

India's Space Policy Framework and Recent Reforms

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Satellite licensing framework in India

- ▲ In the last few years there have been several rounds of consultation and revisions of the satellite regulatory framework by DoT/ISRO/TRAI
 - aiming at streamlining/updating the applicable regulations and allowing the introduction of novel applications/systems
 - satellite industry comments have been taken into consideration

▲ IFMC policy 2018

- In-Flight Maritime Connectivity policy in 2018 opening the possibility for connectivity provisions to Indian and foreign transiting aircraft and vessels

▲ Satellite Communication Reforms 2022

- See next slide

Satellite Communication Reforms 2022

THE REFORM

To propel growth and to accelerate provisioning of affordable services to the citizens, Government has taken the following steps for Ease of Doing Business in the fast emerging area of satellite-based services.

- NOCC charges of Rs 21 Lakh per transponder per year removed for Satellite TV Broadcasters w.e.f. 1st Oct, 2022. This reform shall result in savings of about Rs 34 crore every year for the broadcast industry.
- Mandatory Performance Verification Testing (MPVT) charges of Rs. 6000/- per antenna for testing of satellite antenna(s) also removed.
- Enhanced the scope of the satellite licenses including Commercial VSAT authorisation to enable the provisioning of:
 - ◆ User terminal stations on moving platform(s).
 - ◆ Satellite-based M2M/ IoT devices.
- Guidelines framed for establishing satellite-based communication network for ease of understanding of users/applicants.
- Automated and contactless online processing of all the applications through 'SaraSanchar' portal.

b) What will be its implications for the citizens?

A liberal simplified framework is likely to lead to expansion of the satellite-based services especially in hitherto uncovered and difficult-terrain areas.

PROCEDURE SIMPLIFICATION

To simplify the existing processes, vital changes have been made for streamlining satellite-related clearance processes.

- Apex committee → Renamed as Inter-Ministerial Committee for Satellite Network Clearance (IMC-SNC) → Single platform to issue in-principle clearance for satellite-based network(s) → to expedite the clearances, it consists of all the relevant Departments/Units.
- Application filed with Satellite Division of DoT → DoS/NSIL to carry out allocation of space segment → NOCC to grant carrier plan approval → WPC issues spectrum assignment.
- Existing process takes about 6 to 8 months → Proposed to do it in 6 weeks.
- Instead of multiple-level scrutiny by NOCC and WPC, single scrutiny by each unit is envisaged for Ease-of-Doing-Business.
- Clear timelines prescribed
 - ◆ DoS → space segment allocation letter → 1 week
 - ◆ NOCC → carrier plan approval → 1 week
 - ◆ WPC → Frequency assignment including Lol, decision letter, SACFA clearance and WOL → 4 weeks
- These reforms by the DoT are likely to pave way for enhanced use of satellite-based services in logistics and other sectors and attract more investment thereby creating more job opportunities.
- This booklet outlines the importance of Satcom, explains the associated terms and outlines the reforms undertaken by DoT

Satellite licensing framework in India - 2023

▲ Opening of the Saral Sanchar portal

- Unified portal to issue licenses in a more simplified, efficient and transparent manner

▲ TEC/DoT Standards for Interface Requirements

- Technical Requirements documents to cover both GSO and NGSO user terminals, including maritime and aeronautical Earth Stations in Motion, in a number of frequency bands

▲ Gateway licensing

- Previous model in the Unified License required each service provider to establish a gateway earth station - infrastructure redundancy and non cost-effective solutions
- Revised to “detach” the gateway license from the unified (service provision) license

▲ IN-SPACE Guidelines for Authorizing Space Activities

- Streamlined document including also NGSO systems and the use of non-Indian capacity

TRAI recommendation for spectrum assignment for satellite services – Feb 2025

- ▲ Administrative assignment
- ▲ Annual Minimum Spectrum Charges for GSO/NGSO-based Fixed Satellite Services and GSO/NGSO-based Mobile Satellite Services should be Rs. 3,500 per MHz (approx. Annual 160K USD for 4GHz)
- ▲ The Authority recommends that the annual spectrum charges should be calculated as following:
 - GSO-based Fixed Satellite Services and GSO/NGSO-based Mobile Satellite Services: Max (4% of AGR, Annual minimum spectrum charge)
 - NGSO-based Max Fixed Satellite Services $\{(4\% \text{ of AGR} + 500 \times N_u)\}$, Annual minimum spectrum charge} where N_u refers to Number of subscribers in urban areas
- ▲ Essential to take a final and swift decision on the way forward. Time is of the essence

Security aspects in Chapter XII of the UL Agreement for the provision of GMPCS service – May 2025

- ▲ While the security concerns are fully understood, caution should be used towards excessive/unwarranted requirements that would unnecessarily complicate service provision
- ▲ While applicable in a critical situation, there may be scope for re-evaluation
- ▲ Balance between effectiveness of some of the proposed measures and their feasibility/impact on cost

Thank you!

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