

Government of India

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1. Introduction

NIC Messaging Division has established SMS Gateway services to provide reliable and 24x7 SMS services for the e-Gov applications in the Government for both G2G and G2C.

This service is available to all applications hosted under Ministries / Departments / Statutory Bodies / Autonomous bodies of both Central and State/UT Governments

2. Objective of the Policy

The purpose of the policy is to detail the policy statements regarding the NIC SMS Gateway services. It covers the technical, administrative and commercial aspect related to the service.

This document lays down the various policies regarding integration of application with NIC SMS gateway services. It addresses all the elements of the service.

3. Technical

The technical details are enumerated below:-

A. Push SMS

Push SMS service allows applications integrated with the SMS gateway to send SMS in a PUSH mode i.e. from the application to the mobile subscriber's handset. This part of the service is governed by the following:

- a) Applications should be hosted on NICNET/NKN/SWAN/SDC. Applications which are hosted on a network other than the ones indicated above, should be under the administrative and technical control of an NIC officer.

- b) Integration of an application with SMS gateway will be done after submission of a duly filled registration form available at [http://mail.gov.in/ forms](http://mail.gov.in/forms). The duly signed filled form can be sent physically to NIC support, iNOC, CGO Complex, New Delhi or can be sent as scanned copy to smssupport@gov.in. The account shall be created within 1 working day after the receipt of the completed registration form.
- c) The account created will contain a username, a password and a sender id. The username and integration manual will be sent as an email to the application owner. Password will be sent through SMS to the registered mobile number (as mentioned on the form) of the application owner
- d) International SMS gateway to applications launched by PMO/NIC/DeitY and apex organisations (O/o President/Vice President/Parliament Sectt./Cabinet Sectt.) will require the approval of DG , NIC.
- e) To avoid misuse and scrutiny of an SMS sent by a compromised application, security audit clearance of the application is mandatory for integration of an application. If application is not already security audited but requires immediate launch, the same must be completed within 4 weeks of integration with SMS gateway. Failure of doing the will lead to deactivation of the account.
- f) The integration with API must be over HTTPS.
- g) The default sender ID will be NICSMS. If the application owner wishes to integrate with a different sender ID, the same must be approved by TRAI. Getting TRAI approval is the responsibility of the application owner. Approval of TRAI is required for launch of a service. In case of immediate launch, approval should be sent to NIC within two weeks of the launch, failure to do so will result in deactivation of the service. The TRAI sender id approval template is

attached at Annexure 'A'.

- h) Integration of application with SMS gateway is the responsibility of the application owner. The application owner will implement integration with the SMS gateway using the platform/technology of their choice/requirement. NIC SMS gateway support cell will share necessary integration document and will not be responsible for any coding support.
- i) If SMS is sent to an unknown mobile number or absent subscriber for more than three occasions/days, mobile number shall be placed on the black-list number and no SMS will be processed for that number in future.
- j) The application must not exceed submission rate of 2000 single-part SMS per second.
- k) Application owners, use the upload SMS file feature in <https://sms.gov.in> portal must ensure that the file contains less than 20 lac mobile numbers in a single file. The file formats supported are .TXT, .CSV and .XLS. For better service delivery, NIC SMS support cell can change the upload files timing/sequence or schedule as per the requirement under intimation to the end user.
- l) There will be no customization with respect to the SMS service. The service will be updated regularly with enhanced features. Application owners can send feature enhancement requests which will be considered for subsequent upgrades.
- m) In addition to a routine SMS transmission, if an application requires a one time password (OTP) service which requires high priority queue, two accounts will be created. Only OTP SMS can be sent using OTP account. If normal SMS are sent through the OTP, NIC SMS support cell shall deactivate the OTP account and shall not be activated till corrective action by the application owner is taken. Two such instances shall lead to permanent deactivation of the account.

Reactivation request will require the approval of DG, NIC.

