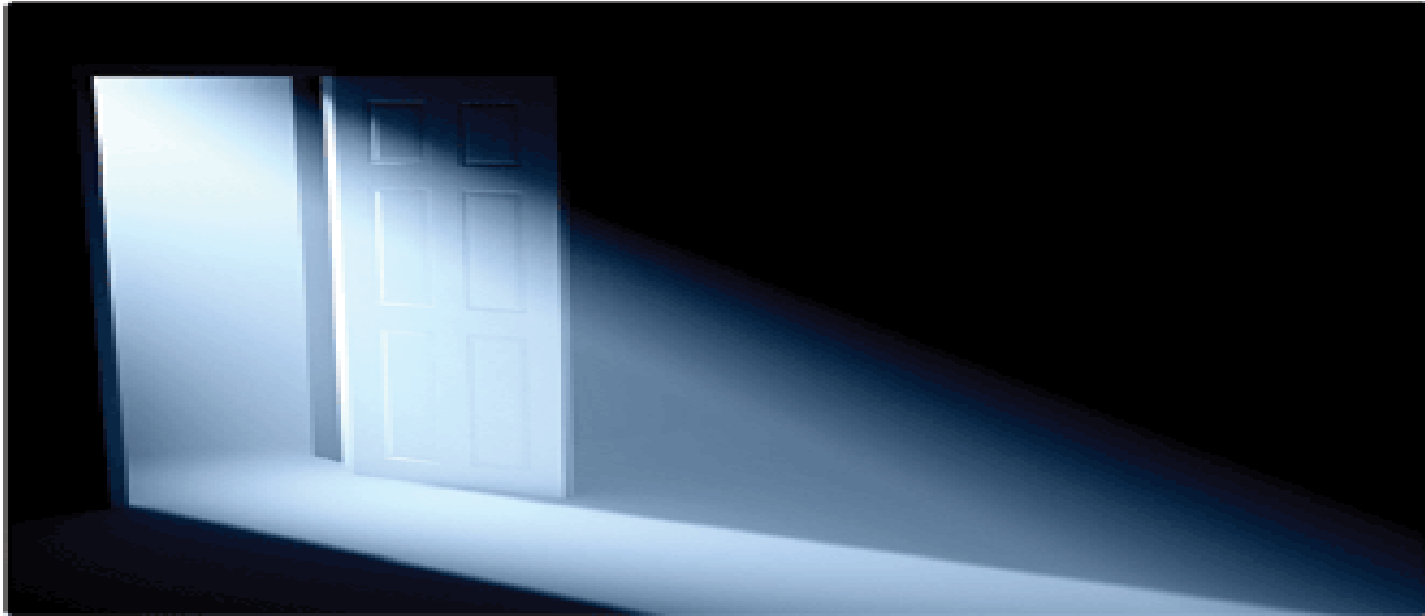


# Consumer Grievances in Telecom Sector- INITIATIVES BY MOBILE INDUSTRY



T.R. Dua, Deputy Director General  
@ TDSAT Seminar, 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2010

# ABOUT COAI

- ❖ Functional since 1995, the COAI started with all private sector companies engaged in provision of GSM based Cellular Mobile Services in India.
- ❖ Provide policy & licensing inputs to DoT.
- ❖ Provide inputs to & participate in consultation processes of the Regulator – TRAI, to assist in developing an enabling and competitive regulatory framework for provision of telecom services
- ❖ Commission /carry out research studies (e.g. Annual Benchmarking Study).
- ❖ Undertake Special Projects like MIM, Subscriber verification, Infrastructure sharing, etc.

## VISION

**To facilitate the establishment of a world class cellular infrastructure and deliver the benefits of affordable mobile telephony services to the people of India.**

# COAI MEMBERS



## Core Members

- ❖ AIRCEL LTD.
- ❖ BHARTI AIRTEL LTD.
- ❖ ETISALAT DB TELECOM INDIA PVT.LTD.
- ❖ IDEA CELLULAR
- ❖ LOOP TELECOM
- ❖ S TEL
- ❖ UNITECH WIRELESS
- ❖ VODAFONE ESSAR
- ❖ VIDEOCON TELECOMMUNICATIONS

