

Comments On Consultation Paper For CRS

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Q1. What should be the period of permission for CRS to be prescribed in the CRS Guidelines? Is the present 5 years adequate?

Ans1. For a CRS present initial period of 5 years is adequate.

Q2. What should be the period of extension on the expiry of the initial period of permission for CRS?

Ans2. After ascertaining the past performance of operation of service and its advantage, benefits accrued to the community as well as the capability of the organization for running the CRS further through an independent Auditor (for Technical facilities & Content relevancy as well suitability) ,a further period of 5 years can be considered.

Q3. Should there be any additional terms and conditions of extension/renewal of the permission for CRS?

Ans3. The following additional terms and conditions can be:

- a) Annual technical audit for the facilities for performance and QOS by independent auditors taken from the panels of professional bodies like IETE, IE, BES, AIR &DD etc or Govt. PSU dealing in the matter provided there is no conflict of interest.
- b) Audit of content format and matter suitability for CRS as per guidelines.
- c) Audit of other licensing conditions not covered by above say financial ,integrity and political neutrality etc .

Q4. Should CRS permission holders be permitted to carry the news bulletins of All India Radio (AIR) in unaltered format and community based non-news and current affairs programs for the categories permitted to FM radio stations?

They should be permitted to carry news of AIR as relay as per their wish and also community based non-news and current affairs programs as indicated in paragraph 11.2 (a) to (g) of the guidelines. The community based religious ceremonies of addressing the mass, religious gathering like baptism etc should not be permitted.

Q 5. In view of the availability of alternative revenue/ funding options, is there any reason to increase the duration of advertisement beyond the 5 minutes per hour limitation? If yes, please explain with full justification.

With the government scheme of financial assistance , there appears to be no need for duration of advertisement time beyond 5 minutes for CRS, as most of the operating cost and maintenance has to be by community members

Q 6. Do you agree with the above proposal for utilization of CRS during natural calamities/ emergency situations?

The CRS can be utilized for broadcasting the disaster warning in advance, during disaster and after disaster and other contents as per the guidelines of NDMA plan but from its fixed location only due to its basic nature as it has to cater to community only.

AIR has an elaborate & detailed well planned network of high and medium power transmitters in MW,SW & FM mode with captive power supplies for catering to broadcast during natural calamities along entire Indian coast line ,in islands and border areas.

So in view of 2nd paragraph on the facilities of broadcasting by AIR/ PB during disaster CRS should not be permitted higher power than the prescribed and moveable location.

However it can be permitted to erect an emergency antenna for temporary use in case the authorized main and auxiliary are damaged and cannot be used at existing location only with a formal communication to WPC within 24 hrs with a copy to MIB

Q 7. What, in your opinion, are the measures required to ensure a faster growth in the number and spread of CRS in rural India?

For faster growth of CRS government has already taken lot of steps and the latest plan scheme of financial assistance for 50 % of the capital cost subject to a max of Rs 7.50 lakh is very encouraging.

Further for faster growth followings is suggested:

- a) The spectrum is a national resource and a scarce commodity .So it should not be kept idle. The CRS presently operates for few hrs (ranges from 4 to 8 hrs) and thereafter it remains off resulting into hoarding. So it be allotted on Time Sharing basis instead of exclusive subject to other modalities to be decided by WPC. This will increase the nos by two fold .
- b) The present three spot frequency earmarked for CRS should be repeated after 20, 30 and 50 km for Metro, Urban and Rural areas as transmission is for local coverage and narrow casting only . This will increase the nos to many fold.

Both the above has already been decided in one of the committee in WPC for this purpose and I was a member of this committee as Director (O&M) BECIL, a MIB PSU.

Q 8. Stakeholders may also provide their comments on any other issue relevant to the present consultation.

Even though CRS is a Radio Station for a community but its broadcast should meet a certain QOS as well as there should be pre-audit of technical facilities before commission and on regular interval of say at least annually for adhering to technical standards through professional auditors to be deployed from professional bodies.

