

The Digital Communications Commission (DCC), erstwhile Telecom Commission of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) met recently and approved a number of key proposals including an audio-conferencing service under the ambit of the telecom licence, reducing the entry fee on very small aperture terminal (VSAT) to Rs 1.5 million from Rs 3 million and waiving the fee of Rs 1.6 million that the organisations are required to pay for each VSAT hub thereafter. {K2Splitter} The Digital Communications Commission (DCC), erstwhile Telecom Commission of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) met recently and approved a number of key proposals including an audio-conferencing service under the ambit of the telecom licence, reducing the entry fee on very small aperture terminal (VSAT) to Rs 1.5 million from Rs 3 million and waiving the fee of Rs 1.6 million that the organisations are required to pay for each VSAT hub thereafter.

The commission also cleared Telecom Consultants of India Limited's (TCIL) proposal to raise 10 per cent through a public offer to raise its working capital.

Further, the DCC is going to seek the views of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) on allocating 10MHz spectrum in the 700 MHz band worth Rs 650 billion to the Indian Railways for an advanced signalling system.

The 700 MHz band is considered one of the best radio waves for long-distance mobile communication services, and the TRAI had recommended a base price of Rs 656.8 billion per MHz in the 700 MHz band, which many operators found to be expensive and did not bid for in the last auctions. Giving spectrum to the Railways for non-commercial use may also impact levies such as adjusted gross revenue, spectrum usage charges (SUC) and licence fee collected, as the band has been earmarked for mobile services. That is why the DoT will seek TRAI's views on the matter.

Meanwhile, the DCC has rejected a TRAI proposal to create data aggregators as it felt many players are already doing similar work and it has decided against creating a new category for data services under telecom licences.

Besides this, the DCC has rejected the TRAI's recommendations to offer free data to the poor. As it did not find any merit in TRAI's proposal in view of the already-low mobile tariffs across the country, and also because of the strong penetration of internet across subscribers.

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