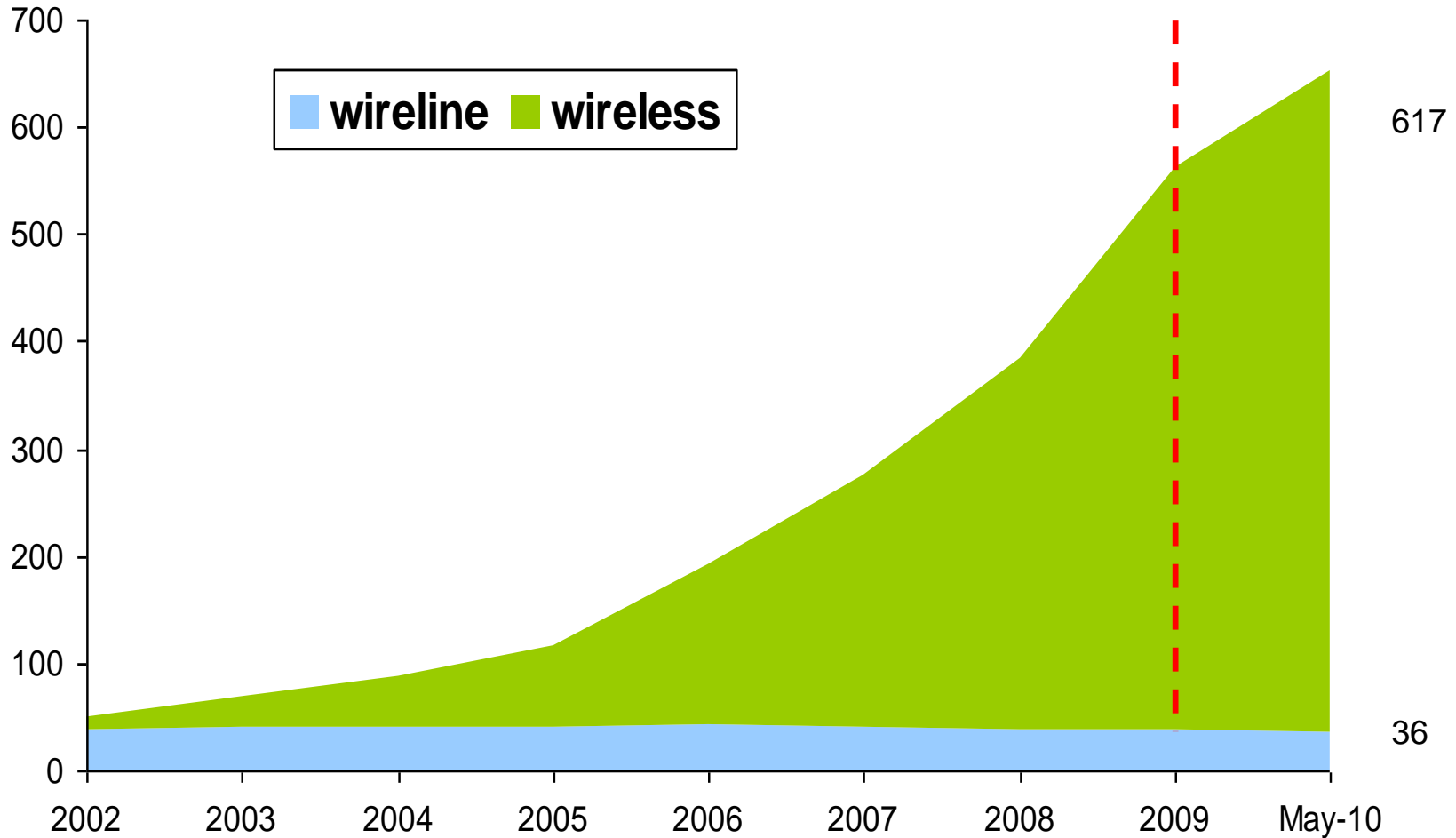
## Associate Members

- ❖ ASTER INFRASTRUCTURE PVT.LTD.
- ❖ ATC TOWER COMPANY OF INDIA PVT. LTD.
- ❖ ERICSSON India Pvt. Ltd.
- ❖ ESSAR TELECOM INFRASTRUCTURE PVT. LTD.
- ❖ GTL INFRASTRUCTURE LTD.
- ❖ INDIA TELECOM INFRA LTD.
- ❖ MOTOROLA
- ❖ NOKIA SIEMENS NETWORK
- ❖ QUIPPPO TELECOM INFRASTRUCTURE LTD.
- ❖ SREI INFOCOMM LTD.
- ❖ TEXAS INSTRUMENTS
- ❖ TOWER VISION INDIA PVT. LTD.
- ❖ XCEL TELECOM PVT. LTD

