



# TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA



## Recommendations

on

## Issues related to Community Radio Stations

22<sup>nd</sup> March 2023

**Mahanagar Doorsanchar Bhawan**

**Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg**

**New Delhi-110002**

Website: [www.trai.gov.in](http://www.trai.gov.in)

## Contents

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
I.	Introduction	1
II.	Issues related to Community Radio Stations	3
III.	Summary of Recommendations	25
	List of Acronyms	27
<b>Annexure</b>		
I	Reference dated 11.11.2021 from MIB	28
II	Reference dated 17.01.2022 from MIB	31
III	Status of Community Radio Stations	32
IV	MIB OM dated 21 May 2012	33
V	MIB OM dated 3rd February 2022	37

## **Chapter I**

### **Introduction**

- 1.1. The power of community radio to be an instrument of change for distinct groups/ communities is well recognized. A Community Radio Station (CRS) serves the interests of the community concerned through dissemination of relevant information, ideas and knowledge. The CRS provides opportunity to people from far flung areas. CRS becomes a means of empowerment to underprivileged and unconnected sections of society. CRSs are also the repository of local culture, traditions, language, and traditional knowledge.
- 1.2. The Government announced a policy for the grant of license for setting up of CRS in December 2002. The policy was aimed at providing radio stations for well-established educational institutions, including IITs/IIMs, with certain conditions. The objectives of the policy, *inter-alia*, included promoting local culture and sharing of socially relevant information within the community. The first CRS in the country became operational on 1st February 2004 at Anna University, Chennai. As per the policy, initially, the license period was three years.
- 1.3. In December 2006, the Government announced a revised policy for CRS, bringing non-profit community-based organizations, apart from educational institutes, under its ambit. This included civil society and voluntary organizations, State Agriculture Universities (SAU), Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) institutions, Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), registered societies and autonomous bodies and public trusts registered under Societies Act or any other such act relevant for the purpose. The validity period of license was also enhanced to five years.

- 1.4. At present, 408 CRS<sup>1</sup> are operational. These CRS provide developmental, agricultural, health, educational, environmental, social welfare, community development and cultural programs for meeting the special interests and needs of the local communities.
- 1.5. MIB, vide its references dated 11.11.2021 (**Annexure-I**) and 17.01.2022 (**Annexure-II**), requested the Authority to provide its recommendations, under section 11(1)(a)(ii) and 11(1) (d) of the TRAI Act, 1997 on the following issues:
- (i) Inclusion of not-for-profit companies, registered under Section 8 of Companies Act 2013, in the list of eligible organizations.
  - (ii) Increasing of license period from existing period of 5 years to 10 years
  - (iii) Maximum duration of advertisement per hour of broadcast on CRS
  - (iv) Number of CR Stations operated in each district of operation by Not-for-profit organizations, operating in multiple districts.
- 1.6. To deliberate on the issues referred to by MIB, the Authority issued a Consultation Paper (CP) on 'Issues related to Community Radio Stations' on 21 July 2022. Written comments and counter-comments on the CP were invited from stakeholders by 31 August 2022 and 14 September 2022 respectively. All comments received have been posted on the TRAI's website. Subsequently, an Open House Discussion was held through video conferencing mode on 11 November 2022.
- 1.7. After carefully examining and analyzing various issues emanating from the written submissions of the stakeholders, the Open House Discussion and international practices, the Authority has finalized its recommendations. Chapter II discusses various issues related to CRS. A summary of the recommendations is provided in Chapter III.

---

<sup>1</sup> Information obtained from MIB on 13.02.2023 (Annexure-III)

## **Chapter II**

### **Issues related to Community Radio Stations**

#### **A. Eligibility criteria**

- 2.1 In the existing guidelines for CRS, not-for-profit companies registered under section 8 of the Companies Act 2013, are not explicitly mentioned in the list of eligible organizations considered for establishment of CRS. Therefore, MIB has sought TRAI's recommendations on the subject. Accordingly, in the CP, stakeholders were asked whether the not-for-profit companies, registered under section 8 of the Companies Act 2013, be permitted to establish Community Radio Stations. Also, comments were sought as to whether the existing terms and conditions for establishment of Community Radio Stations and Government's supporting scheme be made applicable to such not-for-profit companies.
- 2.2 Some stakeholders are in favour of allowing Section 8 companies to hold CRS license. They are of the opinion that it will aid in the faster growth of community radio in the country and ensure wider outreach amplifying impact. Such stakeholders suggested that it will give an opportunity for CRS to be set up in remote districts which do not have coverage by FM radio station(s). These stakeholders believe that allowing capable organizations, having the capacity to operate and sustain a CRS, would help providing more professional broadcasting services.
- 2.3 Few stakeholders also pointed that the existing policy guidelines for community radio already mention "registered societies and autonomous bodies and public trusts registered under Societies Act or any other such act relevant for the purpose." Such stakeholders mentioned that existing provisions already provide a window for Section 8 companies established as not-for-profit entities to be permitted to establish CR stations.

- 2.4 Some stakeholders have, however, expressed reservations on permitting section 8 companies to establish CRS. Such stakeholders have mentioned that section 8 companies can be established for 'promotion of a religion' and a CRS administered by such company may lead to development of communal disharmony. Some stakeholders also mentioned that there is no bar on Section 8 company having a 'for-profit' subsidiary which may allow a back door entry for a 'for-profit' company. One stakeholder has stated that section 8 companies are allowed to merge with other companies of similar objects. The stakeholder further mentioned that such companies, on merger, could pass the CRS license benefits to other companies defying the 'non-transferable' nature of the CRS license.
- 2.5 Some stakeholders, including private FM Radio operators, have mentioned that permitting the section 8 companies to set up CRS may alter the level playing field. It has been submitted that there is a minimal cost in obtaining the license for establishing CRS and permitting the section 8 companies would allow the large corporations to secure such licenses without need to participate in auctions and spending large amounts in fees, infrastructure cost etc. Some stakeholders have mentioned that as per rates published by Phonographic Performance Ltd (PPL) and Indian Performing Rights Society (IPRS), royalty charges for the music payable by CRS are miniscule as compared to private FM radio channels (higher of-Rs 50,000/- or 5% of Gross Advertising Revenue for CRS as compared to 5% of Gross Revenues, subject to minimum guaranteed license fee ranging from 4,50,000/- for Tier D city to as high as Rs.17,00,000/- for Tier A+ city for private FM Radio). They further mentioned that allowing section 8 companies would even encourage such companies related to big corporates, to apply and get CRS license. As per stakeholders, in such case, the CRS license will allow big corporations to pay music royalty at extremely low rates. Some stakeholders mentioned that section 8

companies may use the license to promote their own services and products which at present they do by availing the services of private FM radio channels. They are of the opinion that this may create monetization difficulties for private FM stations.

- 2.6 One stakeholder pointed out that the content on CRS owned by Section 8 companies may be thematic in nature viz. artistic, scientific, religious, due to the nature of these companies and may not be relevant for the heterogeneous population residing in the limited geography covered by the CRS. According to another stakeholder, these companies may not adhere to the basic principles of community radio, such as local community participation, voluntarism, and local content in favour of a more professionally driven management. A few stakeholders are of the opinion that if section 8 companies are allowed to establish CRS, no frequencies will be left for community-based organizations and NGOs.

