COMMUNICATION SECURITY CERTIFICATION SCHEME

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National Centre for Communication Security

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COMMUNICATION SECURITY CERTIFICATION SCHEME

1. Short Title and Commencement

1.1. This document may be called the 'Communication Security Certification Scheme' (ComSec).

1.2. This scheme shall be applicable for Security Certification of all telecommunication equipment for which Mandatory Testing and Certification of Telecom Equipment, here in after referred as "MTCTE", applies and shall come into force from the date of notification.

1.3. The Scheme shall also be applicable to such other Telecom Equipment, Hardware, Software or System as notified by the Government.

1.4. National Centre for Communication Security (NCCS) – a Centre under Department of Telecommunications (DoT) – shall be responsible for implementation of this scheme.

2. Definitions

2.1. In this document, unless there is something repugnant in the subject or context, -

i. **Act** means Indian Telegraph Act 1885.

ii. **Applicant** means indigenous Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) or Local Representative (LR) of foreign OEM or Importeror Telecom licensee who wishes to get their equipment security tested and certified.

iii. **Appropriate Authority** means an officer not below the rank of Assistant Director General of Department of Telecommunications or its subordinate or attached offices authorised by the Telegraph Authority.

iv. **Certification Body (CB)** means a body that issues a conformance certificate and may also conduct conformity assessment activities. Security Certification Division of NCCS entrusted with the function of Certification of Telecom equipment will be the Certification Body.

v. **Designation** means the authorisation given by Security Lab Recognition (SLR) Division of NCCS to a Telecom Security Testing Laboratory (TSTL) to undertake specified conformity assessment activities.

vi. **Designating Authority** (**DA**) means Security Lab Recognition (SLR) Division of NCCS with the authority to designate, monitor, suspend or withdraw designation of TSTLs to conduct conformity assessment activities within its jurisdiction.

vii. **ITSAR** means Indian Telecom Security Assurance Requirements. ITSAR is published by Security Assurance Standards (SAS) Division of NCCS for a Telecom equipment or a group of Telecom equipment and gives the list of Security Requirements that a Telecom equipment or a group of Telecom equipment must comply with.

viii. **'Model'** means a particular hardware/software design or version of a product/equipment bearing a unique model number assigned to the equipment. An equipment, which is different in either of hardware/software/design/model/version, shall be treated as a different model.

ix. **Mandatory Testing and Certification of Telecom Equipment** refers to the procedure made to implement the Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Rules, 2017. The procedure for MTCTE is published by Telecom Engineering Centre (TEC).

x. **National Centre for Communication Security (NCCS)** refers to a centre of DoT that is vested with the responsibility of developing Security standards/ requirements and activities associated with the security testing and certification of Telecom equipment.

xi. **Telecommunication equipment** also referred to as 'Telecom equipment' or 'equipment' is synonymous with 'Telegraph', as defined in Section 3 of Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 and the terms are interchangeable.

xii. **Telecom Security Testing Laboratory (TSTL)** refers to a Telecom Test Laboratory having the capability to test Telecom equipment for conformance to ITSAR.

xiii. **Validator** is an authorised representative of the Certification Body who is responsible for technical oversight of the evaluation process in a TSTL.

2.2. Words and expressions used but not defined in this document shall have the meaning respectively assigned to them in the Act or the Rules made thereunder.

3. INTRODUCTION

3.1. 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.

3.2. 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 operationalise the new Rules.

3.3. 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 and for Security testing and certification lies with NCCS.

3.4. Any Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM)/ importer/ dealer who wishes to sell, import, or use any telecom equipment in India, shall have to get their equipment security tested and certified. This may be implemented in a phased manner.

4. SCOPE OF SECURITY CERTIFICATION

4.1. The scope of certification shall cover all types of telecom equipment to be sold in India and to be connected to Indian telecom network after the date of effect of this scheme for which ITSAR is available and is in force.

4.2. NCCS shall be responsible for developing and for release of ITSARs for the various equipment in a phased manner. On release of ITSAR for an equipment, that equipment shall get included in this Scheme for enforcement. The ITSAR for that equipment comes into force from the date notified separately. Any amendment in ITSAR, caused to address newer threats and requirements, will result in release of new version of ITSAR and same shall be applicable from the date of applicability indicated in the new version of the ITSAR. The new version will indicate, for the equipment certified against the earlier version of ITSAR, whether the equipment requires to undergo full or incremental testing for certification against the new version of the ITSAR.

4.3. The use of certified equipment, unless specifically exempted, shall be governed by extant guidelines and rules.

4.4. If the equipment is being imported for Research and Development or for demonstration purpose in India or as a sample for mandatory testing, prior security certification may be exempted for limited numbers of equipment.