# INDIAN MOBILE SECTOR CURRENT STATUS

- ❖ ~220 operational networks
- ❖ Investments over Rs. 150,000 crores
- ❖ Mobile subscriber base of ~ 617 million as of May 2010
  - Adding @ 12-15 million every month
- ❖ Rural subscriber base served by private GSM operators > 139 million by May 2010
  - Growing @ around 4-5 million every month, i.e. nearly 40% of the GSM subscriber adds are from the rural areas
- ❖ Lowest Mobile tariffs and one of the lowest ARPU (Average revenue Per User) in the world
  - GSM ARPU (Dec'09) of ~ Rs. 144/sub/month
- ❖ One of the highest GSM MoU (Minutes of Use) globally - ~411/sub/month (Dec'09)

# INDIA IS WORLD'S SECOND LARGEST WIRELESS MARKET



**India accounts for the highest mobile subscriber additions globally.**

# THE INDIAN MOBILE MAGIC; AFFORDABILITY HAS BEEN DRIVING THE GROWTH



**Mobile, being extremely affordable, has permeated almost all segment of the everyday life of citizens**



# ABOUT CUSTOMERS

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*Every company's greatest assets are its customers,  
because without customers there is no company.*

*Michael LeBoeuf*

*Quality in a service or product is not what you put into it. It is  
what the client or customer gets out of it.*

*Peter Drucker*

*Customers are an investment. Maximize your return*

*Unknown*

**In order to constantly provide a quality service, the operators ensure that the activities are inspired by the principles of transparency, participation, continuity, efficiency, equality, impartiality, courtesy and availability.**

**We will also endeavor to continuously benchmark ourselves with best in telecom and best in other service industry and actively try to adapt practices which can benefit our customers.**

## ❖ **Transparency, clarity and promptness**

The mobile industry shall ensure that all the necessary information is disseminated and that the procedures initiated are easy to understand for all.

## ❖ **Participation**

Our member operators are committed to constantly improving upon their processes and systems by incorporating feedback from subscribers, based on their requirements and also to be open to all suggestions and proposals from subscribers to further strengthen and improve services.

## ❖ **Efficiency and effectiveness**

The aim is to guarantee prompt, qualified and competent response to subscriber's requirements through the adoption of technological and organizational solutions.

## ❖ **Accessibility**

To gain higher customer satisfaction, the industry has put in place a number of communication channels backed by a team of customer service professionals to enable customers to access the services and receive prompt assistance.

## ❖ **Equality and impartiality**

The operators do provide and shall continue the endeavor to provide services without distinction and discrimination to all customers throughout the service area.

## ❖ **Courtesy and availability**

Our operators and their personnel are continuously striving to meet all customer needs and requirements.

GSM industry has established a well structured and robust complaint redressal structure for resolution of Consumers' grievances within the company :

## ❖ Call Centre

- Consumers can contact the Call Centre of service provider on toll free number at the first instance for redressal of their grievances.
- Depending upon the nature of complaints, it is attended within a certain period of time, subject to time limits laid down in the Regulations.
- The Call Centre registers each complaint by allotting a unique identification number to be called the docket number and communicates the same to the consumer.
- The service provider then intimates the action taken on the complaint to the consumer.

**Many Complaints gets resolved at this stage-  
either through state of the art IVR  
or through customer care agent**

## ❖ Nodal Officer

- In case the consumer is not satisfied with the redressal of his grievance at the Call Centre level, he can approach the Nodal Officer for redressal of his grievance.
- All grievances received by the Nodal Officer is redressed within a certain period of time, depending upon nature of grievance. (as Regulated)
- Nodal officer then communicates, the unique complaint number to the consumer.
- The consumer is then intimated about the resolution or decision thereon within the time limit specified.