B. Pull SMS

The Pull SMS service empowers user to get the status of their application or make any queries to the e-Gov application by sending a formatted SMS to a designated Virtual number. It will be governed by the following:

- a) NIC SMS gateway supports a fixed designated 10-digit mobile number (referred to as VMN) attached in Annexure 'B' and also available on the SMS website, <https://sms.gov.in>. All efforts will be made to retain the VNM for ensuring service continuity, however to adhere to any compliance and operational requirements, NIC reserves the right to change the VNM. VNM currently integrated with the gateway are enclosed as annexure "B".
- b) The application owner will be responsible for integration of Pull service with their application on any preferred platform/technology. SMS Support cell will share necessary documents and manuals in this regard and will not provide any coding support.
- c) The mobile user who uses to pull service by sending the SMS shall be charged by their telecom operator as per their SMS plan.
- d) For the better operation of the SMS gateway if it is required to delete or modify a pull service, the same will be done after consultation with the application owner.
- e) Please refer to the best practice document placed at annexure "C". SMS is meant for instant notification and as per best practices, a short SMS has a better impact on an end user than long SMS. Hence, in the interest of the of an application and to reduce the cost incurred, a SMS message should be drafted with the least number of characters. It may also be noted that multipart SMS are displayed in smart phone as a single SMS however, in older handsets, a multipart SMS are delivered as multiple SMS thereby

reducing the impact of a SMS. Please follow the best practice document to prepare content for an SMS.

- f) Refer to Terms and Conditions for integration with SMS service placed at annexure "D".

C. Reporting

- a. The SMS delivery reports will be available at <https://reports.sms.gov.in>.
- b. The user can login into the reporting portal from the allowed IP using the SMS account credentials. User can also login from non-allowed IP by using OTP. Such users must have email account on NICNET (userid@nic.in/userid@gov.in) as OTP SMS will be delivered on registered mobile number which is mapped with their email id.
- c. Detailed report option will show the delivery status of all parts of SMS (in case of multi-part SMS). Only first 2000 records shall be displayed.
- d. Concatenated report option will show the delivery status of SMS as a whole (on per transaction basis). Only first 2000 records shall be displayed.
- e. History report will not be available for current date,
- f. User can download complete report (as per the filter specified by the user). The download report will be in zipped (compressed) format. The unzipped file will contain report in .TXT format.
- g. If SMS account is mapped to an application owner mobile number, user will get a SMS informing him that report is ready for download.
- h. Reports for both Push and Pull are available.
- i. Reports will be available for current plus two previous months.

4. Log Retention

Following policy is applicable in regard to log retention

- a) Log will be available for current month plus two previous months.
- b) The application owner can request for the logs by sending an email to smssupport@nic.in
- c) Log shall be made available within 2 working days.
- d) The log shall be shared over email and in the spreadsheet or text/csv file format.

5. Commercial

- a) This policy will come into effect from 1st April 2015. All Ministries/Departments/States will need to provision for the cost of the service depending on their estimated traffic.
- b) All Ministries/Departments & States shall pay for the SMS service.
- c) Applications launched/approved by PMO/NIC/DeitY and apex organisations (O/o President/Vice President/Parliament Sectt./Cabinet Sectt.) shall not be charged for the service.
- d) In special cases, DG, NIC may approve sending SMS for other ministries at no cost subject to availability of funds.
- e) Notwithstanding any clause above, due to budget constraints, NIC reserves the right to ask any application ministry to pay for the service, if required. Hence, it is recommended that depending on the estimated traffic of SMS, all Ministries and departments should provision for a SMS budget head.

Payment shall be made to NICSI. Charges will be as per the empanelled rates at NIC/NICSI.

6. Warranty

NIC warrants that:

It shall, at all times exercise reasonable skill and care in providing SMS services.

The User warrants that:

- The application will be security audited and the certificate will be submitted to NIC as part of the integration process.
- It shall ensure adherence to NIC security policies.;
- It has the full right, power and authority to enter into and perform this Agreement in accordance with its terms, and such entry and performance does not and shall not violate or infringe the intellectual property or other rights of any other person.
- Application owners are solely responsible for the contents sent in SMS and NIC under no circumstances will be made liable for any damage that arises because of the SMS.
- NIC shall do due diligence in ensuring the service is always operational and also have a redundant URL for sending the SMS. Despite best efforts in case of a service downtime, NIC is not liable to pay any damages due to disruption in service.

7. Limitation of Service

While NIC shall use its reasonable endeavors to provide Users a continuous service, the User acknowledges and accepts there is a regular "Scheduled Maintenance Period" during which time the whole or part of the service may not be available.

8. Force Majeure

Any failure of either party to perform its obligation under this Agreement shall not be a breach of this Agreement if such failure results from Acts of God, governmental action that did not result from wrong doing of the party involved in such governmental action, or labor strikes or walkouts that could not reasonably be avoided by the party subject to such labor strike or walkout. Each

party shall, with the cooperation of the other, exercise reasonable efforts to mitigate the extent of a delay or a failure resulting from a force majeure condition and the adverse consequences thereof.

