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Subject: COAI & AUSPI submission on TRAI Consultation Paper On Data Speed Under Wireless Broadband Plans

Dear Sir

This is with reference to the Consultation Paper "Data Speed Under Wireless Broadband Plans" issued by TRAI on June 1, 2017.

In this regard, please find enclosed COAI & AUSPI submission on the Consultation Paper.

We hope that our submission will merit your kind consideration.

Ashok Sud
Secretary General-AUSPI

Rajan S. Mathews
Director General-COAI

**COAI & AUSPI comments on TRAI Consultation Paper
On
Data Speed Under Wireless Broadband Plans**

- 1. Is the information on wireless broadband speeds currently being made available to consumers is transparent enough for making informed choices?**
 - i. Yes, the consumers are informed about various wireless broadband plans available for selecting and making their choices. Consumers are well informed about the technology, duration of the plan, amount/volume of data, fair usage conditions and price. All the TSPs are sharing information transparently with the subscribers to make an informed choice.
 - ii. A sustained internet based scrutiny of the tariff plans, through the websites of various telcos across the world reveals that the tariff plans are advertised without any mention of the data speeds being available over their networks.
 - iii. Moreover, there are many neutral third party Applications available freely in the market for the subscribers to check their network speeds. MySpeed, the TRAI mobile based application is also available for consumers to measure wireless data speed experience and having an option for consumer to send the measured speed results to TRAI without any TSP intervention. The application captures and sends coverage, data speed and other network information along with device and location of the tests.

- 2. If it is difficult to commit a minimum download speed, then could average speed be specified by the service providers? What should be the parameters for calculating average speed?**
 - i. The download speed is one that is achieved under test conditions and the minimum download speed is a calculated speed as per methodology/approach set out by the Authority.
 - ii. It may be noted that even this calculated minimum download speed varies from quarter to quarter as is evident from the speeds that are being reported by the TSPs to the Authority. The performance of mobile network at any geographical point and/or at any point of time and day, are affected by many variables like (some of these have already been captured in the consultation paper):
 - a) Location of user in the cell;
 - b) Coverage point – indoor/outdoor;
 - c) Day and time of observation/requirement;
 - d) Simultaneous users in the cell; and
 - e) Application being used by the end user (full buffer vs. chatty),
 - f) Link between web server and the telecom network,
 - g) Availability of web server,
 - h) Website behaviour
 - i) Location of usage (Indoor/ Outdoor),
 - j) Peak/ off peak time specific events,
 - k) Device classes and capabilities,

- iii. In view of the above, it may be appreciated that it will not be possible for TSPs to commit to /specify an average speed data/ information as this information is dynamic and varies from quarter to quarter and could actually lead to situations of misrepresentation and confusion for the customers.
- 3. What changes can be brought about to the existing framework on wireless broadband tariff plans to encourage better transparency and comparison between plans offered by different service providers?**
 - i. There is sufficient competition in the market. Service providers under the given competitive environment are coming up with attractive tariff plans that are transparent. The TSPs are already reporting tariff plans to the Regulator and the same are also available on their respective websites. The tariff information is transparently available in public domain at Point of Sales, TSPs Apps, public advertisements and TSPs websites in the format as provided by TRAI. Therefore, it is available for comparison to the consumers. Hence the existing framework in wireless broadband plan is sufficient and there is no requirement of changing existing framework.
- 4. Is there a need to include/delete any of the QoS parameters and/or revise any of the benchmarks currently stipulated in the Regulations?**
 - i. Inclusion/deletion of QoS parameters is not the subject or object of the present consultation. TRAI has stated "Through the present Consultation Paper the Authority intends to seek the inputs of stakeholders on ensuring transparency and customer awareness regarding data speeds under wireless broadband plans.
 - ii. Notwithstanding the above, TSPs have already given their comments on TRAI's Consultation Paper on 'Review of Network related Quality of Service Standards for Cellular Mobile Telephone Service' dated 05.08.2016.
 - iii. We believe that in a scenario of intense competition and MNP is inherent, and now intrinsically built into the nature of the Indian telecom market environment for the operators to regularly monitor their networks to provide good Quality of Service to the customers. Moreover, with comparable low tariffs and equivalent services, the operators themselves are under pressure to maintain their QoS in case they need to attract new customers as well as retain their existing customers. Hence, QoS is driven by market forces rather than by Regulatory intervention.
 - iv. It is requested that the Authority should consider TSP views on QoS parameters.
- 5. Should disclosure of average network performance over a period of time or at peak times including through broadband facts/labels be made mandatory?**
 - i. There are lot of tools and applications available to the consumer to estimate the broadband speed provided by the operator. There are various applications available over the internet for free which can measure download speed being experienced by the consumer. TRAI has also been publishing download speed (theoretical speed under test conditions) for all telecom operators on its website.

