licensing Framework for Satellite based connectivity for low bit rate applications.”**

2. The Department of Telecommunications (DoT), through its letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020, has requested TRAI, under section 11(1)(a) of the TRAI Act, to furnish recommendations on Licensing framework to enable the provisioning of Satellite based connectivity for low bit-rate applications for both commercial and captive usage.

3. Considering the constraints of the existing provisions in respect of proposed Satellite based low bit-rate services, DoT has stated that there is a need for suitable licensing framework and requested TRAI to examine all the factors holistically and recommend enabling provisions under the existing licensing framework of DoT, or new licensing framework may be suggested for such services for both commercial and captive usage.

4. Low Bit-Rate applications and IoT devices require low cost, low power and small size terminals that can effectively perform the task of signal transfer with minimum loss. Many sparsely populated areas with important economic activities suited for IoT related services may not have terrestrial coverage or other forms of connectivity. Therefore, Satellites can help bridge this gap by providing coverage to even the most remote areas and will help in fulfilling connect India mission.

5. Based on the reference received from DoT, Consultation Paper on “Licensing Framework for Satellite based connectivity for low bit rate applications.” was issued on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2021, seeking comments of the stakeholders. The consultation paper covered the issues related to different models of provision of satellite-based connectivity, various orbits, frequency bands for Low Bit Rate applications, availability of satellite capacities and enabling requirements in licensing framework.

6. Written comments and counter-comments on the Consultation Paper were invited from the stakeholders by 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2021 and 7<sup>th</sup> May, 2021 respectively. The Authority received 29 comments and 4 counter-comments from various stakeholders. All these comments and counter comments are available on TRAI website [www.trai.gov.in](http://www.trai.gov.in). An Open House Discussion (OHD) was also convened on the issues raised in the Consultation Paper on dated 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2021 through video conferencing.

7. The salient features of these recommendations are:
- a. For provision of Satellite-based connectivity for IoT and low-bit-rate applications, the relevant service licensees may provide connectivity as per scope of their authorization for any kind of network topology model including Hybrid model, Aggregator model and Direct-to-satellite model.
  - b. All types of satellite viz. Geo Stationary Orbit (GSO) and Non-GSO (NGSO) satellites and any of the permitted satellite frequency bands may be used for providing satellite-based low-bit-rate connectivity.
  - c. The relevant existing authorizations under Unified Licensing framework may be suitably amended for enabling satellite-based low-bit-rate connectivity.
  - d. Scope of authorizations of GMPCS service, Commercial VSAT CUG service and NLD service under Unified License and Captive VSAT CUG service license may be suitably amended to include provision of satellite-based low-bit-rate connectivity for IoT devices.
  - e. The Service Licensees should be permitted to obtain satellite bandwidth from foreign satellites in all the permitted satellite bands in order to provide satellite-based services. They should be permitted to choose the foreign satellite from the approved list, published for the purpose by the Government and to lease the satellite capacity directly from the chosen foreign satellite and should be mandated to establish the Earth Station in India, corresponding to the chosen foreign satellite system, prior to using the leased capacities.
  - f. The Government may come out with a road map detailing schedule of launch of communication satellites and availability of the domestic satellite capacities in India to facilitate the service licensees to plan and optimize their capacity procurement.
  - g. The Authority has recommended various measures to make the services cheaper and affordable like permitting hiring of foreign capacities for a longer period as per need instead of 3-5 years, removal of facilitation charges by the government when hiring foreign capacities from the approved list of foreign satellites/satellite systems, leasing the satellite capacity directly from the chosen foreign satellite, reducing the role of intermediaries and removing the prevailing NOCC charges.

h. To improve Ease of Doing Business (EoDB), it has also been recommended that DoT should put in place a comprehensive, simplified, integrated, end-to-end coordinated, single window online common portal for all the agencies involved in grant of various approvals/permissions/allocations etc, like DoS, DOT, WPC and NOCC, wherein the service licensees can place their request and the agencies respond online in a transparent and time bound manner. All the guidelines, applications forms, fee details, processes, timelines and application status should be made transparently available on portal.

8. The recommendations on **“Licensing Framework for Satellite based connectivity for low bit rate applications.”** have been placed on TRAI's website [www.trai.gov.in](http://www.trai.gov.in).

9. For clarification / information, if any, Shri S.T. Abbas, Advisor (Networks, Spectrum & Licensing), TRAI may be contacted at [advmn@traai.gov.in](mailto:advmn@traai.gov.in) or Telephone Number +91-11-23210481.

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**Secretary, TRAI**