



SANCHAR NIGAM EXECUTIVES' ASSOCIATION

KERALA CIRCLE

(Recognised Majority Association of Executives in BSNL)
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No.SNEA/Kerala/2018-19/II/112 **dated at TVM** **the 15th June 2020**

To

Sh. C V Vinod,
Chief General Manager Telecom,
BSNL, Kerala Circle,
Thiruvananthapuram-33

Respected Sir,

Sub: Service assurance in the outsourced cluster maintenance model - need for ensuring timely resolution of faults, prompt payment to vendors and improving BSNL collection/ service efficiency, introduction of e-wallet system as done for FTTH franchisees can bring significant changes in CFA sector, our suggestions, reg:

Ref: Letter No. SNEA/Kerala/2020-21/II/110 dated at TVM the 3rd June 2020

This is in continuation of our earlier letter dated 3rd June 2020 regarding modifications required in the framework of cluster management system introduced in the Circle after the VRS. As external maintenance of our copper based network has now been outsourced and the system is being implemented in all BA clusters, we may have to go for certain innovative and proactive steps to make the system further tuned to meet both operational/marketing targets and to ensure superior service quality to customers. Payment of dues to channel partners along with incentives to better performers meeting SLA based targets would be one of the most important aspects for extracting better output from those vendors. At the same time, non-performers need to be corrected if they don't manage activities in a particular Xge area in a cluster or don't resolve faults as per prescribed timelines. At any cost, cluster management initiatives are to be streamlined in such a way so as to maximize service efficiency from the vendor side and by ensuring prompt service delivery to esteemed customers.

To make the system more effective, the following are suggested:

1. In the present tender, there is no provision for deducting the outsourcing charges for not attending certain xges in a cluster or not attending the maintenance for many days other than imposing 15% penalty in monthly invoices. It wouldn't be an effective mechanism as the cluster partner may knowingly or unknowingly ignore certain exchange or pillar areas due to their own reasons like non-availability of adequate technicians, etc. This would result in

accumulation of faults and the cluster partner may continue working without resolving such faults on time accepting the 15% penalty capping. Penalty can be for not meeting SLA timelines and should not be for not working for which 100% prorata reduction is required.

2. As we have pointed out there is no point in granting incentives to the Franchises without meeting SLA.
3. Though payments are made against data circuits, data circuit faults are not being migrated to FMS.
4. Though BTS outsourcing is a work contract, we have been able to fix norms for the number of personnel to be deployed as well as spares to be supplied etc for managing BTS & Infra maintenance depending on normal or hard stations. Similarly, BSNL must fix some norms for deployment of person in clusters and for the supply of necessary stores for ensuring better output from the Vendor.
5. In this context it is suggested that the cluster partners may be instructed to get the certificate from the cluster in charges regarding the quality and quantity of stores supplied as these materials are becoming BSNL assets. BSNL may fix certain norms to ensure minimum availability of drop wire and UG cable to be stocked in each cluster according to the size of the cluster. This will ensure use of quality material and give an assessment of stores being deployed by the cluster partners which can be made use for future purpose.
6. It is experienced that the cluster partners are not deploying sufficient technicians and we are not in a position to insist any number of personnel under the present tender conditions. However the details of EPF/ESI payment may be insisted along with invoices so that the number of personnel being employed by the contractor will be available to BSNL and it will ensure the compliance of labour laws regarding minimum wages, EPF, ESI Etc. The above details will give first-hand information regarding the economic viability of the cluster franchisee system being followed in BSNL.
7. It is noted that the 15% penalty for slippage of SLA is just 10 % of the actual penalty worked out for the slippage of SLA. Considering the COVID situation, BSNL has reduced the penalty for first three months and it has decided not to apply SLA bench mark of first three months for termination of the tender. In this connection, it is proposed that the penalty capping may be increased for non-adherence of SLA after 3 months to at least 50% Of the penalty worked out for SLA slippage or 15 % of the bill whichever is more. From the experience of Kerala circle wherein all BAs will be completing 3 months in June 2020 , none of the cluster Franchisees has met even 50% of the SLA and liable to be terminated as per NIT. Since there are not many experienced vendors available in the field, bringing a new contractor may not be successful. Hence, instead of termination of the agreement as provided in the NIT, the penalty capping may be increased on mutual consent as suggested above after three months. It is also suggested, not to pay maintenance charge for the month against faulty numbers if the fault remains for more than 72 hrs as BSNL is bound to grant rent rebate to the customer.
8. Though the design of FMS is very user friendly its access, speed and time taken for hitting the fault from Clarity to FMS and FMS to clarity for final testing etc need much improvement. Access issues in FMS portal are more frequent these days and the users finding it very difficult to manage activities in a time bound manner. As all the Franchisees have been given access to Clarity, there is no need for transferring faults from Clarity to FMS for ordering and from FMS