**Analysis:**

- 2.7 Radio can influence and mold public opinion to a great extent. Therefore, to prevent mischievous and irresponsible elements from obtaining access to this powerful medium, laying down eligibility conditions for award of license is necessary. While determining the eligibility criteria for CRS licenses, there is an additional need to confirm that every licensee will be abiding by the community radio principles and work towards the interest of the local community.
- 2.8 As per existing policy guidelines, an organization desirous of operating a CRS must be:
- a) a Legal Entity i.e., it should be registered under the registration of Societies Act or any other such act relevant to the purpose;
  - b) explicitly constituted as a 'non-profit' organization.

- 2.9 Not-for-profit companies, registered under section 8 of the Companies Act 2013 fulfill both the above-mentioned eligibility conditions. Therefore, the Authority notes that the existing guidelines already provide a window for Section 8 companies established as not-for-profit entities to establish CRS. Existing CRS guidelines also include some classes of applicants that are not eligible for Community Radio Service. The same conditions should be applicable to section 8 companies applying for CRS.
- 2.10 In 2008, in “Recommendations on Issues relating to entry of certain entities into Broadcasting and Distribution activities” TRAI recommended the following:

***“3.45.4.3. Having regard to the foregoing factors, the Authority is of the view that religious bodies may not be permitted to own their own broadcasting stations and teleports. The Authority accordingly recommends that the disqualifications as contained in Item 2 of Part I of the Schedule to the Broadcasting Bill, 1997 as regards disqualification of religious bodies (as enumerated in paragraph 3.42.1 above) may be incorporated in the proposed new legislation on broadcasting. However, such disqualification should not be construed to mean that religious contents in the broadcasting channels should not be allowed, so long as such content is in conformity with the appropriate content code or programme code as prescribed from time to time by the Government. Broadcasting channels may be permitted to carry programmes aimed at the propagation of different religious faiths subject to strict compliance with the applicable content code or programme code, as the case may be.***

***3.45.4.4. Even though the Authority does not see any reason for taking a view different than the one recommended in the preceding paragraph by the Authority, particularly because the recommendation is in consonance with the basic secular fabric of the Constitution and the need to balance the rights of religious bodies to propagate their faiths with the maintenance of public order and societal harmony, in case the Central Government deems***



**it appropriate to review the disqualifications as contained in the Broadcasting Bill, 1997 in the proposed new legislation on broadcasting, in that event, the Authority recommends that the Central Government may appropriately consider, as a matter of public policy, the questions as to ---**

**(a) the eligibility requirements, if any, to be prescribed in the case of religious bodies for such entry, (such as the requirement as to registration under the Companies Act, 1956, etc.)**

**(b) the legal framework to be laid down for prevention of misuse or abuse of the broadcasting permission by any such body;**

**(c) the mechanism for ensuring strict compliance with the programme code and advertising code by such bodies,**

**keeping in view, inter alia, the availability of resources like radio frequencies in different bandwidths and their optimum utilisation in the national interest, the balancing of the requirements for the available frequencies for use in different sectors like telecommunication, defence, broadcasting, etc., and the difficulties involved in the enforcement of the programme code and advertising code, etc. in the case of religious bodies. However, the Authority, even at the cost of repetition, would reiterate the significance of recommendation made in paragraph 3.45.4.3.”**

- 2.11 Further the para 3.42.1 of the above-mentioned recommendations which provides relevant clause of the Broadcasting Bill, 1997 regarding disqualification of religious bodies from entering into broadcasting sector, is also reproduced below:

**“3.42.1. It is, however, seen that in India, the Broadcasting Bill, 1997 (which was not enacted into law) had proposed to disqualify religious bodies from entering into broadcasting sector. Clause 2 of Part I of the Schedule to the said Bill contained the following provisions in this regard, namely:-**

**“2. Disqualification of religious bodies.**

- (a) A body whose objectives are wholly or mainly of a religious nature;**
- (b) A body which is controlled by a body referred to in clause (a) or by two or more such bodies taken together.**
- (c) A body which controls a body referred to in clause (a);**
- (d) A body corporate which is associate of a body corporate referred to in clause (a), (b) or (c);**
- (e) A body corporate in which a body referred to in any of clauses (a) to (d) is a participant which more than five per cent. interest;**
- (f) An individual who is an officer of a body referred to in clause (a); and**
- (g) A body which is controlled by an individual referred to in clause (f) or by two or more such individuals taken together.””**

2.12 The above recommendation about restriction on religious body is still pending with MIB. The Authority is of the view that issues regarding disqualification of religious bodies from owning broadcasting channels as mentioned in its ‘Recommendations on Issues relating to entry of certain entities into Broadcasting and Distribution activities’ dated 12.11.2008 are still relevant.

2.13 Policy Guidelines issued by MIB in 2006 for setting up Community Radio Stations in India prescribes ‘Basic Principles’ for operating a CRS station. The ‘Basic Principles’ are reproduced below:

*An organization desirous of operating a Community Radio Station (CRS) must be able to satisfy and adhere to the following principles:*

- a) It should be explicitly constituted as a ‘non-profit’ organization and should have a proven record of at least three years of service to the local community.*
- b) The CRS to be operated by it should be designed to serve a specific well defined local community.*
- c) It should have an ownership and management structure that is reflective of the community that the CRS seeks to serve.*

*d) Programmes for broadcast should be relevant to the educational, developmental, social and cultural needs of the community.*

*e) It must be a Legal Entity i.e., it should be registered (under the registration of Societies Act or any other such act relevant to the purpose).*

Therefore, the not-for-profit companies, established under section 8 of the Companies Act 2013, desirous of operating a Community Radio Station must satisfy and adhere to these basic principles.

2.14 **The Authority recommends that:**

- i. Not-for-profit companies established under Section 8 of Companies Act 2013 are already covered in the extant eligibility criteria for CRS.**
- ii. The existing criteria prescribed in MIB guidelines barring certain types of entities for setting up Community Radio Stations are equally applicable to Section 8 companies also.**

2.15 **The Authority reiterates its recommendations regarding disqualification of religious bodies from owning broadcasting channels including Community Radio Stations as mentioned in its ‘Recommendations on Issues relating to entry of certain entities into Broadcasting and Distribution activities’ dated 12.11.2008.**

## **B. Term of License Period and Extension**

2.16 The existing policy guidelines for setting up CRSs prescribe the period of license as five years. The first extension of 5 years is granted on application and verification of adherence to the terms and conditions. For the second extension i.e., extension beyond 10 years, the continuous operation of CRS by the license holder for 10 years is treated as ground for extension. In the CP, stakeholders were asked whether the present five-year period was adequate and to suggest a period of extension on expiry of the initial period

of license for a CRS. They were also asked to suggest additional terms and conditions for extension/ renewal of the license for CRS.

