

US-India Strategic Partnership Forum's (USISPF)'s response to the Consultation Paper on Ease of Doing Business in Broadcasting Sector

USISPF believes that issues relating to ease of doing business in the broadcasting sector are broad in nature and require a change. Therefore, we would like to bring to your kind attention as the regulatory body, the following concerns for the benefit of the broadcasting industry as a whole.

Q14. What are the key issues affecting the indigenous manufacturing of various broadcasting equipment and systems. How these issues can be addressed?

There is a strong need to encourage the indigenous manufacturing of equipment and systems in India. The same resonates with the 'Make in India' program which promotes manufacturing in India. It is suggested that the indigenous production of set top boxes ("STB") as part of this program will provide necessary economic incentives such as tax incentives, subsidies for production units and extensive funding for research and development. The indigenous quality standards should be set to global standards while promoting the manufacturing of broadcasting equipment.

Q15. Is there any other issue which will be relevant to ease of doing business in broadcasting sector? Give your suggestions with justification.

The pace of technology is ever changing in the Broadcasting Sector. As such, a balance has to be maintained between the regulations and new technologies. Below are a few suggestions in this regard:

- Spectrum is a scarce resource and should be utilized as effectively and efficiently as possible. With new technologies for bandwidth-efficient satellite transmission solutions such as NS3/NS4 coming to the fore, it would be beneficial to migrate to these technologies for optimum utilization of the spectrum. Hence, the implementation of such technologies needs to be aided by a suitable regulatory framework.
- There are many other new technology which are there for efficient use of spectrum and they provide new set of capabilities in satellite transmission technology. By such technologies the satellite bandwidth capacity used for the channel transmission over the entire transponder can be used for a return contribution feed from the venue on the same satellite transponder capacity. Our suggestion is to look at the possibilities of including these band-reuse technologies without any regulatory hurdles.
- The "Digital India" program could help broadband services reach rural areas by utilization of existing digitized cable TV infrastructure for the provision of broadband services. Our suggestion is to look at the avenues of opening the last mile cable infrastructure to the entities which can provide the broadband services in the remote areas.



- The Value Added Services (“VAS”) market in India has a great potential for growth. VAS services carried through permitted TV channels give the viewer access to interactive services, for instance, the ability to view matches from multiple camera angles, etc. Such VAS services should be permitted to be integrated by the broadcaster without taking any separate permission or separate channel license.
- Measures should be taken to strictly combat piracy by updating the standards for TV equipment. Such equipment should be in line with international standards.

Q17. What should the policy framework and process for consideration and approval of such trial projects?

As stated above, the regulatory framework should have the flexibility to embrace new technology. The current framework is restrictive in nature and thus does not promote the implementation of new technology. Numerous permissions restrict innovation and adoption of new and efficient technologies. We humbly suggest that the regulations should be kept to a minimum so as to promote the overall development of the broadcasting sector.

Sincerely,
Mukesh Aghi
President
U.S.-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF)