back to Clarity for clearing the faults. These procedures make things delayed and complicated which can be avoided to make things faster and use of FMS can be limited for invoice generation and SLA monitoring purposes.

9. While updating FMS after fault resolution, details of the technician who visited the customer premises may also be recorded for security reasons which would be also useful while tracking further faults in future.
10. Also, it would be useful to incorporate adequate clauses to exclude one or more pillar area(s) from the maintenance contract, if felt by the cluster in charge, for ensuring better service and control over certain group of customers in strategic/high security areas like Govt. Secretariat, defense, SEZ etc.
11. As far as invoice processing is concerned, the procedure being implemented to avoid delay is a welcome step, but the hurry shall not result in loss in the absence of proper verification by cluster in charges. Sufficient time (minimum one week) to be allotted for verification of the invoice.
12. At present, the cluster in charges are not having the data of active customers on FMC base for verification, which is very much essential for certifying the invoices.
13. In fact, the verification of invoice for its correctness regarding FMC and number of active numbers can be done by TRA or computer cell/ CDR team of SSA/ Circle for which the cluster in charges have no role.
14. It will be better if the cluster in charges concentrate on clearing the faults, provide new services, ensure quality of services and working of indoor equipment like switch/ transmission/ power plants/ battery etc and attending customer grievances rather than checking the arithmetical correctness of the invoice generated by ITPC which can be done centrally at BA/circle level.
15. There could be incidents of prolonged breakdown of services due to cable/pillar damages or shifting of the same due to road works etc. BSNL may be forced to give rent rebate to customers due to delay in restoring the services. It needs to be ensured that the cluster partners don't receive maintenance charges or incentives during the prolonged breakdown period even though the status of the number may be active.
16. In the present financial situation, BSNL may not be able to effect timely payments to its suppliers/vendors every time. Introduction of e-wallet /e-pay system launched for FTTH Franchisees seems to be a successful model in managing those vendors by ensuring timely payments to the channel partners.
17. The cluster partners may be entrusted with the work of bill collection through wallet as being done in the case of FTTH partners and the basic maintenance charge may be paid to the wallet on each collection.
18. By Implementing e-pay system, BSNL can stop printing and supplying of bills.
19. Customer bill payment assurance will become one of the priorities of Franchisees also.
20. There is every possibility of cluster Franchisee visiting all customers under their purview to collect payments other than for rectifying faults, which in turn can help to improve service efficiency also.
21. The Franchisee is likely to get more opportunity for improving their sales by providing more services like BB and also to capture new LL connections.

22. The balance payments against incentives for high FMC numbers etc can be paid manually after adjusting penalties, if any.

It is requested to consider the above suggestions, please.

Thanking You,

Sincerely Yours

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Jithesh K P', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jithesh K P
Circle Secretary
SNEA Kerala Circle

Copy to: 1. Shri P.G.Nirmal, GM(NWO-CFA), Kerala Circle
2. The GS, SNEA CHQ