- 2.17 In response, stakeholders suggested that the prescribed license period should be 10 years. They pointed out that the process for obtaining the license is lengthy and difficult and a 10-year license will provide a sense of security to the organization to prepare a sustainable strategy to operate the community radio.
- 2.18 Some stakeholders said that the period of license of five years is adequate. They pointed out that CRSs are using the scarce spectrum therefore the five- year license period allows the Ministry to weed out non-functional or non-compliant entities after a limited period.
- 2.19 Some stakeholders said that the current guidelines for extension and renewal of CRS license are sufficient. Another set of stakeholders mentioned that CRSs are not professionally run commercial enterprises and suggested an extension period between ten to twelve years. One stakeholder suggested an initial extension of five years and a subsequent extension of ten years.
- 2.20 Some stakeholders suggested a peer review process for stations coming up for renewal. They also suggested regular audits to ensure that the license terms are scrupulously complied with during the entire previous license period (and not only part of it) and the grants and support provided by Government are properly utilized. A stakeholder suggested that there should be a fresh security clearance, twice a year where the DM or SDM of respective subdivision or IB officers submit a report to MIB on the operations of the CRS.

2.21 Some stakeholders suggested that number of hours of content produced, the amount of original content produced and the relevance of content to the area served should be considered as important parameters for renewal/extension of license.

**Analysis:**

2.22 The Authority agrees that the duration of the initial license should provide adequate time for the CRS license holder to physically establish the station. In addition, adequate time is also required for building contacts and connections within the local community; assess their needs and develop programming capabilities. Furthermore, a CRS is like a social entrepreneurship organization. Certainty and continuity of operations is important for CRS. Such an institution requires capital expense, manpower resources (even if a small number), training/skilling of manpower etc. Such manpower also looks for certainty of operations. Therefore, the Authority agrees that a ten years' license period will help provide a sense of security to the CRS owners. It will also promote futuristic business planning by the stakeholders. It will encourage more players to enter the community radio domain and help make the CRS ecosystem more viable.

2.23 TRAI in its recommendations on 'Issues related to Community Radio Stations' dated 29<sup>th</sup> August 2014 had recommended the following regarding extension of CRS license:

**(i) The period of permission should be extended for a period of five years, at a time.**

**(ii) The first extension, i.e., on completion of the initial permission period of five years, may be granted on the basis of an application and verification of adherence to the terms and**

**conditions of the permission. The application is to be submitted in the fourth year of operation.**

- (iii) A performance evaluation format should be developed by MIB, in consultation with the stakeholders, and placed in the public domain. CRSs applying for extension beyond ten years should submit the performance evaluation report, duly filled in, along with their application one year before end of the permission period.**
- (iv) If it is found that the CRS has performed satisfactorily, the CRS should be considered for a further extension. The application for extension will be considered along with other fresh applications, if any.**
- (v) The procedure described in (iii) and (iv) above will be adopted for all applications for extension beyond ten years of operation.**

2.24 MIB, on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2017 made the following amendments to CRS guidelines related to extension of license:

**“4(viii): Grant of Permission: Agreement shall be extended for a period of five (5) years at a time. First extension shall be granted on the basis of an application and verification of adherence to the terms and conditions of the permission. The application for extension shall be submitted in the fourth year of operation.**

**4(ix): For second extension i.e extension beyond ten (10) years, the continuous operation of CRS by the permission holder for 10 years will be treated as ground for extension. CRS should submit their application for extension of permission one year before end of the permission period.”**

2.25 The Authority notes that the provisions related to extension of CRS license have been incorporated in the existing guidelines by MIB subsequent to acceptance of TRAI's recommendations dated 29<sup>th</sup> August 2014. Accordingly, the Authority is of the view that the present guidelines as mentioned in previous para for extension of CRS license are adequate. However, as regards the period of extension, the views of the stakeholders are divergent.

2.26 A long time period may inhibit innovation and creativity if the operating CRSs are not monitored regularly. Without proper monitoring the license holders of non-operational CRS will continue to retain the spectrum allocation. Spectrum being a scarce resource, non-utilization of the same is in no-one's interest. Furthermore, it deprives other competent entities of the opportunity to start a CRS in the same area. Hence, the Authority believes that every license holder should provide proof of their continued operation, every year. An annual report for "continued service" from the concerned authorities of the district must be obtained by every CRS. Such a report may be made part of the application process for renewal/extension of the Community Radio Station.

2.27 **The Authority recommends that:**

- i. The Grant of Permission Agreement period should be increased from five (5) years to ten (10) years.**
- ii. Present policy guidelines for extension/ renewal of CRS permission are adequate and should be continued.**
- iii. Community Radio Station permission holders should be required to obtain a continued service report every year from the SDM of the concerned District. Such reports should be submitted to MIB by the CRS Permission Holder at the time of seeking renewal/ extension of the CRS permission.**

### **C. Duration of Advertisements**

- 2.28 The current CRS policy guidelines permit seven minutes of advertisement per hour on a CRS. In its reference MIB sought recommendations from TRAI regarding the maximum duration of advertisements per hour of broadcast on CRS. Accordingly, in the CP, stakeholders were asked whether there is a need to revise the existing limit of 7 minutes per hour on duration of advertisement on CRS.
- 2.29 In response, stakeholders in favour of increasing the limit on the duration of advertisements suggested that it should be between ten to twenty minutes as according to them no additional income for CRS is available. They are of the opinion that increasing the time limit will increase the financial strength and the quality of the program. Most of them suggested a limit of twelve minutes per hour. In their opinion extending the advertisements time limit will motivate CRS to explore the possibility of mobilizing advertisement from their communities and earning revenue from other sources and make them sustainable. One stakeholder pointed out the rural advertisers do not understand the importance of duration and produce longer advertisements (generally producing 60-90s extending up to 2 mins per single ads). Even if they do not want to produce such ads, CRSs are compelled to do so for sustaining, pointed out the stakeholder.
- 2.30 In response to reasons for slow growth of CRS in the country, stakeholders pointed out that there is no adequate fund for operating a CRS and it is hard to sustain the CR over a long period of time. According to these stakeholders, proper and regular funding support from the Ministry or other sources are either not available or minimum. They also pointed out that the availability of local advertisements is less. They pointed out that a regular media campaign through BOC and DAVP is not available, and the pending dues have not been paid for years.

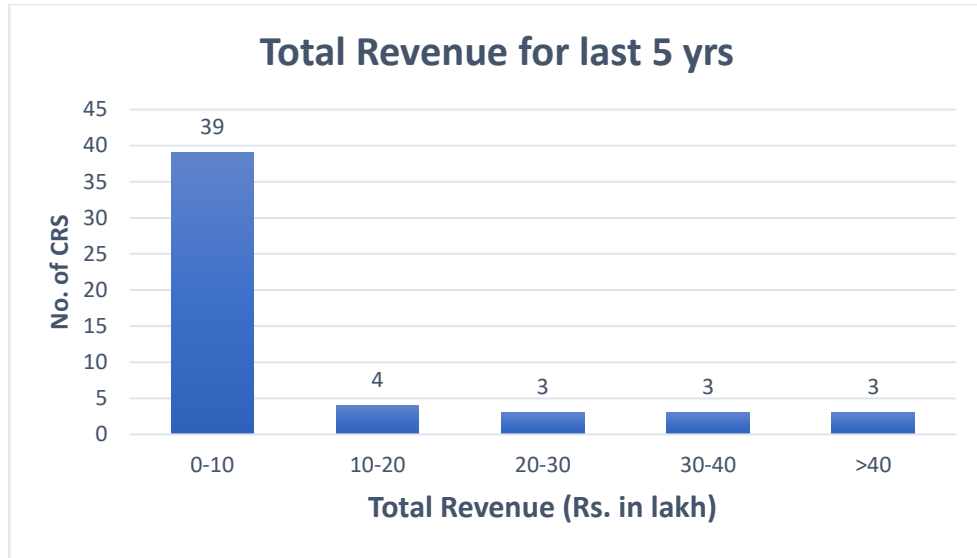


2.31. On the other hand, some stakeholders were not in favour of increasing the duration of advertisement beyond seven minutes per hour. They were of the opinion that 7 minutes per hour is sufficient for a CRS to recover their operating costs. They are of the opinion that extending the existing limit may lead to over commercialization of CRSs. One stakeholder mentioned that CRS are already getting financial assistance from the government and sufficient revenues are generated through advertisements from both businesses and government. Some stakeholders pointed out that only about 10-15% of the stations have been able to reach the earlier limit of 5 minutes of advertising per hour and are very rarely able to reach the revised limit of 7 minutes per hour. They further stated that most of the CRS cater to deprived sections of society in relatively marginalized geographies that hardly constitute an attractive audience for advertisers.

