TRAI releases Recommendations on the Auction of Radio Frequency Spectrum in the Frequency Bands Identified for International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT)

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The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has today released **Recommendations on the Auction of Radio Frequency Spectrum in the Frequency Bands Identified for International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT).**

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT), through its letter No. L-14006/01/2025-IMT dated 15.05.2025, requested TRAI to provide recommendations under Section 11(1)(a) of the TRAI Act, 1997 (as amended) on the applicable reserve price, band plan, block size, quantum of spectrum to be auctioned, and associated conditions for auction of spectrum in the existing bands viz. 800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz, 2300 MHz, 2500 MHz, 3300 MHz and 26 GHz. DoT also sought TRAI's recommendations on the feasibility and timing of auction of the newly identified 6425-6725 MHz and 7025-7125 MHz bands, as well as fresh recommendations on the auction of spectrum in the 600 MHz band. Subsequently, DoT, through its letter dated 14.08.2025, requested TRAI to recommend a possible band plan for the 67 MHz spectrum between 1427-1518 MHz considering the need to assign a continuous 24 MHz block to the Government user.

In this regard, TRAI issued a consultation paper on the Auction of Radio Frequency Spectrum in the Frequency Bands Identified for International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT) on 30.09.2025 for seeking comments and counter comments from stakeholders on the issues raised in the consultation paper. Initially, the last dates for furnishing comments and counter comments were 28.10.2025 and 11.11.2025, respectively. However, considering the request of industry associations and stakeholders, the last dates for furnishing written comments and counter comments were extended to 04.11.2025 and 18.11.2025, respectively.

In response to the issues raised in the consultation paper, 19 stakeholders furnished comments, and 12 stakeholders furnished counter comments. As part of the consultation process, TRAI conducted an open house discussion (OHD) on the consultation paper through virtual mode on 12.12.2025.

Based on the comments received from stakeholders during the consultation process, and further analysis, TRAI has finalized its Recommendations on the Auction of Radio Frequency Spectrum in the Frequency Bands Identified for International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT). Salient points of the recommendations are given below:

A. **Recommendations on auction of frequency bands identified for IMT**

   a. Entire available spectrum in the 600 MHz, 800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz, 2300 MHz, 2500 MHz, 3300 MHz and 26 GHz frequency bands should be put to auction in the forthcoming auction.

b. DoT should immediately initiate action for taking back the spectrum held with the telecom service providers, which are engaged in corporate insolvency resolution process under Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016, and such spectrum should be put to auction in the forthcoming spectrum auction.
c. The spectrum in the frequency bands identified for IMT should be auctioned on Telecom Circle/ Metro Area basis with a validity period of 20 years.
d. Simultaneous Multiple Round Auction (SMRA)-based spectrum auction should be continued.
e. For participation in the forthcoming spectrum auction, the eligibility conditions, as prescribed in Notice Inviting Application (NIA) 2024, should be continued for all frequency bands identified for IMT i.e. authorisation for access service.
f. The net-worth requirement should be reduced from Rs. 100 crore per Licensed Service Area to Rs. 50 crore per Licensed Service Area (for Jammu & Kashmir and North East Licensed Service Areas from Rs. 50 crore to Rs. 25 crore each) for new entrants in the forthcoming auction of IMT spectrum.
g. To the extent possible, the TSPs should be assigned spectrum in a contiguous manner and DoT should carry out harmonization exercise immediately after conducting the auction, and such exercise should be completed within a time frame of not more than six months from the date of conclusion of the auction.

