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New guidelines to control illegal listing and sale of radio equipment on e-commerce platforms

On May 27, 2025, the Central Consumer Protection Authority (“CCPA”) has issued the Guidelines for Prevention and Regulation of Illegal Listing and Sale of Radio Equipment including Walkie Talkies on E-Commerce Platforms, 2025 (“**Guidelines**”). These Guidelines are intended to reinforce compliance with existing telecom laws and ensure that radio frequency devices sold online conform to the licensing and technical requirements laid down by the Wireless Planning and Coordination (WPC) wing.

Compliance requirements for e-commerce platforms and sellers

E-commerce platforms are prohibited from listing or selling radio equipment that requires a frequency assignment from the Department of Telecommunications (“**DoT**”) for lawful use. Such equipment can only be purchased from DoT-authorized dealer possession authorisation holders listed on the Saral Sanchar portal. Online platforms will also strictly prohibit the listing or sale of mobile signal boosters and wireless jammers.

Product listing regulations

Product listings must include the below mentioned technical specifications, such as operating frequency ranges, and provide proof of regulatory approval, including Equipment Type Approval (“**ETA**”). All listings must clearly state the operating frequency range and include valid regulatory approvals, particularly the ETA issued by DoT:

1. for equipment operating only in unlicensed frequency bands (e.g. wi-fi, bluetooth), listings must, (a) mention the ETA details; (b) provide a downloadable copy of the ETA; and (c) include a test report from an accredited lab;
2. for equipment using licensed bands but exempt from individual user licences (e.g. broadcast receivers), listings must show the relevant DoT or Directorate General of Foreign Trade notification number and date; and
3. for dual-band devices (e.g. mobile phones, point of sale machines), both sets of requirements under para 1 and b must be met.

Sellers of license-exempt equipment must certify that:

1. the device has not been altered to operate beyond ETA parameters; and
2. the test report is genuine and unaltered from the original report prepared by the accredited test laboratory.

Any listing which does not comply with the conditions or the required certification as set out above will be taken down.

Monitoring and reporting

There will be an automated keyword and frequency-based scanning implemented by the platforms to detect non-compliant listings. A user-friendly reporting mechanism for public to report illegal or suspicious listings must be provided.

Responsibilities of sellers:

Sellers registered with the e-commerce platforms will ensure that (a) the radio equipments listed for sale do not operate on frequencies which are not exempted by DoT; (b) the frequency bands on such radio equipments are clearly labelled; and (c) the laws of wireless communication equipments are complied with in relation to their import, possession, and distribution within the country.

Responsibilities of e-commerce platforms:

E-commerce platforms will ensure that (a) the sellers of the radio equipment (exempt from license requirements) verify and certify personally that the test report has not been altered from the original report prepared by the accredited test laboratory; and (b) any non-compliant listing are removed from the platform within 24 (twenty-four) hours of receiving directions from the DoT.

Enforcement and penalties

Non-compliance of these regulations by such e-commerce platforms or sellers will attract consequences and penalties as per Consumer Protection Act, 2019 and other applicable laws and authorities such as the DoT, including blacklisting of such persistent defaulters.

Collaboration with regulatory authorities:

E-commerce platforms will cooperate with the regulators to ensure: (a) real-time takedowns and enforcement actions; and (b) regular audits and compliance reports are submitted to the authorities as may be required by law in force.

Public awareness

E-commerce platforms will display notices on the risks and legal implications of purchasing unauthorised walkie-talkies and encourage informed consumer behaviour by educating users on frequency compliance.

Conclusion

The Guidelines issued by the CCPA aims to safeguard consumers and uphold telecom regulations by curbing the unauthorised sale of radio equipment on e-commerce platforms. By mandating strict compliance with licensing, technical approvals, and transparent product listings, the Guidelines reinforce accountability for both sellers and platforms.

Consumer Protection Practice

JSA has extensive experience in consumer protection laws and related matters. We have advised clients (both domestic and global), across sectors and industries on complex queries around consumer protection laws and rules thereunder, and its interplay with other related legislations, like data privacy and exchange control laws.

We have developed a leading consumer protection practice supported by a group of insightful and experienced solicitors with knowledge of the essential consumer law sector. Our team has experience in managing complex consumer matters (transactional, advisory and contentious), domestic and cross border. We are renowned for our proficiency in successfully defending the interests of our clients.

Our key areas of advice include:

- Structuring business activities and governance of consumer sector entities;
- Corporate transactions in consumer and allied sectors, such as M&A, investments, restructuring and joint ventures;
- Review of business and operations from consumer protection laws perspective including import regulations and foreign trade policy of India;
- Advice on registration and licensing requirements;
- Advising on e-commerce rules;
- Advise on single brand retail and multi-brand retail from foreign exchange laws perspective;
- Advise on product liability issues and compliances;
- Advising on standards issued by the BIS and quality control orders including advisory in relation to inspection and enquiries by authorities;
- Advising on advertisement, packaging and labelling requirements.

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21 Ranked Lawyers



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