**Analysis:**

2.32. The Authority notes that the limit of seven minutes of advertisements per hour of broadcast was imposed to prevent the over commercialization of community radio. The said limit was also decided after considering the possible impact on private FM radio stations of permitting advertisements on CRSs. As per data provided to TRAI by Fifty-Two (52) CRS operators (Figure 1), thirty-nine (39) CRS operators have a total revenue of less than Rs. Ten lakh for the last five years.

**Figure 1: Total revenue of CRS in last 5 years**



2.33. The data reflects that the current limit of 7 minutes per hour of advertising may be restricting CRSs to generate sufficient revenues for sustainable operations. While private FM stations do not have any bar on advertising duration, they are required to participate in auctions for obtaining radio frequency and pay an annual license fee. As per Cable Television Network Rules 1994, advertisements of up to twelve (12) minutes<sup>2</sup> per hour are permitted. Increasing the time limit of advertising to 12 minutes per hour in CRS is expected to enable CRS by accommodating more advertisements from local businesses as well as government agencies. More advertising is expected to improve the financial stability of CRS. Authority expects that CRS will prosper when every station becomes self-sustainable.

2.34. **The Authority recommends that the duration of advertisement on a CRS should be increased from seven (7) minutes per hour to twelve (12) minutes per hour.**

<sup>2</sup> The Cable Television Network Rules 1994, sub rule 11 of Rule 7 regarding Advertising Code: (11) No programme shall carry advertisements exceeding 12 minutes per hour, which may include up to 10 minutes per hour of commercial advertisements, and up to 2 minutes per hour of a channel's self-promotional programmes.

#### **D. Ownership of Multiple CRSs**

- 2.35. As per existing guidelines, only Central / State Universities, including autonomous bodies and Agricultural Universities set up under them, having more than one campus, are permitted to operate CRS at more than one place. The only restriction is that the distance between two CRS established by same organization should not be less than 25 Kms. Other eligible organizations are not permitted to operate more than one CRS. Accordingly, in the CP, stakeholders were asked whether the not-for-profit organizations, operating in multiple districts, may be allowed to set up multiple CRS in their area of operation. They were also asked to specify any additional terms and conditions along with the cap on the number of licenses granted to such not-for-profit organizations.
- 2.36. In response, some stakeholders are in favour of allowing the not-for-profit organizations operating in multiple districts to be allowed to setup multiple CRS in their area of operation. They mentioned that similar provisions for educational institutes are already present in the existing guidelines and same could be extended to all other CRS. One stakeholder suggested a need to evolve location specific model for each segment, considering the cultural, social, traditional, economical, geographical, political, and environmental issues of the people in mind. It further stated that CRS, being highly location and culturally specific in terms of its ownership and operation, can address these differences. Some stakeholders suggested multiple licenses for NGOs should be permitted as they bring in the needed expertise and experience to establish a community radio service for another deprived community at a different geographical area to bridge the information gaps.
- 2.37. Some stakeholders have suggested a cap of 2 to 3 stations per organization. One stakeholder proposed that there should be no cap on the number of licenses that can be granted to such organizations as the

value that they might create with a successful model of community radio ought to be replicated all over the country.

2.38. One stakeholder suggested that a CRS should be allowed to hold multiple licenses only if it is able to prove that its model of operation is sustainable; and produce more original content that is relevant for the community it serves. Another stakeholder suggested that both CR stations should satisfy certain proximity criteria (such as being at least 25 km apart). One stakeholder suggested following conditions for holding multiple CRS licenses:

- a) Its parent organization should be working in that area for a minimum of 03 years;
- b) old CRS must be operational for a minimum of 10-13 years;
- c) old CRS must have received first prize CR National Award in past in any category from the MIB;
- d) organization must be aware of language & culture of that new area, etc.

2.39. Some stakeholders are not in favour of giving multiple licenses to any organization. According to them this will conflict with the motto of CRS as creation of media chains and promotion of conglomerates run counter to the spirit of community radio. Some stakeholders mentioned that a single owner establishing multiple stations across different districts or states would promote homogeneous content and stifle local production. One stakeholder was of the opinion that multiple CRS in multiple districts is not reasonable, there should be only one CRS in a state by a not-for profit organization.

**Analysis:**

2.40. The Authority is of the view that allowing competent organizations with required expertise and experience to hold multiple CRSs will ensure

growth of community radio across the country. Capable organizations establishing CRSs at different geographical locations will help in bridging the information gap in remote areas. Moreover, it will help in promoting local artists and local culture-based events. It may also help in reducing the operational expenditure of the stations.

2.41. The Authority is also aware that allowing an indefinite number of CRSs from a single organization may deter plurality of content and hamper the values of community radio. Therefore, an adequate cap on the number of licenses is necessary. The Authority has decided that to start with a limit of six (6) CRS licenses pan India per organization may be prescribed. Based on the experience, the Authority may review this limit in future.

2.42. To comply with the principles of community radio it is also important that CRS in each district has its own local artists/ management. It should not be controlled by central administration working remotely. Participation of the local community and broadcast of local content needs to be ensured. Hence, an organization allowed to set up multiple CRSs should submit an annual undertaking confirming that the programs/ radio-announcers and other staff have been deployed locally. Such an undertaking may be made part of application for second or subsequent CRS permissions. Further, such undertaking may be submitted to local administration (o/o SDM) when applying for annual business continuance report every year.

2.43. **The Authority recommends that:**

- i. An eligible organization that operates in multiple districts should be allowed to set up multiple CRS in their area of operation.**
- ii. An organization should be allowed to set up a maximum of six (6) CRS throughout the country.**

- iii. The organizations setting up multiple CRS should ensure participation of the local community and broadcast content relevant to the community served by the respective CRS.**
- iv. An organization seeking to set up multiple stations should submit an undertaking confirming that the programs will be prepared locally and not sent from other CRS. Such an undertaking may be submitted to O/o local SDM every year while seeking the annual continuance report.**

### **E. Growth of CRS in India**

- 2.44. In the CP, stakeholders were asked to list the factors responsible for slow growth of CRS in India. They were also asked whether the current scheme for 'Supporting Community Radio Movement in India' is adequate to promote the CRS in India and to suggest other measures that can be undertaken to promote faster growth of CRS in India.
- 2.45. In response, many stakeholders mentioned that the lengthy and complex process of obtaining the licenses has been a clear deterrent in the growth of CRS in the country. They have mentioned that the license to set up CRS is granted only when mandatory clearances from Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Defense and Wireless Planning and Coordination Wing of Ministry of Communications & Information Technology are obtained. They also pointed out that clearances from Ministry of Human Resource Development in case of Educational Institutions and Ministry of Agriculture in case of State Agriculture Institutions, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) institutions and Krishi Vigyan Kendras are also required. They submitted that the process of obtaining SACFA clearance and WOL for WPC needs to be streamlined in a time bound manner.

