Subject: Notice for seeking stakeholder inputs on the DFC (Draft For Comments) of proposal for expanding scope of security testing for group of Communication Devices

Dear Stakeholders,

In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 7 of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 (13 of 1885), the Central Government amended the Indian Telegraph Rules, 1951 to insert Rule 528 to 537 in Part XI under the heading Testing & Certification of Telegraph. The new rules provide that every telecom equipment must undergo prior mandatory testing and certification.

Telecom Engineering Centre (TEC) came out with Procedure for Mandatory Testing and Certification of Telecommunication Equipment (MTCTE) in December 2017. The MTCTE document outlines the procedure to operationalize the new Rules.

The testing and certification described in the MTCTE procedure document requires that the equipment meets the Essential Requirements (ER). Security Requirement is part of ER for which the equipment must be tested and certified against. The responsibility for framing Security requirements, for designating TSTLs and for Security testing and certification lies with National Centre for Communication Security (NCCS), a centre under Department of Telecommunications headquartered at Bengaluru.

NCCS is responsible for designating Telecom Security Testing Laboratories (TSTLs) to carry out security testing of OEM equipment as per the Indian Telecom Security Assurance Requirements (ITSAR) in force. In this regard, an online meeting is scheduled for discussion with the stakeholders (TSPs, M2M service providers, Application service providers, Device manufacturers, OEMs, TSTLs, prospective labs, industry bodies and academia) on the Draft proposal (enclosed herewith) for expanding scope of security testing for a group of devices and for designating TSTLs against group of devices. The details of the online meeting and registration link are as follows:
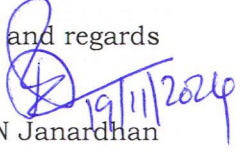
- Date of meeting: To be notified later
- Meeting link: will be shared later

The comments received from stakeholders will form the basis for discussion. Stakeholders are hereby requested to participate in the above meeting & send their suggestions/comments/inputs to the following e-mail addresses on or before 05.12.2024.

1. Shri N Janardhan, Director (SAS-III), NCCS - dirsas3.nccs-dot@ gov.in
2. Shri Manas Kumar Panada, ADG (SAS-II), NCCS - adg2sasf.nccs-dot@gov.in

In case of any queries, please call Sh. N Janardhan, at +91 9449080282 or Shri Manas Kumar Panda at +91 8249017281.

Thanks and regards

19/11/2024

N Janardhan

Director (SAS-III)

O/o Sr DDG(NCCS), NCCS, DoT, Bengaluru-27.

Proposal for expanding scope of security testing for group of Communication Devices

(Draft For Comments)

The ITSARs are consisting of Common Security Requirements (CSR) and Specific Security Requirements (SSR). The CSR clauses are common across most of the ITSARs. SSR clauses are specific to the Communication device. However, the testing infrastructure requirement, skill set requirement may vary from device to device or from group of devices to Group of devices. Hence, it is felt that it is possible to mandate testing CSR clauses of a group of devices and also designate the TSTL for testing CSR clauses of a group of devices.

At present, Telecom Security Testing Laboratories (TSTLs) are designated against each ITSAR/device for testing. The TSTLs have to apply for the designation against each ITSAR/device to NCCS. The applicant TSTL is evaluated by SLR division of NCCS based on various parameters including the availability of infrastructure and other resources and capability to test the ITSAR clauses for designation of which the TSTL has applied. At present, the TSTL designated for testing of one ITSAR will be testing CSR and SSR clauses of that ITSAR.

Once, a TSTL is designated for testing CSR clauses of a group of ITSARs, the OEMs can approach any of the designated TSTLs for testing devices for CSR clauses in that group of ITSARs. On the day of application by OEM for ITSAR testing of a communication device, if only TSTLs designated for testing the CSR clauses of ITSAR are available, then the OEM can get the CSR clauses tested from any of the designated TSTLs and obtain the security certificate. Based on this certificate, OEM can deploy its device in telecom network. If on the day of application by OEM for ITSAR testing of a communication device, there is any TSTL/TSTLs designated for testing both CSR and SSR clauses of ITSAR, then the OEM has to mandatorily approach only those TSTLs and get their device tested for both CSR and SSR clauses and accordingly obtain the security certificate.

In order to bring various communication devices under security testing of at least CSR clauses and to simplify the TSTL designation process, a committee consisting of members from OEMs, TSTLs, academia and NCCS was constituted to study the 42 published ITSARs and to assess the infrastructure and skill set requirements to test the CSR clauses of a group of ITSARs/devices and suggest the grouping of ITSARs for designating the TSTLs against a group of ITSARs/devices for CSR testing.

Based on the recommendations of the committee, it is proposed to group the ITSARs as below for the purpose of designation of TSTLs for testing CSR clauses of the group of ITSARs/devices.

A. Group I – ITSARs of 23No.s of 5G Core NFs
(AMF, AuSF, NWDAF, NEF, NRF, N3IWF, SEPP, SCP, SMF, UDM, UPF, BSF, CHF, LMF/GMLC, SMSF, UDR, UDSF, EIR, NSACF, UCMF, AF, NSSF, PCF)

B. Group II – ITSARs of gnodeB (Option 2) and gnodeB (Option 3,4 and 7)

C. Group III – ITSARs of 5 No.s of 4G Core NEs (HSS, SGW, MME, PGW and PCRF)

D. Group IV – Four ITSARs (Wi-Fi CPE, IP Router, CBC and PABX)

E. Group V – Two ITSARs (OLT and ONT)

For the six ITSARs (Network Function Virtualization (NFV), enodeB, Transmission Terminal Equipment (TTE), UICC, Hybrid Set Top Box and Mobile User Equipment), it is proposed to designate TSTLs for each ITSAR separately.