5. **The Scheme**

5.1. Department of Telecommunications aims to meet the following objectives in developing, operating and maintaining the ComSec scheme:

   a. To develop country specific standards, processes and specifications.
   b. To develop testing and certification eco-system.
   c. To ensure Telecom network elements meet security assurance requirements.
   d. To ensure compliance of regulatory requirements pertaining to security testing

5.2. The Scheme provides for the activities relating to development of Indian Telecom Security Assurance Requirements (ITSAR), Designation of Telecom Security Test Labs (TSTL), and Security evaluations and Certification of the Telecom Equipment against ITSAR.

5.3. The ITSAR shall be prepared based on country specific security requirements, International Standards and consultations with stakeholders such as OEMs, TSTLs, TSPs, Academic institutes, Industry and Government bodies.

5.4. The security testing against ITSAR shall be carried out by the designated TSTL. The labs from private and public sector meeting the specified requirements shall be designated. The prospective TSTL makes an Application in prescribed proforma. After satisfactory evaluation of the Application, competency of the lab to perform the security testing as per ITSAR, shall be assessed. On successful assessment, the TSTL will be issued with Designation certificate. For details in this regard, refer "Procedure for designating TSTLs" and "Designation Requirements of TSTL" documents of NCCS.

5.5. Applicants intending to get their equipment certified will register on MTCTE portal. After successful evaluation of the Application, the Applicant can choose a designated TSTL for security testing of its equipment against the applicable ITSAR. TSTL will conduct the requisite testing under the supervision of a validator. After completion of the testing, Test reports will be submitted by the TSTL. These reports will be evaluated for security certification. On successful evaluation, security certificate will be issued by NCCS. For details in this regard, refer "Procedure for Security Certification of Telecommunication Equipment" document of NCCS.

6. Organisational Structure of NCCS

6.1. Head of NCCS, shall be responsible for the overall implementation and operation of this scheme. NCCS comprises of three Divisions, responsible for the works of development of Security Assurance Standards, Security Lab Recognition/Designation and Security Certification.

6.2. **Security Assurance Standards (SAS)Division**: The Division shall develop security assurance requirements for Telecom equipment and manage the, "**Security Assurance Standards Facility**." The SAS Division shall prepare the security requirements/standards called Indian Telecom Security Assurance Requirements (ITSAR) for network elements (or a class of network elements) and notify them. The SAS Division will also be responsible for testing of network elements in case of any security breach reported and in referral cases.

6.3. **Security Lab Recognition/Designation (SLR) Division: T**he Division shall be responsible for notifying TSTL designation mechanism along with requirements to be met by TSTL, conducting all activities associated with the designation of TSTL, and Designation of TSTL by issuing a certificate.

6.4. **Security Certification (SC) Division**: The Division shall be responsible for issuing security certificate for the successfully tested Telecom Equipment. The work will include evaluation of the test results from Security labs and issuing Security certification based on the testing performed by the designated labs.

7. Scheme Controller

7.1. Head of NCCS shall be the Scheme Controller, and has the overall responsibility for the operation of the scheme.

7.2. Any dispute brought forth by an Applicant or a TSTL, concerning the operation of the scheme or any of its associated activities shall be addressed to the concerned Division head. If not satisfied with the disposal, the applicant/TSTL may appeal to the Scheme Controller for resolution. The decision of the Scheme Controller will be final and binding on the concerned parties.

7.3. The Scheme Controller shall put in place appropriate mechanisms to ensure the confidentiality of the data being handled by the units under the Scheme.

8. Fees Payable

8.1. Under the scheme, NCCS shall collect fees for Lab recognition and evaluation of test results. These fees shall be fixed by the Scheme controller from time to time. Details of these fees can be obtained from the respective scheme-procedure documents. Testing fee as fixed by TSTL will be paid by the Applicants directly to the TSTL.

9. Validity of Certificates Issued:

9.1. Validity of certificates for designation of TSTL shall be for three years subject to the conformity with scheme requirements.
9.2. Security Certificates issued for equipment will be valid for five years subject to compliance to the applicable ITSAR amended from time to time.
9.3. Modification of Certificates is allowed subject to the compliance with the requirements of the scheme.
9.4. Certificates can be renewed for further period subject to compliance to the applicable scheme requirements.

10. Surveillance

10.1 Appropriate Authority (AA) reserves the right to inspect and/ or test any telegraph, which requires security certification at any time and at any premises including sites where it is in use or at the place of manufacturing to ensure that the telegraph used/sold has the required certifications and conforms to the security requirements. Such inspection and/ or testing may be carried out periodically, or at the discretion of Telegraph Authority or due to any complaint.

11. Non-Conformity and Contraventions

11.1. If it comes to the notice of Telegraph authority that

i)   an uncertified equipment or certified equipment with unauthorised modifications or equipment whose certification has expired is being sold/used or intended to be sold/used,

or

ii)   A certified equipment is not confirming to the Security Requirements for which certification has been issued;

then such contraventions/non-conformity will be dealt as per applicable telegraph rules.