B. **Recommendations specific to existing bands viz. 800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz, 2300 MHz, 2500 MHz, 3300 MHz, and 26 GHz bands**

h. Band plans already adopted for the existing frequency bands, viz. 800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz, 2300 MHz, 2500 MHz, 3300 MHz, and 26 GHz bands in India, should be continued in the forthcoming auction.
a. Block Size and minimum bid quantity for the existing bands:

Spectrum Band	Block Size (MHz)	Minimum amount of spectrum that a bidder is required to bid for	
		Existing licensees (MHz)	New Entrants (MHz)
800 MHz	1.25 (Paired)	1.25	5, 1.25 (where less than 5 MHz is available)
900 MHz	0.20 (paired)	0.2	5, 0.2 (where less than 5 MHz is available)
1800 MHz	0.20 (paired)	0.2	5, 0.2 (where less than 5 MHz is available)
2100 MHz	5 (paired)	5	5

2300 MHz	10 (unpaired)	10	10
2500 MHz	10 (unpaired)	10	10
3300 MHz	10 (unpaired)	10	10
26 GHz	50 (unpaired)	50	100

Note: Any existing Access Service authorisation holder should be treated as a 'New Entrant' in the LSA(s) for the frequency bands in which it does not presently hold spectrum.

j. The rollout obligations for the existing frequency bands viz. 800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz, 2300 MHz, 2500 MHz, 3300 MHz, and 26 GHz bands should be the same as those prescribed for respective frequency bands in the Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) 2024.

C. **Recommendations on spectrum cap**

k. The spectrum cap has been recommended as below:

i. A spectrum cap of 35% on the total spectrum available for access services in the 600 MHz band (rounded off considering the block size in the 600 MHz band)
ii. A spectrum cap of 35% on the combined spectrum available for access services (including the spectrum assigned to private TSPs, and the spectrum assigned to/ reserved for PSU operators - for providing access services) in the 700 MHz, 800 MHz and 900 MHz bands
iii. A spectrum cap of 35% on the combined spectrum available for access services (including the spectrum assigned to private TSPs, and the spectrum assigned to/ reserved for PSU operators - for providing access services) in 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz, 2300 MHz and 2500 MHz bands
iv. A spectrum cap of 35% on the total spectrum available for access services (including the spectrum assigned to private TSPs, and the spectrum assigned to/ reserved for PSU operators - for providing access services) in 3300 MHz band (rounded off considering the block size in this band)
v. A spectrum cap of 35% on the total spectrum available for access services (including the spectrum assigned to private TSPs, and the spectrum assigned to/ reserved for PSU operators - for providing access services) in 26 GHz band (rounded off considering the block size in this band)
vi. A spectrum cap of 35% on the total spectrum available for access services (including the spectrum assigned to private TSPs, and the spectrum assigned to/ reserved for PSU operators - for providing access services) in 37-40 GHz band (rounded off considering the block size in this band).

ax. In line with the provision of NIA 2024, in case a TSP has already acquired spectrum that exceeds the spectrum cap of 35%, the TSP should not be asked to surrender right to use of any spectrum which it already holds.

D. **Recommendations specific to the 600 MHz band**

all. Frequency band n105 (600 MHz band) should be auctioned with a block size of 2 x 5 MHz, and the minimum number of blocks for bidding should be one.
n. While the spectrum charge may be levied for a period of 20 years, the validity period of the spectrum should be increased by four years, i.e., the usual 20 years *plus* 4 years.
o. The rollout obligations for the spectrum in the 600 MHz band should be the same as that appliable for other sub-1 GHz bands. However, it should be delayed by four years, i.e., no rollout obligations

for the initial four years, and the applicable rollout obligations should begin after an initial period of four years.

p. In addition to the upfront payment option, an additional payment option should be made available for the spectrum in the 600 MHz band, as given below:

> '5% upfront payment of the bid amount within 10 calendar days from the issuance of Demand Note. The buyer should be given a moratorium period of four years (i.e. no payment is required to be made from the 2nd year to the 5th year), and the balance amount should be payable in equal annual instalments over the remaining 19 years' period (starting from the beginning of the 6th year), payable in advance at the beginning of each year, after the period of moratorium, duly protecting the Net Present Value (NPV) of the bid amount at the applicable rate of interest.'

