

TRAI responds to the DoT's back-reference in respect of the TRAI's recommendations dated 20.02.2023 on "Recommendations on Rating of Buildings or Areas for Digital Connectivity"

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The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) today issued its response to the back-reference dated 19.03.2025 received from Department of Telecommunications (DoT) in respect of the TRAI's recommendations dated 20.02.2023 on "Recommendations on Rating of Buildings or Areas for Digital Connectivity".

Digital connectivity is vital to the way we live and work. The exponential growth in digitalization during the last two decades has revolutionized the world impacting everything, from economy, innovation, science, and education, to health, sustainability, governance, and lifestyle.

In the past, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) and the Government have taken various policy initiatives to fulfil the demands of telecom connectivity. Key recommendations already made by TRAI in this regard are given in Annexure II of the Consultation Paper (CP) on 'Rating of Buildings or Areas for Digital Connectivity' dated 25th March 2022. These policy interventions have helped in improving connectivity. However, the Authority noted that all these efforts have fallen short in achieving the desired level of digital connectivity specifically inside the buildings or areas.

The Authority noted that confluence of the Internet of Things (IoT) with building operations and the future of the workplace is creating a significant opportunity for building owners, operators, and occupants to create smart, digitally connected spaces to support the end users. To fulfil such demand, development of Digital Connectivity Infrastructure (DCI) should be made an integral part of basic infrastructure for Buildings. However, there are various issues in the current framework which are bottlenecks in achieving the demands of good digital connectivity.

The Authority further noted that, in respect of development of Buildings, there are relevant Acts, bye-laws, and regulations that prescribe minimum or essential requirements for building services like water, electricity, gas, fire safety, structural safety and other provisions. There are local bodies and authorities who are responsible to enforce the same by granting approvals at various stages of the construction of the Buildings as well as supervision during the construction and approval for the use of such facilities. Model Building By laws (MBBL) published by the Town and Country Planning Organisation (TCPO) under Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) contains the provisions for all building services. States adopt the provisions of the MBBL in their respective State bye-laws for building development related activities.

In this context, the Authority had submitted comprehensive recommendations dated 20.02.2023 to the Government on 'Rating of Buildings or Areas for Digital Connectivity' to address the issues relating to in-building digital connectivity in a collaborative manner. These recommendations become more relevant in the present context and to achieve seamless 5G and upcoming 6G services inside buildings and to make them future ready. The 5G and upcoming 6G access networks require higher frequency to deliver high data rates, but higher frequency have higher attenuation rates due to building walls and other building materials.

Subsequently, the DoT, through a back-reference dated 19.03.2025, sought clarification from TRAI on certain recommendations in the "Recommendation on Rating of Buildings or Areas for Digital Connectivity" dated 20.02.2023.

After examining the issue, TRAI has finalized its response to the back-reference dated 19.03.2025. TRAI's response to the back-reference has been placed on the TRAI's website (www.trai.gov.in).

For any clarification pertaining to TRAI's response to the back-reference, Shri Tejpal Singh, Advisor (QoS-I), TRAI may be contacted on email: adv-qos1@traigov.in or at Tel. No. +91-11-20907759.

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