

To:
Shri Amit Khare
Secretary
Ministry of Information & Broadcasting
Shastri Bhavan
New Delhi-110001

25 June, 2021

Dear Sir

Critical Utilisation of C-band & Its impact on Broadcasting sector

The spectrum band of 3.6-4.2 GHz has been used for broadcast reception for over a quarter of a century. Apart from the huge investment, the band is used by all broadcasters (with close to 900 TV Channels in operation at any one time), satellite operators and approximately 50 lakhs cable operators for an industry worth in excess of INR 760 Bn generating employment and bringing in export to India of the movie entertainment business.

The recent spectrum allocation for 5G trials in the 3.3-3.67 GHz band is of particular concern to the industry. 5G terrestrial signals are potentially intrusive, and the possibility of its hampering the existing TV broadcast services requires urgent attention particularly since it could impact over 200m viewers. Measures like sufficient guard band, power limits and separation distances will need to be in place if the two services are to co-exist in the adjacent bands. In addition, band pass filters will also need to be installed in huge numbers at the receiver sites. Still, this alone will not be sufficient to mitigate the impact unless the other measures, as stated above, are also stringently implemented.

The Government's effort to promote new communication technologies such as 5G are laudable; however, for a nation with such diverse topography as ours, a mix of different technologies with use in various applications, terrains, and regions needs to be carefully managed. The C-Band satellites network is embedded and is very much part of our national infrastructure and provides enormous value to the national economy and therefore needs to be protected against any interference.

The new generations of very high throughput satellite will also play a critical role as part of the 5G ecosystem utilising both C and Ka bands for broadband services. So, the level of C-band spectrum assigned in mid bands has to be carefully evaluated in terms of how much is really required. In major economies of the world, 5G operators are managing within 40-50 MHz of spectrum in 3.4 to 3.6 GHz. Similarly, for Mobile operators in India 3.3 to 3.6 GHz providing 300 MHz to be shared among four operators would be more than sufficient, this would enable the Satellite sector to continue its uninterrupted operations whilst also having the advantage of 5G services simultaneously.

Sir, on behalf of the Satellite Industry Association (SIA-India) we request time at your convenience to meet you and apprise you of our concerns and seek your intervention for uninterrupted C Band satellite TV operations for the industry to keep contributing to the economy through investments and employment.

We look forward to your kind confirmation at your earliest.

Sincerely,

Anil Prakash
Director General
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