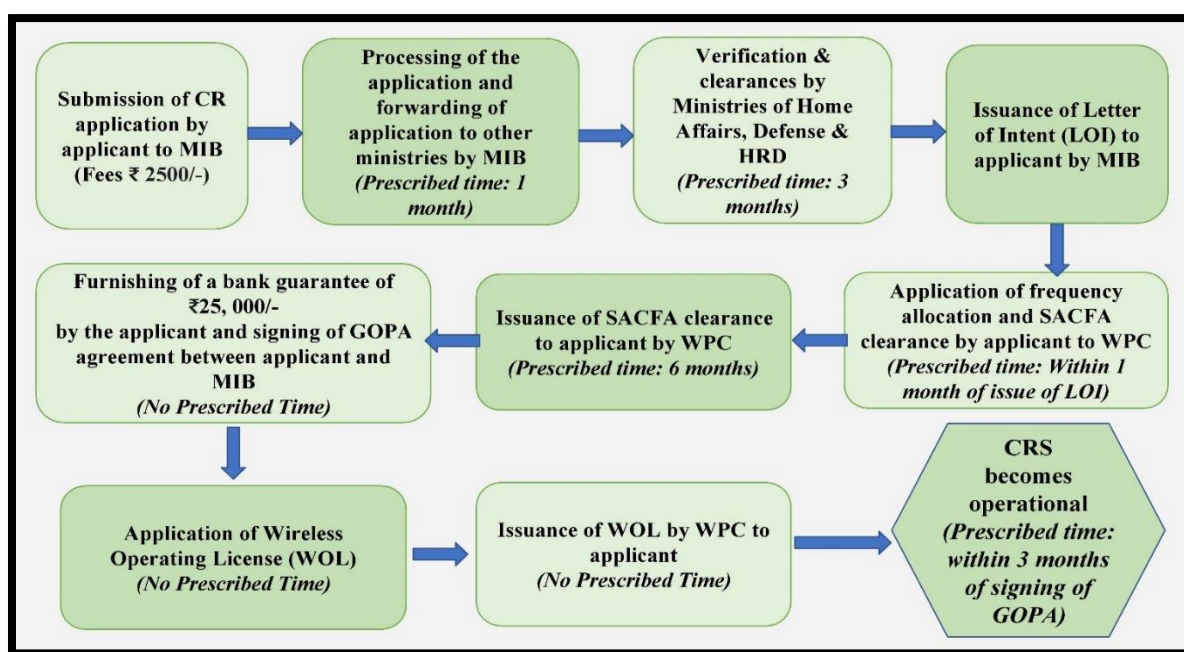
- 2.46. Some stakeholders pointed out that India is a developing Country, and the economic conditions of the people are not good. Another stakeholder listed economic limitations, lack of infrastructure, low- and poor-quality connectivity, dominant language media content competition, limited indigenous knowledge of radio technologies as the factors for slow growth.
- 2.47. Some stakeholders suggested that the government should consider utilizing a minuscule proportion of the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for strengthening the community radio sector. They further suggested that the sectoral consultation processes undertaken by MIB till a few years ago should be reinstated. One stakeholder suggested that licenses of non-operational CRS must be cancelled, with no exceptions to NGOs, KVKs, or Educational Institutions.

**Analysis:**

- 2.48. The Authority noted that the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USoF) is collected from the contribution of stakeholders from telecom sector and does not have any contribution from broadcasting sector. Therefore, it cannot be utilized for the funding of CRS.
- 2.49. As per data received from MIB (**Annexure-III**), till 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022, a total of 2494 applications have been received by MIB for setting up CRS. Of these 1751 applications have been rejected /Letter of Intent (LoI) have been cancelled. LoI have been issued to 674 applicants, out of which 553 have signed Grant of Permission Agreement (GOPA). Only 408 CRS are operational as on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022.
- 2.50. The clause 3 of the existing policy guidelines for setting up Community Radio Stations in India provides the “Selection Process & Processing of the applications.” For the grant of CRS license, applicants are required to apply in the prescribed application form to MIB. A Letter of Intent (LOI)

from MIB is issued after clearances from MHA, MHD and MHRD and frequency allocation by WPC. After issue of the LOI, the eligible applicant will be required to apply for SACFA clearance. On receipt of SACFA clearance, the LOI holder shall furnish a bank guarantee in the prescribed format for a sum of Rs.25, 000/- and is invited to sign a GOPA with MIB. Figure 2 depicts the entire process of obtaining the community radio license:

**Figure 2: Process of Obtaining CRS license**



2.51. The Authority acknowledges the long process of obtaining a CRS license, including clearances from multiple ministries, as a clear obstacle in the growth of CRS in the country. The prescribed period of SACFA clearance alone is six months. There is no prescribed time for grant of WOL from WPC, whereas the applicant is required to start the operations of the CRS within 3 months of signing the GOPA.

2.52. Such a long process of merely obtaining the license is the biggest factor in demotivating the applicants to apply for community radio license. In order



to encourage more participation, ensure ease of doing business and promote growth of CRS in India it is necessary to make the licensing process more uncomplicated and less tedious. There is a need to streamline the entire process of granting CRS licenses through a single online window system with a timeline for each step clearly prescribed. The prescribed time periods for SACFA clearance and other such clearances required from various ministries also need to be reduced to a reasonable level.

2.53. In 2006, MIB permitted Central and State Governments and other organizations to sponsor programmes on CRS to broadcast public interest information. However, no comprehensive guidelines and rates were notified for such programmes. MIB, on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2012, notified the guidelines for empanelment of CRS with Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP), now renamed as Bureau of Outreach and Communication (BOC) (**Annexure-IV**). As per these guidelines a CRS should have completed three months of continuous operation for a minimum of two hours broadcasting per day for empanelment with BOC. Central & State Governments are permitted to provide 30 minutes sponsored programmes with free commercial time of 150 seconds. The rate of airtime for the empaneled CRSs was fixed at Rs. 4/- per second. All government sponsored programmes and their payments to CRS are released through BOC.

2.54. MIB, vide its notification dated 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2022, revised the above mentioned guidelines (**Annexure-V**). As per the above notification, the eligibility conditions for empanelment of CRS with BOC have been revised and all the CRS having license from MIB are now eligible for empanelment without any additional condition. The rate of advertisement for empaneled organizations has been enhanced to Rs. 5.20 per second of broadcast. MIB

may actively pursue with Central and State Governments to sponsor more programmes on CRS which may help in sustainability of CRSs.