E. **Recommendations on the 6 GHz band (6425-6725 MHz and 7025-7125 MHz)**

q. Considering the importance of the 6 GHz (upper) band, it should be kept reserved for IMT.

r. The available frequency ranges in the 6 GHz (upper) band, viz. 6425-6725 MHz and 7025-7125 MHz should not be put to auction in the forthcoming auction. The issue of auctioning the spectrum in the 6 GHz (upper) band should be re-examined after considering the outcome of WRC-27.

s. DoT may carry out a plan (involving all TSPs) to conduct trials around all 34 locations where satellite uplink stations are located in the relevant frequencies (in-band and adjacent frequencies) to determine the requirement of the keep-out distance of IMT base stations from satellite uplink stations. The outcome of the trials may also be shared with TRAI.

F. **Recommendations on 1427-1518 MHz band**

t. The matter relating to the adoption of an appropriate band plan for 1427-1518 MHz frequency range should be re-examined after the Government decides to put this band to auction.

u. DoT may explore the possibility of taking up the matter with the regional and global standardization bodies for the creation of a suitable band plan for utilizing the frequency range for 1427-1518 MHz for Supplementary Uplink (SUL). The action taken and the outcome of the same may be shared with the Authority.

v. While allocating a 24 MHz block to the Government user, DoT should ensure that a contiguous 67 MHz block is available for IMT services.

G. **Recommendation for strengthening competition and demand**

w. TRAI's earlier recommendations with respect to the creation of a separate authorization under Unified License for Access Network Provider (network layer) to provide network services on a wholesale basis, recommended through the Recommendations dated 19.08.2021 on "Enabling Unbundling of Different Layers Through Differential Licensing", should be reconsidered for strengthening competition.

x. Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Provider (DCIP) authorisation and Cloud-hosted Telecom Network (CTN) Provider authorisations, proposed by DoT in the draft "Telecommunications (Authorisation for Telecommunication Network) Rules, 2025" dated 09.10.2025 should be expeditiously introduced under the Telecommunications Act, 2023.

y. Certain quantum of spectrum in the Time Division Duplexing (TDD)-based frequency bands (identified for IMT such as 2300 MHz/ 2500 MHz/ 3300 MHz/ 26 GHz/ 37-40 GHz bands should be set aside for Internet Service Providers (ISPs), Machine-to-Machine (M2M) providers and Captive Non-Public Networks (CNPNs).

z. After identification of suitable IMT frequency band(s) to be set aside for ISPs, M2M providers and CNPNs, DoT should send a reference to TRAI for seeking recommendations on the terms and conditions including reserve price for assignment of such spectrum.

H. **Recommendations on the scheme to incentivise access service providers to expand their mobile network coverage**

a. The following scheme should be launched so that access service providers are incentivized to expand their mobile network coverage in the areas which have no mobile network coverage and are not covered under the schemes of Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) [renamed as Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN)]. The broad contours of the scheme are given below:

i. Once the spectrum auction is concluded, the successful bidders of the spectrum should be permitted to opt for a reduction in the spectrum cost [upto 10% of the auction determined price (ADP)]. This option should be available for all Licensed Service Areas and for all frequency bands.

ii. In lieu of the reduction in the spectrum cost, the TSP should deploy new unique base stations sites to provide mobile broadband services (using 4G/ 5G technologies) using the spectrum in any of its frequency bands (existing/ newly acquired) at the locations identified by DoT (coverage holes) within a specific period of say one year from the date of identification of such locations.

iii. The number of unique base stations sites to be deployed may be worked out by dividing the reduction in the spectrum cost by the estimated cost of deploying a new base station site. For estimation of the cost of deploying a new base station site, one of the options could be to consider the cost of site (capex + opex for five years) as estimated under the latest USOF (DBN) projects. In case DoT is of the view that the cost under USOF (DBN) projects is on a higher side, the same may be rationalized to make it more realistic for a pan-India scenario.

iv. For the base stations sites so deployed, mandatory site sharing at a reasonable and non-discriminatory price should also be prescribed to ensure that coverage of multiple TSPs is available in such areas.

v. In case a licensed service area is found to have fewer coverage holes and thereby lower requirement of new base station sites in licensed service area, telecom service providers should be asked to deploy unique base station sites at the locations identified by DoT in other licensed service areas.

