

TRAI releases Consultation Paper on Assignment of the Microwave Spectrum in 6 GHz (lower), 7 GHz, 13 GHz, 15 GHz, 18 GHz, 21 GHz Bands, E-Band, and V-Band.

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The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has today released a **Consultation Paper on Assignment of the Microwave Spectrum in 6 GHz (lower), 7 GHz, 13 GHz, 15 GHz, 18 GHz, 21 GHz Bands, E-Band, and V-Band.**

Earlier, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), through a letter dated 12.08.2022, had requested TRAI to provide recommendations for assignment of spectrum in E&V Bands and Microwave Access (MWA) & Microwave Backbone (MWB) spectrum in frequency bands of 6/ 7/ 13/ 15/ 18/ 21 GHz. In this regard, TRAI released a consultation paper on Assignment of Spectrum in E&V Bands, and Microwave Access (MWA) & Microwave Backbone (MWB) for soliciting comments of stakeholders on the subject.

In the meanwhile, the Telecommunication Act, 2023 was enacted in December 2023. In light of the provisions of the Telecommunications Act, 2023 in respect of radio backhaul for telecommunication services, TRAI, through a letter dated 20.02.2024, conveyed to DoT that *“the DoT's Reference dated 12.08.2022, requesting TRAI to provide its recommendations for (a) methodology of auction of E&V band spectrum and (b) allocation methodology of MWA and MWB RF carriers in 6/7/13/15/18/21 GHz bands, may require a review by DoT. Therefore, DoT is requested to provide the specific issues on which TRAI's recommendations are now required on the subject.”*

In response, DoT, through a fresh reference letter dated 13.09.2024, while agreeing to the TRAI's observation that backhaul spectrum is a part of the First Schedule of the Telecommunications Act, 2023 for which the assignment method would be administrative, requested TRAI to provide recommendations under Section 11(1)(a) of the TRAI Act, 1997 on the following aspects:

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- a. Demand assessment and scope of service/ usage for (i) 57-64/ 66 GHz (V-band) and (ii) 71-76 GHz/ 81-86 GHz (E-band) and accordingly methodology of assignment of spectrum and associated terms & conditions, in line with the determination of scope of services/ usages by TRAI i.e. "Access" or "Backhaul" or "Integrated Access & Backhaul (IAB)".
- b. Spectrum charges and related terms & conditions such as spectrum cap, carrier aggregation, etc. for assignment of spectrum in 6 (lower)/ 7/ 15/ 13/ 18/ 21 GHz bands for backhaul purposes of commercial telecom services.
- c. Any need for review in respect of use of 7/ 15 GHz bands in view of consideration of these bands for Access using IMT after WRC - 2027.
- d. Quantum/ band(s) of spectrum to be earmarked for last mile connectivity (Fixed Wireless Access) of commercial telecom services and methodology of assignment of spectrum and associated terms & conditions in non-IMT bands as referred to in Para 2.2 above.
- e. Quantum/ band(s) of spectrum to be earmarked for Backhaul purposes for non-commercial/ captive use and associated terms & conditions including charges as referred to in Para 2.3 above.

- f. *Feasibility & technical parameters, for allowing low power, indoor, consumer device-to-consumer device usage on license-exempt basis in V-band as referred to in Para 4(d) of reference dated 12-08-2022.*
- g. *Provide any other recommendations deemed fit for the purposes mentioned under (a) to (f) above.”*

In this regard, a consultation paper on Assignment of the Microwave Spectrum in 6 GHz (lower), 7 GHz, 13 GHz, 15 GHz, 18 GHz, 21 GHz Bands, E-Band, and V-Band has been placed on the TRAI's website (www.trai.gov.in) for seeking comments and counter-comments from stakeholders. Written comments on the issues raised in the consultation paper are invited from stakeholders by 25th June 2025 and counter-comments by 9th July 2025.

The comments/ counter-comments may be sent, preferably in electronic form at advmn@traigov.in. For any clarification/ information, Shri Akhilesh Kumar Trivedi, Advisor (Networks, Spectrum & Licensing), TRAI may be contacted at telephone number +91-11-20907758.

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