2.55. CRSs also play a very vital role in dissemination of educational content to rural population. CRSs established by educational institutions not only broadcast educational programs for students, but also provide hands on experience to students on various aspects of radio broadcasting – technological as well as content generation. At present, out of 408 operational CRS, only 90 CRS are operated by government educational institutes. There is a need to encourage universities of Central/ State Governments to establish and operate CRS. For this purpose, provisions for budgetary support to universities of Central/ State Governments is the need of the hour. MIB may actively pursue providing license/ spectrum for such institutions on priority basis.

2.56. **The Authority Recommends that:**

- i. MIB may actively pursue with Central and State Governments to sponsor more programmes on CRS for helping CRS in their sustainability.**
- ii. All the universities of Central/ State Governments may be provided budgetary support to establish and operate Community Radio Stations. MIB may actively pursue providing permission/ spectrum for such universities.**
- iii. All the processes for granting CRS permission should be made online through a single window system.**
- iv. SACFA clearance should be granted within one month of application.**
- v. WOL license should be granted in a prescribed period preferably within one month of application.**

## **Chapter III**

### **Summary of Recommendations**

- 1. The Authority recommends that:**
  - i. Not-for-profit companies established under Section 8 of Companies Act 2013 are already covered in the extant eligibility criteria for CRS.**
  - ii. The existing criteria prescribed in MIB guidelines barring certain types of entities for setting up Community Radio Stations are equally applicable to Section 8 companies also.**
- 2. The Authority reiterates its recommendations regarding disqualification of religious bodies from owning broadcasting channels including Community Radio Stations as mentioned in its 'Recommendations on Issues relating to entry of certain entities into Broadcasting and Distribution activities' dated 12.11.2008.**
- 3. The Authority recommends that:**
  - i. The Grant of Permission Agreement period should be increased from five (5) years to ten (10) years.**
  - ii. Present policy guidelines for extension/ renewal of CRS permission are adequate and should be continued.**
  - iii. Community Radio Station permission holders should be required to obtain a continued service report every year from the SDM of the concerned District. Such reports should be submitted to MIB by the CRS Permission Holder at the time of seeking renewal/ extension of the CRS permission.**
- 4. The Authority recommends that the duration of advertisement on a CRS should be increased from seven (7) minutes per hour to twelve (12) minutes per hour.**

**5. The Authority recommends that:**

- i. An eligible organization that operates in multiple districts should be allowed to set up multiple CRS in their area of operation.**
- ii. An organization should be allowed to set up a maximum of six (6) CRS throughout the country.**
- iii. The organizations setting up multiple CRS should ensure participation of the local community and broadcast content relevant to the community served by the respective CRS.**
- iv. An organization seeking to set up multiple stations should submit an undertaking confirming that the programs will be prepared locally and not sent from other CRS. Such an undertaking may be submitted to O/o local SDM every year while seeking the annual continuance report.**

**6. The Authority Recommends that:**

- i. MIB may actively pursue with Central and State Governments to sponsor more programmes on CRS for helping CRS in their sustainability.**
- ii. All the universities of Central/ State Governments may be provided budgetary support to establish and operate Community Radio Stations. MIB may actively pursue providing permission/ spectrum for such universities.**
- iii. All the processes for granting CRS permission should be made online through a single window system.**
- iv. SACFA clearance should be granted within one month of application.**
- v. WOL license should be granted in a prescribed period preferably within one month of application.**

### List of Acronyms

Abbreviation	Description
BOC	Bureau of Outreach and Communication
CP	Consultation Paper
CR/CRS	Community Radio /Community Radio Station
DAVP	Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity
DM	District Magistrate
FM	Frequency Modulation
GOPA	Grant of Permission Agreement
HRD	Human Resource Development
ICAR	Indian Council for Agricultural Research
IIM	Indian Institute of Management
IIT	Indian Institute of Technology
Kms	Kilometers
KVK	Krishi Vigyan Kendra
LOI	Letter of Intent
MHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MHD	Ministry of Defense
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MIB	Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
NGO	Non-governmental Organisations
SACFA	Standing Advisory Committee on Radio Frequency Allocation
SAU	State Agriculture University
SDM	Sub Divisional Magistrate
TRAI	Telecom Regulatory Authority of India
USoF	Universal Service Obligation Fund
WOL	Wireless Operating License
WPC	Wireless Planning and Coordination

**Reference dated 11.11.2021 from MIB**

**No.35016/1/2021-O/o DDCRS  
Government of India  
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting  
'A' Wing, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi 110001**

Dated : 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2021

To

The Secretary  
Telecom Regulatory Authority of India  
Mahanagar Doorsanchar Bhawan  
J. L. Nehru Marg  
New Delhi – 110 002

**Subject: Seeking recommendations of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in respect of proposed amendment in 'Policy Guidelines for setting up of Community Radio Stations in India'.**

Sir,

In December 2002, the Government of India approved a policy for the grant of licenses for setting up of Community Radio Stations (CRS) to well-established educational institutions including IITs/IIMs. The policy was broad-based, in 2006, by bringing 'Non-profit' organizations like civil society and voluntary organizations etc. under its ambit, in order to allow greater participation by the civil society on issues relating to development & social change.

2. In the last few years, this sector has been growing effectively but gradually in India. Since 2002, 791 Letters of Intent (LOIs) have been issued to various organizations, however only 337 organizations have commissioned the CRS. Considering that 19 years have passed since the Guidelines have been put in place, the number of commissioned Community Radio Stations is relatively low. The primary reason, for low number of CRS, appears to be the lengthy process of getting clearances from various Ministries/Departments and low financial capability of 'Non-profit' organizations.

3. The Community Radio Stations have proven to help communities in their overall development and in meeting their information needs. In view of this, there is a need to provide impetus so that large number of organizations come forward and set up CRS. The Ministry believes that for facilitation of the same, further amendment is required in existing Policy Guidelines.

Contd..2/-

4. Apropos to above, the Ministry has identified some points for amendment in the Policy Guidelines. The relevant points are mentioned below:

**a) Inclusion of not-for-profit companies, registered under Section 8 of Companies Act 2013, in the list of eligible organizations**

As per the extant Policy Guidelines, educational institutions; civil society and voluntary organizations; state agriculture universities (SAUs); ICAR institutions; Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs); registered societies; autonomous bodies; and public charitable trusts are eligible to apply for Community Radio licenses. The Policy Guidelines also, *inter-alia*, provides that the applicant organization must be a legal entity i.e., it should be registered (under the registration of Societies Act or any other such act relevant to the purpose).

However, the companies registered u/s 8 of the Companies Act 2013 are not recognized in the Policy Guidelines as eligible entities for setting up of Community Radio Stations. These companies are set up with objectives for promotion of commerce, art, science, sports, education, research, social welfare, religion, charity, protection of environment or any such other object; and intends to use its profits (if any) or other income for promoting these objectives.

The number and nature of applicants who can derive the best results out of a community radio station needs to widen, with parties who have discovered newer and more effective means of making inroads into communities or who are naturally well placed within communities to leverage the voice of the community. However, at the same time, this should not blur the lines between commercial FM radio and community radio. Therefore, inclusion of not-for-profit companies, registered under section 8 of the Company Act 2013, among the eligible organisation may be considered for establishment of Community Radio Stations.