I. **Recommendations on Reserve Price and Payment Options**

ab. Recommended Reserve Price for various spectrum bands (for 20 years) is as per table given below:

Reserve Price of spectrum per MHz for 20 years									
Service Area	600 MHz band	800 MHz band	900 MHz band	1800 MHz band	2100 MHz band	2300 MHz band	2500 MHz band	3300 MHz band	26 GHz band

	(Paired)					(Unpaired)			
	(In Rs. Crore)								(in Rs. lakhs)
Andhra Pradesh	233	182	217	127	90	38	38	20	43
Assam	52	47	50	28	28	9	8	4	8
Bihar	133	108	124	97	56	16	17	10	21
Delhi	441	327	327	214	192	73	74	34	71
Gujarat	196	151	151	108	94	37	32	17	38
Haryana	66	51	51	36	28	12	10	5	11
Himachal Pradesh	25	20	20	13	9	7	4	2	4
Jammu & Kashmir	14	12	13	8	5	4	2	1	1
Karnataka	185	142	166	102	81	44	33	15	31
Kerala	105	82	82	49	43	18	16	8	16
Kolkata	109	81	102	62	44	20	20	11	24
Madhya Pradesh	140	111	111	114	53	17	18	11	22
Maharashtra	259	201	201	141	101	44	39	22	48
Mumbai	292	215	215	166	118	65	58	26	58

North East	14	12	12	8	4	4	3	1	1
Orissa	65	53	59	34	24	10	9	5	9
Punjab	88	68	120	49	35	18	14	7	15
Rajasthan	125	99	155	67	56	15	16	9	20
Tamil Nadu	212	164	188	100	97	55	40	17	36
U. P. (East)	232	194	214	212	99	23	26	14	27
U.P. (West)	174	161	165	80	68	20	22	12	24
West Bengal	112	91	114	68	39	14	14	8	16

bc. Recommended payment options for various spectrum bands are as follows:

I. Payment terms for the 800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz, 2300 MHz, 2500 MHz, 3300 MHz and 26 GHz spectrum bands - two options, as given below:

(i) Full or part upfront payment option, and

(ii) 20 equal annual instalments option.

II. Payment terms for the assignment of spectrum in the 600 MHz spectrum band: two options, as given below:

i. Full or part upfront payment option, and
ii. 5% upfront payment of the bid amount within 10 calendar days from the issuance of Demand Note. The buyer should be given a moratorium period of four years (i.e. no payment is required to be made from the 2nd year to the 5th year), and the balance amount should be payable in equal annual instalments over the remaining 19 years' period (starting from the beginning of the 6th year), payable in advance at the beginning of each year, after the period of moratorium, duly protecting the Net Present Value (NPV) of the bid amount at the applicable rate of interest.

J. **Periodicity for Conduct of Fresh Valuation Exercise**

CD. The periodicity for conducting a fresh valuation exercise is as outlined below and is consistent with the provisions specified in the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Recommendations on the Auction of Spectrum in frequency bands identified for IMT/5G dated 11.04.2022.

I. For existing bands (including for the bands being put to auction for the first time in the forthcoming auction), a fresh spectrum valuation exercise be conducted once every three years; a suitable reference be made to the Authority by Government for this purpose.

II. For auctions conducted in the interim period between periodic valuation exercises conducted once every three years,

i. for LSAs where the spectrum put to auction in a previous auction is sold, the auction determined prices (duly indexed using applicable MCLR if more than one year has elapsed since the previous auction) should be used for arriving at the reserve prices for the next auction;

ii. for LSAs, where spectrum remains unsold in previous auctions, past recommended reserve price (without indexation) should be used.

III. For new spectrum bands, to be put to auction for first time, a reference be sent to the Authority, as per established procedure as and when these bands are proposed to be put to auction.

IV. However, if required, DoT may seek fresh reserve prices from the Authority for the existing bands, providing a full and reasoned justification for the same.

The Recommendations have been placed on the TRAI's website (www.trai.gov.in). For any clarification/ information Shri Akhilesh Kumar Trivedi, Advisor (Networks, Spectrum and Licensing), TRAI may be contacted at Telephone Number +91-11-20907758.

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