## ❖ Appellate Authority

- In case the consumer is still not satisfied with the redressal of his grievance by the Nodal Officer, he can appeal to the Appellate Authority of the service provider for redressal of his grievance.
- The Appellate Authority is a senior level officer, which could be a Head of customer services.

- Information about Nodal & Appellate officer is being communicated to customers through start up kits, monthly bills etc.
- The information is also being displayed at sales offices and service outlets.
- The subscribers can also access operator's website for any information.
- The call centre officers have been trained on three tier grievance redressal system and they have been instructed to share nodal & appellate officers details in case the subscriber is not satisfied.

**Adequate Publicity is given with regard to contact details of the nodal officers**



## ❖ FCC (USA)

- The Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division of FCC provides informal mediation and resolution of individual informal consumer inquiries and complaints consistent with controlling laws and FCC regulations, and in accordance with the Bureau's delegated authority.
  
- The Division-
  - receives, reviews and analyzes complaints and responses to informal consumer complaints;
  - maintains manual and computerized files that provide for the tracking and maintenance of informal consumer inquiries and complaints;
  - mediates and attempts to settle unresolved disputes in informal complaints as appropriate; and
  - coordinates with other Bureaus and Offices to ensure that consumers are provided with accurate, up-to-date information.

## ❖ SKMM (Malaysia)

- SKMM has set up the “SKMM Complaints Bureau” to receive and handle the complaints with regards to communications and multimedia services.
- The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission has also issued guidelines to set out the principles and procedures for the making, receipt, handling and resolution of complaints from consumers.

SKMM-Suruhanjaya Komunikasi dan Multimedia Malaysia

## ❖ OFTA (Hong Kong)

- OFTA rely on market forces and competition to enhance and safeguard consumer interests.
- OFTA does not have a statutory responsibility for consumer protection. But they investigate into a complaint, if laws & regulations under OFTA's jurisdiction are breached.
  - For other complaints, it is the responsibility of operators to settle with their customers
- OFTA has no power or role in the settlement of contractual disputes, like-
  - Refunds to customer
  - Commercial decision made by operators on whether to provide a product or service
  - Others

We appreciate the efforts of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) which is in the process of floating a Consultation Paper relating to Telecom Consumers Protection and Redressal of Consumer Grievances.

TRAI had invited the views of the stakeholders at pre-consultation stage to identify important issues and concerns. The consultation paper is now awaited.