9. Arbitration

On all aspects where this document is silent or for special cases of deviation from this policy, the decision mutually agreed upon NIC and User will be final. However, in case of any dispute relating to or arising out of this policy, such dispute shall be resolved amicably by mutual consultations. If such resolution is not possible, then the unresolved dispute or difference shall be referred to the arbitration of a sole arbitrator to be appointed by Secretary, Deptt. of Legal Affairs, Govt. of India. The Arbitration and Conciliation Ordinance, 1996 together with any modifications or re-enactment thereof and rules framed there under, as amended from time to time shall not be applicable to such arbitration proceedings under this clause.

ANNEXURE “A”

Template for Sender ID Approval

<PLS PRINT IT ON OFFICIAL LETTER HEAD>

To

Secretary, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)

Mahanagar Dhoorsanchar Bhawan, Jawaharlal Nehru Marg,

Old Minto Road, New Delhi 110001

Subject: Permission for providing 5 paisa exemption on Transactional Bulk SMS

Dear Sir,

We <**department name**>, under ministry of <**ministry name**> use Transactional SMS to deliver citizen centric messages as well as critical information without any commercial/promotional content and the end user shall not be charged for this SMS service. The NIC SMS gateway shall be used for the same.

With reference to your notification No.: 311-23/2013-QoS dated 24th May 2013 w.r.t. the Telecommunication Customers Preferences Regulations, 2010; we would like to request for providing 5 paisa exemption to broadcast bulk SMS.

We are using following Sender ID's.

- 1. <Sender IDs> {Sender ID should be exactly 6 character string like NICSMS, only A to Z character allowed}**

2. <Project Description> mention in detail about the project, why SMS is required, how SMS will benefit the common citizen or the government. You can also include any other artifacts related to this, for instance, decision taken to go for SMS service and any other justification>

We hereby request you to approve the same.

Sincerely,

(Signed with stamp)

ANNXURE "B"

List of 10-digit VMN for Pull Service

Circle	Mobile Number
Gujarat	8511199899
UP West	9935701889
Andhra Pradesh	8790499899
Assam	9954699899
UP East	9935901889
Delhi	7738299899
Himachal Pradesh	9805999899
West Bengal	9002481874
Rajasthan	9680999899
Kolkata	8420955238
Punjab	8288029899
Orissa	7682899899
Kerala	9633018998
Chennai	8220699899
Bihar and Jharkhand	9771439899
Maharastra & Gujarat	9766899899, 9730899899
MP & Chhattisgarh	7389939899
Karnataka	9731979899
Tamil Nadu	9629499899
North Eastern States	8119099899
Jammu & Kashmir	9596199899,9596499899
Haryana	919954699899

ANNEXURE "C"

SMS Best Practices

Following are the recommended best practices for using SMS service from NIC SMS gateway.

- 1) Never share username or password with anybody. It can be misused. Regularly change your password as per NIC Policy.
- 2) Always check your daily traffic pattern on <https://reports.sms.gov.in>. If any deviation in traffic or content comes to your notice, immediately contact NIC SMS support cell.
- 3) When using Push service, always keep the HTTP response sent by NIC SMS gateway. This can be used to track SMS delivery and consolidation of your SMS traffic.
- 4) When using Pull service, make sure that the Pull URL configured on your application is only used by NIC SMS gateway, else it can be misused. This can be done by granting necessary access rule to the Pull URL.
- 5) Always use domain name of SMS gateway i.e. msgw.sms.gov.in. Never use IP for connection as IP can change without any prior notice.
- 6) SMS content best practice is elaborated below:-

NIC SMS gateway supports message writing in English and any Indian language. As per TRAI guidelines, message length should be as follows:

Language	No Of Characters
English	160 Chars
Any Indian Language	70 Chars

For calculating the message length, following application can be used:

Message Length Calculator: -

<https://cal.sms.gov.in/unicodeconverter/>

SMS Message more than above characters will be sent in multi parts and . Each part is an independent SMS . Below is the matrix for multipart SMS:

Normal SMS		
Message Counts	Character Counts	Split after number of Character
1	160	-
2	306	153
3	459	306
4	612	459
5	765	612
6	918	765
7	1071	918
8	1224	1071
9	1377	1224
10	1530	1377

Any Indian Language (Unicode SMS)		
Message Counts	Character Counts	Split after number of Character
1	70	
2	134	67
3	201	134
4	268	201
5	335	268
6	402	335
7	469	402
8	536	469
9	603	536
10	680	603