

TRAI releases recommendations on ‘Licensing Framework for Establishing and Operating Satellite Earth Station Gateway (SESG)’

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The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has today released recommendations on ‘Licensing Framework for Establishing and Operating Satellite Earth Station Gateway (SESG)’.

Earlier, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), through their letter dated 10.09.2021 had sought the TRAI’s Recommendations on licensing framework for establishment of satellite gateway.

In this regard, a Consultation Paper on ‘Licensing Framework for Establishing Satellite Earth Station Gateway’ was issued on 15.11.2021. Comments from 23 stakeholders and counter comments from 7 stakeholders were received. An Open House Discussions (OHD) with stakeholders was held on 25.02.2022.

Based on the comments/ inputs received from the stakeholders and on its own analysis, TRAI has finalized its Recommendations on ‘Licensing Framework for Establishing and Operating Satellite Earth Station Gateway (SESG)’ to the Government.

The salient features of these Recommendations are as follows:

There shall be a separate Satellite Earth Station Gateway (SESG) License under the Section 4 of Indian Telegraph Act. The SESG License will not form part of the Unified License (UL). The Service Area for the SESG License shall be at National Level.

The SESG Licensee may establish, maintain, and work SESGs anywhere within the territory of India for all types of satellite systems for which the Government has given the permission.

The SESG Licensee may provide satellite-based resources to any entity, which holds license/ permission granted by DoT or Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MIB) and is permitted to use satellite media for the provision of services under its license/ permission.

The SESG Licensee may establish SESGs in respect of one or more Government approved satellite systems.

The SESG Licensee shall not be permitted to provide any kind of telecommunication service or broadcasting service directly to the consumers, for provision of which, a separate license/ authorization/ permission is required from the Government.

The SESG license shall be valid for a period of 20 years from the effective date of the license with a provision of renewal for 10 years.

The Licensee shall adhere to the instructions/ guidelines issued by the Government in respect of connecting Trusted Products in its network.

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The SESG Licensee shall meet the instructions/ directions of the Licensor (i.e. DoT) issued from time to time in the interest of national security.

Only the companies registered under the Companies Act, 2013 of India shall be eligible to apply for grant of SESG License.

A non-refundable one-time Entry Fee of Rs. Ten lakhs (Rs. 1,000,000) shall be levied for grant of SESG License.

As the SESG licensees will not provide any service directly to end consumers, only a token License Fee of Re. 1 per annum shall be levied on SESG License.

In respect of the application for grant of SESG License, a Processing Fee of Rs. Five thousand shall be levied. Further, a Processing Fee of Rs. Five thousand shall be levied in respect of every application for grant of permission to establish an additional SESG.

The mandate to compulsorily establish Land Earth Station Gateway/ Hub Station/ Uplink Earth Station in the relevant licenses/ permissions granted by DoT and MIB shall be removed.

The telecommunication and broadcasting service licensees/ permission holders, who are eligible to provide satellite-based communication services in India, shall have the option to establish their own satellite earth station gateways, if permitted under their licenses/ permissions, or use the SESGs established by the SESG licensees by connecting their baseband equipment with the SESGs at the terms and conditions offered by the SESG licensees.

The service licensee/ permission holders, being served by the SESG Licensee, shall install their own baseband equipment at the SESG established by the SESG Licensee.

Frequency spectrum (gateway-side spectrum, as well as user terminal-side spectrum) should be assigned to the eligible service licensees/ permission holders as per the allocation of transponder bandwidth in the concerned satellite system. No frequency spectrum shall be assigned to SESG licensees.

The recommendations have been placed on TRAI's website www.traigov.in. For clarification/ information, if any, Shri Akhilesh Kumar Trivedi, Advisor (Network Spectrum & Licensing), TRAI may be contacted at Telephone Number +91-11-23210481 or email at advmn@traigov.in.