

COAI dispels myths related to Public Health and Mobile Tower Emissions

Pune, November 15th, 2013: In a specially convened press conference, **Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI)** dispelled the myths related to Public Health and Mobile Tower Emissions. Addressing the media, COAI officials said that the central norms on installation of mobile towers and emissions level were drafted in consultation with the States including Maharashtra and the industry. These guidelines as issued by the Central Department of Telecommunications are one of the safest in the world. Any major deviation from the Central guidelines will lead to severe network failures and massive service disruptions for a city like Pune and lead to grave inconvenience for the mobile phone users. The emission norms in India are so low that there is no need for any exclusion zone for erecting a tower, be it a school or a hospital. The industry bodies offered to work with the State Government to ensure that mobile networks in the State are not affected in anyway and all fears of public health are addressed.

Mr. Rajan S. Mathews, Director General of COAI, said, “The telecom industry is sensitive to the public health concerns in Pune. Despite following all the norms set out by the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the government of India, certain misconceptions are being propagated about cell phones and mobile towers. We’re convinced on the widespread awareness of safety aspects of mobiles, and will further reassure the citizens that their mobile emissions and that from towers cause no health hazard, as we follow the best practices in this regard. As recently as in Sept 20, 2013, the WHO clearly stated that ‘Studies to date provide no indication that environmental exposure to RF fields, such as from base stations, increases the risk of cancer or any other disease’.”

COAI feels that the public apprehension related to health hazards from mobile towers is primarily due to lack of information and misconceptions arising out of misguided activism. The industry, in a joint initiative with the Central and State governments, will introduce an extensive citizen education campaign on the safety, friendliness and usage of mobile services to address this issue. Industry norms across the globe on emissions are guided by UN bodies like WHO and its associates like ICNIRP and the Government of India has adopted one tenth of these internationally accepted norms.

The Indian scientific community too had taken note of the alleged health hazards from mobile towers as claimed by certain groups, and had expressed their strong views to the Government recently. In their recent letter to the DoT, 25 professors of IITs and IISc had opined that “there is no further knowledge available that warrants a change in safety recommendations of mobile emissions” and had urged the government to exercise caution in taking ad-hoc decisions regarding restrictions on tower locations and had also cautioned against creation of unnecessary panic and fear among citizens.

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Government of India had issued guidelines for installation of mobile towers in August 1, 2013 after a year of consultations including State Governments, industry and public. The guidelines recognize that mobile towers are critical infrastructure with no potential public health hazard and hence towers are permitted on all locations irrespective of land usage. There are no exclusion zones or restriction on installation of towers on schools or hospitals as the EMF emission levels in India are 90% lesser and safer than the WHO approved levels prevalent globally and hence provide adequate safeguard for all segments of the population.



About COAI:

The COAI was constituted in 1995 as a registered, non-governmental society dedicated to the advancement of communication, particularly modern communication through Mobile Telephone Services. With a vision to establish and sustain a world-class cellular infrastructure and facilitate affordable mobile communication services in India, COAI's main objectives are to protect the common & collective interests of its members.

www.coai.in twitter: [@ConnectCOAI](https://twitter.com/ConnectCOAI)