ii. Also, TRAI Analytics Portal has three portals for different Quality of Service parameters:

- a) TRAI MySpeed Portal: The TRAI application available for consumers to measure consumer data speed experience and sends the results to TRAI. The application captures and sends coverage, data speed and other network information along with device and location of the tests. It facilitates users to explore the Mobile Data experience of customers across India. Users can submit data by downloading the app and testing their data speeds.
- b) TRAI Drive Test Portal: It is a portal to explore the results of independent drive tests done TRAI.
- c) TRAI QoS Analysis Portal: It facilitates users to explore the call drop rate of various TSPs. Through this portal the Quality of Service performance of service providers can be identified for any specific location in India. Users can also navigate and view performance metrics from service area to district to city and finally to the BTS level.

6. Should standard application/ websites be identified for mandating comparable disclosures about network speeds?

- i. There are lot of tools and applications, including TRAI MySpeed App, available to the consumer to estimate the broadband speed provided by the operator. There are various applications available over the internet for free which can measure download speed. TRAI has also been publishing download speed for all telecom operators at its website.
- ii. It has been observed that the speeds of the same network, at the same place, at the same time, with the same device and even with the same testing algorithm being used by different applications are predicted differently by different testing websites / applications. This variance can once again be attributed to the dynamics of network condition, physical environment at the testing site, test server selection, etc. Standardizing / trying to bring in objectivity in a scenario where the dependent parameters are absolutely non-predictable is fraught with the probability of arbitration. It is best avoided and left to the open source environment simply as an informative service rather than making it a regulatory metric.
- iii. Different Apps have innovated to measure different parameters along with the speeds and based on these parameters these Apps are being advertised. It is the customer's choice to opt for whichever App that they want to use depending on the parameters they want to check. Mandating a standard website/ application by TRAI will not be appropriate and will also take away the choice from the customers that they have as of now. Since, the need of the customers is met through these Apps, the choice should be left to them and it should not be mandated.

7. What are the products/technologies that can be used to measure actual end-user experience on mobile broadband networks? At what level should the measurements take place (e.g., on the 2G device, network node)?

- i. The actual speed available to or experienced by the customer will vary depending upon a number of factors as highlighted above, which are beyond the control of the TSP. Further, it is pertinent to state that it is also not possible for TSPs to measure the actual speed availed by the customers at all times.

- ii. As acknowledged by the Authority, the speed of the packet data is dependent on various factors such as number of subscribers browsing the data services, low coverage area, location of the customer, peak/off peak time, kind of device being used, external factors like availability of link between web server and the telecom network, availability of web server, website behaviour etc., which are dynamic in nature and service provider does not have any control on the same.
 - iii. **The use of any products/technologies to measure actual end-user experience on mobile broadband networks should be left to the open market and the individual choice of subscribers. There should not be any regulatory intervention in this matter.**
 - iv. We believe that TRAI should focus on making its own MySpeed App more robust and transparent rather than looking at other products /technologies. The app should clearly share the architecture of the app as also the manner in which the results are being obtained and processed so as to increase the confidence of the consumers as well as the service providers in the App.
 - v. These applications should also ensure proper handling of measurement results on DSDS (Dual SIM Dual Standby) devices, allocating the results to the applicable service provider only and not be limited to the visibility of the network operator as per API from the OS of the smartphone. In addition, device OEMs should ensure that there is no degradation of user experience, especially when DSDS devices are used with a “4G-only operator” on 3G/2G only SIM slot. Such incidences have been reported recently which are acknowledged by chipset and device manufactures.
 - vi. In view of above, we submit that there is no need for TRAI to specify any products/technologies for the measurement of actual end-user experience on mobile broadband networks.
- 8. Are there any legal, security, privacy or data sensitivity issues with collecting device level data?**
- a) **If so, how can these issues be addressed?**
 - b) **Do these issues create a challenge for the adoption of any measurement tools?**
- i. There needs to be level playing field between all stakeholders in this regard.
 - ii. TRAI is aware that the legal, security, privacy or data sensitivity rules are different for different players in the internet ecosystem. These need to be harmonized and applied in an equal manner.
 - iii. TRAI should ensure that TSPs/ISPs are not disadvantaged and should recommend that the rules for TSPs /ISPs should be aligned with those applicable to other internet players.
- 9. What measures can be taken to increase awareness among consumers about wireless broadband speeds, availability of various technological tools to monitor them and any potential concerns that may arise in the process?**
- i. TRAI is already conducting Consumer Outreach/Awareness Workshops at different locations in the country and TRAI applications for broadband speeds and network

performance should be explained to the consumers during these workshops or programs.

- ii. "TRAI My Speed" app may be promoted by the authority to increase awareness and use of App among wireless broadband customers.