**b) Increasing of permission period from existing period of 5 years to 10 years**

As per the extant Policy Guidelines, the initial Grant of Permission Agreement (GOPA) remains valid for a period of five years. Thereafter, GOPA is extended for a period of five (5) years at a time. To facilitate ease of doing business, the initial permission period may be extended from existing five years to ten years and period of subsequent extensions may be kept same i.e., for a period of five years at a time.

Contd..3/-

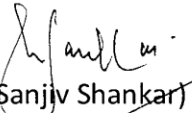
**c) Increasing allowable advertisement duration from 7 min/hour to 12 min/hour**

At present, Community Radio Stations are permitted for transmission of limited advertising and announcements relating to local events, local businesses and services and employment opportunities. However, the maximum duration of such limited advertising is restricted to 7 (seven) minutes per hour of broadcast.

The financial sustainability of the CR Stations has been an issue. The CR Stations face hardship to meet their recurring operational expenses and therefore, increasing permitted advertisement duration from existing 7 min/hour to 12 min/hour, in line with TV Channels, may be considered, as it may help in financial viability and sustainability of CR Stations. It may be noted that at present, there is no limit on advertisements for the Private FM Radio.

5. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India is requested make recommendations on the issues raised above under section 11(1)(a)(ii) and 11(1)(d) of the TRAI Act.

Yours faithfully,

  
(Sanjiv Shankar)

Joint Secretary to the Government of India  
Tel. No.: 011-2338 4453



## Annexure-II

### Reference dated 17.01.2022 from MIB

No. N-35016/1/2021-O/o DD(CRS)  
Government of India  
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting  
'A' Wing, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi 110001

Dated 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2022

To  
The Secretary  
Telecom Regulatory Authority of India  
Mahanagar Doorsanchar Bhawan  
J. L. Nehru Marg  
New Delhi

**Subject: Seeking recommendations of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in respect of proposed amendment in 'Policy Guidelines for setting up of Community Radio Stations in India'.**

Sir,

This is with reference to this Ministry's letter of even no. dated 11.11.2021, wherein the Authority was requested to make recommendations on certain issues relating to Community Radio Stations. A copy of the said letter is enclosed herewith for ready reference.

2. As per the Policy Guidelines, not-for-private private organizations can be granted only one permission for CRS operations, however, the Government institutions are allowed to operate at more than one place. The clause 4(v) of the Policy Guidelines for setting up Community Radio Stations in India, reads as under:

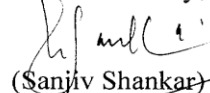
*"An applicant / organization shall not be granted more than one permission for CRS operations at one or more places. However, Central / State Universities, including autonomous bodies and Agricultural Universities set up under them, having more than one campus, may be allowed to operate CRS at more than one place, provided, the distance between two CR Stations established by same organization should not be less than 25 Kms."*

3. Representations have been received from not-for-profit organizations requesting the Ministry to grant permissions for setting up of more than one Community Radio Stations. The Ministry is of the view that the not-for-profit organizations, operating in multiple districts, may be allowed to setup CR Stations in each district of operation.

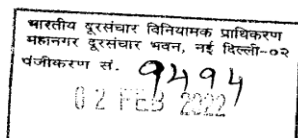
4. The Authority is requested to consider the above issue while making their recommendations on issues relating to Community Radio Stations in India as referred in the letter dated 11.11.2021.

5. This issues with the approval of <sup>the</sup> competent authority.

Yours faithfully,

  
(Sanjiv Shankar)

Joint Secretary to the Government of India  
Tel. No.: 011-2338 4453



**Status of Community Radio Stations**

No. N-35018/1/2018-O/o DD(CRS)  
Government of India  
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi 110001  
Dated 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2023

To  
The Joint Advisor (B&CS)  
Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI),  
MahanagarDoorsancharBhawan,  
Jawaharlal Nehru Marg (old Minto Road),  
New Delhi 110002

Subject: Report on the status of the Community Radio Stations in the country as on  
~~1302-2023~~ 31.12.2022.

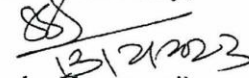
Sir,

Following are the details on the status of the Community Radio (CR) Stations in  
the country as on 31.12.2022.

	Quarter ending September, 2022 (cumulative)	Quarter ending December, 2022 (cumulative)
Total no. of applications received	2472	2494
No. of Letters of Intent (LoIs) issued (active)*	693	674
No. of applications rejected + LOI cancelled	1712	1751
No. of permissions issued (GOPA signed)	529	553
No. of operational CR Stations	374	408

\* Active LoIs are calculated after deleting cancelled LoIs from total LoIs issued.

Yours faithfully,



(Gaurishankar Kesarwani)  
Additional Director (CRS Cell)  
Tel. No.: 2338 6547

MIB OM dated 21 May 2012

No.104/102/2009-CRS | 455  
Government of India  
Ministry of Information & Broadcasting  
CRS Section

Room No.116 A-Wing  
Shastri Bhawan  
New Delhi-110 001

Dated 21<sup>st</sup> May 2012

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

**Subject : Guidelines for Empanelment of Community Radio Stations with DAVP, revised rates of advertisement and comprehensive guidelines for sponsored programmes on Community Radio -reg.**

DAVP may refer to this Ministry's letter No.1/50/2006-MUC(Vol.II) dated 03.02.2011 on the above subject.

2. Government of India had constituted a Committee to consider the revision or rates for advertisement and sponsored programmes on CRS. Recommendations of Committee have been accepted by competent authority in the Ministry.
3. Accordingly, the revised Guidelines for Empanelment of Community Radio Stations ( CRS) and Comprehensive Guidelines for sponsored programmes are enclosed herewith.
4. The rate of airtime for the CRS empanelled with DAVP will be Rs.4/- per second and such rate will be valid for a period of 1 year, after which it may be reviewed.
5. DAVP is requested to place the revised Guidelines for Empanelment of Community Radio Stations and comprehensive Guidelines for sponsored programmes on CRS on DAVP website.
6. This issues with the approval of competent authority.

*Inderjeet*  
( Inderjeet Grewal )  
Deputy Director  
Tel: 23385021

Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity  
(Kind attn: Shri A.P.F.Noronha, Director General)  
Soचना Bhawan,  
Lodhi Road  
New Delhi-110 003

*o/c*

*Issued on 24/5/2012  
p.s.f.  
Ruz*

### Comprehensive Guidelines for sponsored programmes on Community Radio

Policy guidelines notified in December 2006 allow Central & State Governments and other organisations to sponsor programmes on CRS and broadcast public interest information. But, in the absence of comprehensive guidelines and rates for such programmes, Ministries/Departments desirous to use the potential of CRS are facing difficulties to sponsor programmes. Now the Government has finalized the guidelines for sponsored programmes.

