



AUSPI Media Release: Unprecedented and virulent attack by incumbent GSM operators on an Independent Regulator is an attempt to browbeat Government to accept the few remaining issues from their wish-list that TRAI has not accepted

- AUSPI terms recommendations as well balanced, progressive and transparent unlike past instances of spectrum allocations well over legal entitlement to incumbent GSM operators.
- AUSPI says recommendations are pro-consumer and will help bridge digital divide by linking spectrum allocation with roll-out obligations.
- AUSPI says that while no Association or operator has got all issues from their wish-list accepted by TRAI, TRAI has accepted far more of the wish-list of incumbent GSM operators than AUSPI members.
- Yet, vicious and unprecedented attack continues – this has never happened in the sector before and against an independent regulator in any sector, anywhere in the world.
- AUSPI terms vicious attack by incumbent GSM operators an attempt to force the Government and Authority to give in on the few remaining issues from their wish-list that TRAI has not accepted.
- Browbeating Government in line with past behavior of incumbent GSM operators, who have received huge largesse in the past – without any additional charges and without any checks.
- AUSPI gives examples of previous gifts from Government to incumbent GSM operators – change of licencing regime to revenue share, doubling of licence period at no additional charge, allocation up to massive excess spectrum of 10 MHz in a totally non-transparent manner and with no additional charges, frequent reduction in licence fees etc. AUSPI says, an attempt to stop the continuing largesse to incumbent GSM operators is the reason for the virulent attack.
- AUSPI shows how TRAI recommendations are nearly totally in line with incumbent GSM operators’ wish-list – dropping of subscriber linked criteria (SLC) for additional spectrum, accepting of spectrum sharing, delinking of spectrum from licence, levying merger charges, no re-farming of 900 MHz immediately, increasing spectrum limit for GSM operators etc.

- TRAI has rejected far more of AUSPI and its members wish-list – 20 year validity for dual technology, no licence fee on ISP and IP-1, no perpetuity of licence, no definite 3G forward path for CDMA, practically no increase in spectrum limits for CDMA etc.
- Despite this, AUSPI says that, while it has expressed its disappointment in some areas where it believes TRAI has been unfair, it has broadly supported the TRAI and understands the Authority has to take a balanced view of various stakeholder needs for the good of the sector and of consumers.
- AUSPI says that incumbent GSM operators had welcomed DoT's Second Spectrum Committee Report. TRAI recommendations are very much similar but as these are now closer to implementation, they are being attacked by the very same operators who had earlier welcomed very similar recommendations.
- AUSPI hopes TRAI and the Government will not buckle to this vicious and virulent blackmail and will continue to maintain independence.
- One of AUSPI's Member i.e., Tata TeleServices suggests that:

Dual technology operators who are existing operators is a separate category and DoT action of placing Tata Tele after new UAS licensees is in-appropriate .Tata Tele which paid dual tech fee before 30 months has received partial spectrum in 9 circles and is yet to receive in Delhi and AUSPI requests that the order of priorities suggested by TRAI need a correction in as much as first priority should be given to Tata Tele as regards initial spectrum.

As there is no 2G spectrum available and as it has been made available without paying market price, the spectrum above the permissible limits needs to be withdrawn and in case of mergers spectrum above the permissible level should not be allowed to be retained as it would encourage hoarding of spectrum.

**S. C. KHANNA
SECRETARY GENERAL**