

“Licensing framework for Audio Conferencing/ Audiotex/ Voice Mail Services” to be part of Unified License, decides Telecom Department

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In a series of policy reforms initiated in telecom sector, Government has issued the “**Licensing framework for Audio Conferencing/ Audiotex/ Voice Mail Services under Unified License**” and amendments in the terms and conditions of the existing standalone license of “Voice Mail Service (VMS)/ Audiotex (ATS)/ Unified Messaging Services (UMS)”. Presently, standalone license for VMS/Audiotex/ UMS are being issued by DOT as per the existing guidelines dated 16.07.2001.

After examining the TRAI’s Recommendations on “Licensing framework for Audio Conferencing/Audiotex/ Voice Mail Services”, DoT has decided to make this license a part of the Unified License (UL) by adding a new Chapter for this authorisation. However, the migration from existing license to Unified license will be optional for existing licensees holding VMS/ Audiotex/ UMS license. No new standalone license or their renewal will be issued for VMS/ Audiotex/ UMS license against the DOT guidelines issued on 16.07.2001.

The major highlights of the changes as per Revised policy issued are:

- a. The license is being made part of “Unified Licence” by adding a new Chapter for the authorisation titled “Audio-conferencing/ Audiotex/ Voice Mail Service”.
- b. The Audio Conferencing unit can be connected to both PSTN/Mobile and IP network as per TEC standards.
- c. Dial out facility will be allowed even if using resources of more than one access service provider subject to license conditions.
- d. Point-to-point conferencing has been allowed for providing services to Registered Enterprises in India.
- e. The Service Area for the License under UL is being changed from “SDCA” to “National level” i.e. All India level. However, it will remain SDCA for standalone license of VMS/ Audiotex /UMS.
- f. The licence fees of the new licensees and existing licensees will be 8% of AGR, which is at par with other licensees of UL.

This framework will be effective from **01.01.2022**.

RKJ/M

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