- ii) Central & State Governments may provide 30 minutes sponsored programmes with FCT of 150 seconds using the DST program rates as a reference, which DST uses for its Science for Women and HEALER (Health Education through Local Radio) programmes. The rates for such sponsorship will follow the DST programme rates, and all contracts for sponsored programming will be for a minimum of one year duration. Thus, the rates will be as follows:
- a. For 90 programmes across one year: Rs.6000/half hour programme.
  - b. For 180 programmes across one year: Rs.5000/half hour programme.
  - c. For 360 programmes across one year (daily shows): Rs.4000/half hour programme.
  - d. CR stations will produce sponsored programmes locally, in the local language or dialect according to the theme given by the sponsoring ministry/department. No state or central government Ministry or department should offer canned or ready-to-air programmes for broadcast over Community Radio Stations, as this would negate the very concept of local and community-centered programming.
  - e. The sponsored programmes can be taken only up to 50% of the total broadcast time. For example If a station is broadcasting for 6 hours , the sponsored programmes can be taken only up to three hours of broadcast time including repeat broadcasts.
- iii) All government sponsored programmes will be released through DAVP, which will act as a single point agency for both the sponsoring department and the CRS. All payments will be routed through DAVP.
- iv) Equal rights to sponsored content will be shared by the sponsoring ministry/department and the concerned CR station. After the stipulated number of broadcasts, the programmes may be released into the public domain and should be freely sharable with other radio stations for rebroadcast with attribution. The producing station may re-broadcast the programmes beyond its contractual obligations, but the re-broadcast(s) will necessarily be free of cost and cannot then be sponsored by any other entity.

*Indent:*

## Guidelines for Empanelment of Community Radio Stations

### 1. Eligibility Criteria

The CRS should have completed three months of continuous operation for a minimum of two hours broadcasting per day on the date of applying for empanelment.

### 2. Process of Empanelment

- i) The empanelment of CRS will be considered by DG, DAVP on case to case basis and when an application is received.
- ii) The application shall be processed in accordance with the eligibility criteria laid down in the guidelines and a decision will be taken about the empanelment within 30 days from the date of receipt of complete application from the organisation.

### 3. Documents to be submitted along with application

- i) Copy of Grant of Permission Agreement (GOPA) signed with Ministry of I&B.
- ii) Copy of valid Wireless Operating License (WOL), issued by WPC Wing of Ministry of Communication & IT.
- iii) A CD containing the content telecast for the last three months.
- iv) Self-certification by the head of CRS certifying that the CRS is functional and is continuously broadcasting at least two hours of programmes per day since last three months.

### 4. Rate of Advertisement

The spot rate for CRS empanelled with DAVP will be Rupee 4 ( rupee four) per second will continue for 1 year.

### 5. Other terms and conditions

- a) Empanelment and Advertisement rates will be valid for 1 year, after which it may be reviewed.
- b) Communities Radio Stations will undertake in writing that DAVP approved rates accepted by them are their lowest rates and exclusive to DAVP and cannot be offered to any other agency. DAVP reserves the right to review empanelment rates if this condition is violated.

*Indeent:*

- c) A Channel may be debarred from Govt. advertisements from DAVP if at any time it refuses to accept and carry advertisements issued by DAVP on behalf of the Ministries/ Departments of Government of India, Public Sector Undertakings and Autonomous Bodies, on more than two occasions.
- d) Notwithstanding any of the provisions mentioned above for empanelment of channels and their rates and other terms and conditions, in case of any disagreement etc., decision of DG, DAVP will be final and binding.

6. **Payments of Bills**

- a) Every channel will submit its bill complete in all respects to DAVP along with self certified Broadcast Certificate within 30days of completion of the campaign. The self certified Broadcast Certificate submitted by the CRS channel will be the basic proof of broadcast. In case a self certified Broadcast Certificate is found to be false, the empanelment of CRS may be cancelled and channel may be debarred from getting Government advertisement for the duration of permission and may also be liable for action as per relevant laws "including cancellation of permission".
- b) Recovery shall be made in case of excess payment to channel.
- c) Empanelment does not guarantee any business from DAVP.

*Andent-*

\*\*\*\*\*

MIB OM dated 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2022

No. N-35016/7/2021-O/o AD(CRS)  
Government of India  
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

116, 'A' Wing, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi  
Dated 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2022

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

**Subject: Revision in the Guidelines for Empanelment of Community Radio Stations (CRS) with Bureau of Outreach and Communication (BOC).**

Kind reference is invited to this Ministry's O.M. no. 104/102/2009-CRS dated 21.05.2012 and no. 104/104/2012-CRS dated 30.07.2012 (copies enclosed).

2. In partial supersession of the Guidelines for Empanelment of Community Radio Stations, issued vide Ministry's O.M. no. 104/102/2009-CRS dated 21.05.2012 and O.M. no. 104/104/2012-CRS dated 30.07.2012, revised Guidelines for empanelment of CRS with BOC are issued herewith. The revised Guidelines are attached at Annexure-A.

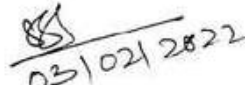
3. However, the Comprehensive Guidelines for sponsored programmes on CRS, issued vide Ministry's O.M. no. 104/102/2009-CRS dated 21.05.2012, remain the same.

4. BOC is requested to place the revised Guidelines for Empanelment of Community Radio Stations on its website.

5. This issues with the approval of the competent authority.

Encl: as above

To  
Bureau of Outreach and Communication  
{Ms. Ranjana Dev Sarmah, ADG(AV)}  
Soचना भवन, CGO Complex,  
Lodhi Road, New Delhi 110003

  
03/02/2022  
(Gaurishankar Kesarwani)  
Additional Director (CRS)  
Tel. No.: 2338 6547  
email ID: [gs.kesarwani.pb@nic.in](mailto:gs.kesarwani.pb@nic.in)

(गौरिशंकर केशरवानी)  
(GAURISHANKAR KESARWANI)  
अतिरिक्त निदेशक (CRS)  
Additional Director (CRS)  
सूचना तथा प्रसारण विभाग  
Min. of Information & Broadcasting  
सूचना भवन, लोधी रोड, नई दिल्ली  
New Delhi

**GUIDELINES FOR EMPANELMENT OF COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS WITH  
BUREAU OF OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION**

**1. Eligibility Criteria**

(a) The organizations having licence for setting up of Community Radio Stations (CRS) shall be considered empanelled with Bureau of Outreach and Communication (BOC).

(b) All the organizations having license for setting up of CRS shall be listed on the website of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the same shall be updated on a monthly basis by the Ministry.

**2. Rate of Advertisements**

The rate of advertisement for empanelled organizations shall be Rs. 52/- per ten seconds of broadcast.

**3. Payment of Bills**

(a) Every organization will submit its bill complete in all respect to BOC, along with self-certified Broadcast Certificate and PAN details, within 30 days of completion of the campaign. The self-certified Broadcast Certificate submitted by the organization will be the basic proof of broadcast. In case a self-certified Broadcast Certificate is found to be false, the empanelment of organization may be cancelled and organization may be debarred from getting Government advertisement for the duration of permission and may also be liable for action as per relevant laws "including cancellation of permission".

(b) The organization will be required to possess GSTIN if the aggregate value of taxable service of the organization exceeds Rs. 20 lakhs in a financial year, otherwise a self-declaration to this effect is to be furnished.

(c) Recovery shall be made in case of excess payment to organization.

(d) Empanelment does not guarantee any business from BOC.

**4. Other Terms and Conditions**

(a) The organization may be debarred from Government advertisements if, at any time the organization refuses to accept and carry advertisements issued by BOC on behalf of the Ministries/Departments of Government of India, Public Sector Undertakings and Autonomous Bodies, on more than two occasions.

(b) In case of any disagreement etc., decision of Pr. DG, BOC shall be final and binding.

\*\*\*\*