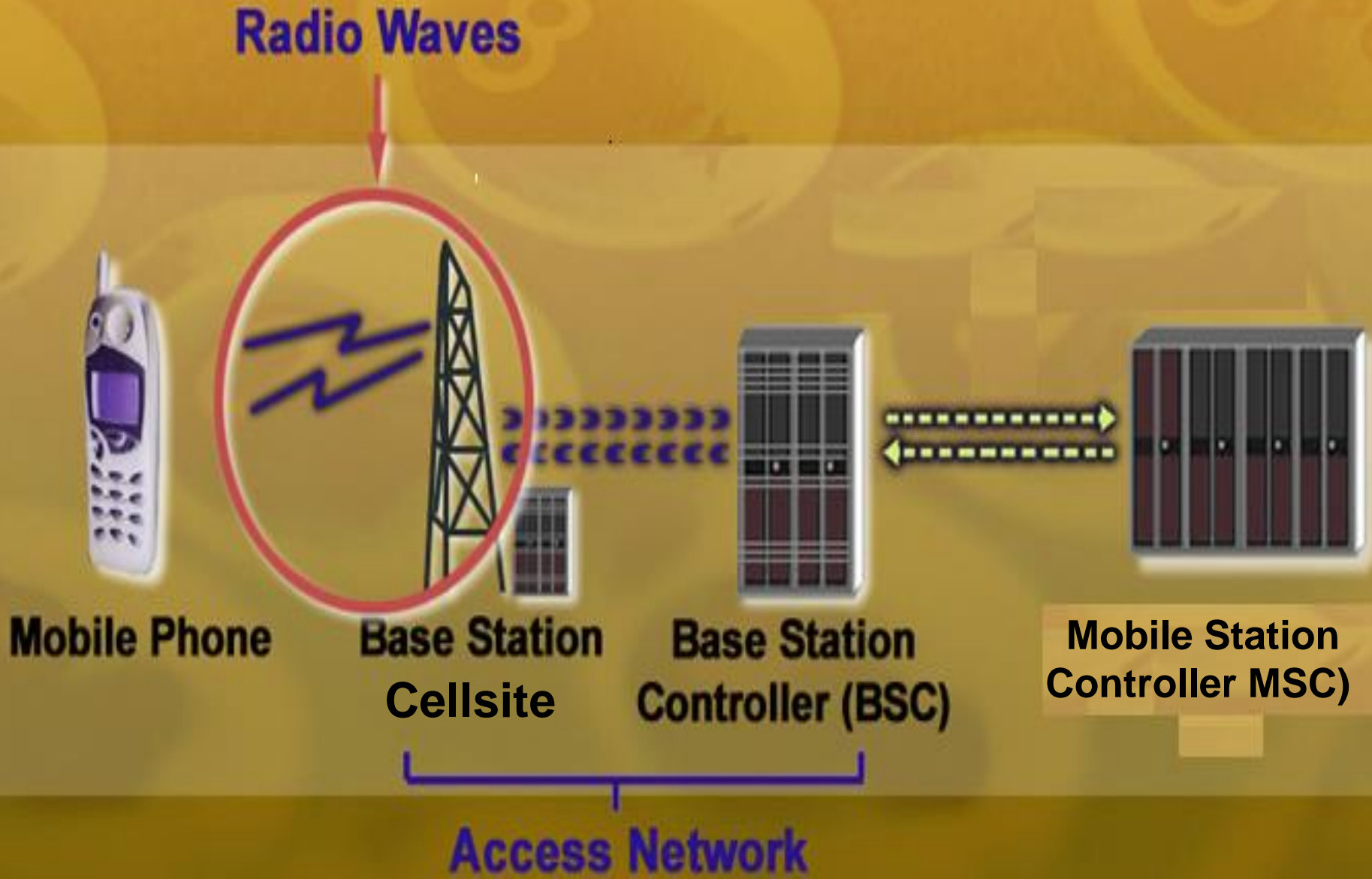
TRAI also held meeting/interaction among CAGs & Senior Representatives from respective operators to deliberate on various consumer centric issues/concerns.

# AWARENESS ABOUT EMF RADIATION



**Electromagnetic Fields (EMF) occur in nature and thus have always been present on earth. With the growth of Mobile Communications it is apprehended that the population is being exposed to EMF radiations that could constitute a health hazard. However, extremely low-level Electromagnetic Fields are produced by the base station antennas normally mounted on cellular mobile towers and by handheld mobile telephone sets/radio terminals.**

# UNDERSTANDING CELLULAR ARCHITECTURE

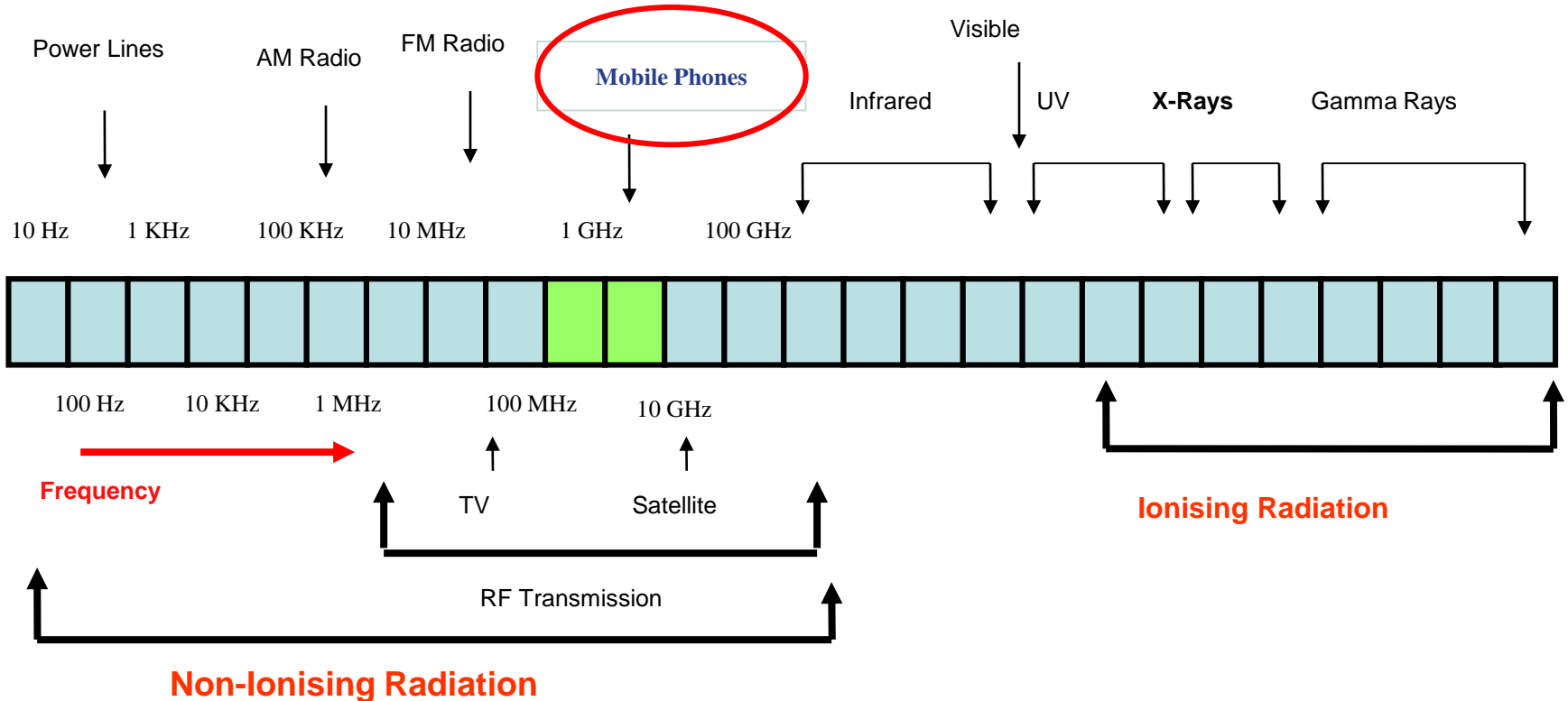


# APPROVAL REQUIRED FOR INSTALLATION OF TOWERS



- The essential documents which should be provided by the service provider to the civic / municipal bodies for taking approval for installation of towers are as follows:
  - **SACFA Approval:** Standing Advisory Committee on Radio Frequency Allocations (SACFA) is a committee which provides approval for installation of towers at the specific location. The approvals are mainly on the mast heights, line of site and frequency interference, from various members of SACFA , i.e. Defence, Airport Authority of India , etc.
  - **Structural Safety :** Prior to Installation of Towers , operators are required to get a structural safety certificate from one of the following five institutions:
    - **Indian Institute of Technology (I.I.T), Delhi**
    - **Central Building Research Institute (CBRI), Roorkee**
    - **Rail India Technical & Economic Services Ltd.(RITES), Delhi**
    - **National Council for Building Material, Faridabad**
    - **Indian Institute of Technology (I.I.T), Roorkee**

# CELLULAR TOWERS WORK IN THE NON-IONISING SPECTRUM



As you move towards the higher side of the spectrum, the electromagnetic energy & penetration power goes on increasing



# NON-IONIZING RADIATIONS DOES NOT CAUSE ANY RADIATION HAZARDS



- Ionization is a process by which electrons are stripped from atoms & molecules
- This can produce molecular change that can lead to damage in biological tissues, including effect on DNA
- The effect is possible in the high end of the frequency spectrum where there are highly penetrating forms of EME such as **X-Rays, Gamma Rays**
- Energies below the Infrared and UV bands are termed as non-ionizing as there is insufficient photon energy to cause ionization
- Mobile phones, AM & FM Radio, Power lines all lie in the extreme low frequency (ELF) range of the spectrum
- **Radio frequency range required for cellular communications lies in the non-ionizing part of the spectrum and does not have enough energy to cause any genetic damage**

**Radiations from Mobile Phone Base Stations are well below the frequency range of Ionizing Radiations & therefore are completely Non- Ionizing**



- **World Health Organization (WHO) has concluded that '...current evidence does not confirm the existence of any health consequences from exposure to low level electromagnetic fields.'**
- **WHO recommends adoption of the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) 1998 guidelines and states that these guidelines '...offer protection against all identified hazards of RF energy with large safety margins.**

**No evidence of established effects on health at exposure levels below the safety limits prescribed by various international bodies like ICNIRP and endorsed by WHO.**



- **“Regarding Health Hazards:** As per the information available with TRAI there is **no definite conclusive study**, which confirms that health is adversely affected by radiations emitted by mobile phones”

## Telecom Regulatory Authority of India

- **“As far as DoT is concerned, we do not have any authentic information from any study or report about health hazards** of mobile phones or from towers installed for purpose of providing Mobile Telephone Services”

## Department of Telecommunications, India

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## **ACCEPTANCE OF ICNIRP GUIDELINES BY GOVT. OF INDIA** *(Ministry of Communications & IT)*

**The standards set by ICNIRP for emission levels are considered to be the safest, and have been adopted by most of the countries across the globe to ensure compliance against all the safety limits from EMF. Indian Government has amended the UASL license and thereby has directed all the operators to comply with the ICNIRP Guidelines.**



- Adoption of ICNIRP guidelines by DoT / TEC in May'2008
- DoT amended UAS Licenses on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2008.
- TEC issued test procedure for measurement of EMF from base station antennas in September 2009.
- Test Procedure are based on ICNIRP norms.
- All operators required to provide self certification on EMF compliance within 6 months of Telecom Engineering Centre (TEC) issuing Test Procedures.
- DoT vide letter dt. 8<sup>th</sup> April 2010 issued instructions for implementing test procedure and has directed that all existing BTS's to be ICNIRP compliant by 8<sup>th</sup> May 2010.

**Industry welcomes adoption of ICNIRP guidelines bringing India at par with international standards.**

# FIELD TEST FOR ESTIMATION OF BASE STATION ANTENNA FIELD PARAMETERS



- Recently a field test was conducted by Thiagarajar advanced Research Center, Thiagarajar College of Engineering, Madurai for the estimation of Base Station Antenna Field Parameters i.e. Electric Field (E) , Magnetic Field (H)& Power Density (S) and to **check the compliance with the ICNIRP limit.**
- It was observed that the the measured values for E field, H field and power density are **Hundreds of times lower than the prescribed reference level by ICNIRP.**

# MYTHS & FACTS

	Myths	Facts
1.	Mobile phones increase the of Brain Cancer, Brain tumor etc	Till date there is absolutely no evidence of such kind.
2.	Mobile phones are powerful enough to cook your brain	No. Output of mobile phones is less than 1 Watt
3.	RF radiations emitted by Mobile Base Station are ionising	RF radiations emitted by the Mobile Base Station lie in the non-ionising part of electromagnetic spectrum
4.	Exposure to the level of RF radiations emitted by the base station can be hazardous to health	The average level of RF exposure from the base station is <u>only 0.002%</u> of the recommended guidelines

**RF emissions from mobile phones and base stations are some Hundreds of times lower than the levels at which the first health effects begin to be established**

# CONCLUSION



- RF radiations emitted by Mobile Communication Systems lie in the non-ionizing part of the electromagnetic spectrum. Hence, Hundreds of times lower than the levels at which the first health effects begin to be established.
- The various *studies conducted by researches of highest integrity, does not demonstrate any link between human health risks and the use of digital mobile phones or living near a base station.*
- All of the reviews over the last ten years by expert panels and government agencies looking into the health and safety of mobile communications have agreed that the scientific evidence **does not demonstrate any health risks from the use of mobile phones for children.**
- As per ICNIRP, “**there is no evidence of any health hazard whatsoever from the RF radiations from the Mobile Phones and Cellular Towers. In fact, there is no need to have any concern even with regard to exposure of children to RF radiation**”.



**All Service Providers assure that their subscribers interact with them, either personally or through their authorized representatives.**

**For information and education of subscribers, all Service Providers inform their subscribers of**

- the broad range of services offered,**
- the individual plans available to them at any given point of time,**
- the tariff rates applicable to each of these, their validity, terms and conditions,**
- payment policies, the billing processes and procedures**
- and the structure within the organization where information and clarification on redressal systems for customer complaints and billing disputes will be available with all their relevant contact details**

**THANK YOU !**

visit us at: [www.coai.in](http://www.coai.in)