

SETTING UP OF COMMUNITY RADIO STATION



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1. INTRODUCTION

Government of India, vide announcement made in December, 2002 has opened up vistas for educational institutions / organizations to have their own small power FM Radio Stations. As a step forward in this direction, Government has invited applications for grant of licenses to community based organizations including civil society and voluntary organizations, state agriculture universities, ICAR institutions, krishi vigyan kendras, registered societies, autonomous bodies and public trusts registered under societies act and well established educational institutions/organizations including Universities, Institutes of Technology / Management and Residential Schools for setting up Community Radio Stations. The idea behind the scheme is to enable these organizations to provide radio coverage within area of operation and to serve the cause of the community by involving member of the community. These radio stations will go a long way in reaching out to the community with programme content that shall be interest to the local audience. The local community would thus get largely benefited and find itself more involved in the happenings within the campus in the areas of education, health, sports, entertainment, university debates, seminars, workshops, cultural events etc.

All eligible organizations should, therefore, seize this opportunity and plan to set up their Radio Stations and apply for grant of license and frequency allocation. Broadcast Engineering Consultants India Ltd. (BECIL) offers its services for providing turnkey solution right from the initial stages of planning, frequency allocation and other regulatory clearances to the completion of project including training of personnel who shall be manning and operating the facility.

2. ABOUT BECIL

Broadcast Engineering Consultants India Ltd. (BECIL) is the premier consultancy agency and turnkey solution provider in the field of Broadcast Engineering, Communication and Information Technology. It is a profit making undertaking of the Government of India, specially set up in 1995 to provide guidance and expertise to the fast growing fraternity of broadcasters. BECIL has a pool of in-house expertise and a vast reservoir of experts drawn from various fields. BECIL, thus, has under one roof the complete expertise to execute any project in the broadcast field and has flexible, tailor made solutions meeting unique requirements of every customer.

BECIL provides consultancy services including turnkey solutions in the specialized fields of Acoustics, Audio-Video Systems (SRS/Conferencing/Recording/Production and Post-production System), MMDS, CATV Network, Terrestrial & Satellite Broadcasting and Data Broadcasting. BECIL has been the first in many fields including satellite uplink stations and FM Broadcasting. It has been the first in setting up of the first two private broadcasters' uplink stations in the country at Anna Salai, Chennai and Hyderabad for SUN TV and Eenadu TV respectively. As far as FM Broadcasting is concerned, BECIL is already in forefront in this field. The first private FM Radio Station to come up in India at Bangalore has been set up by BECIL. This has been followed up by setting up of about 50 stations all across the country. BECIL has also set up large number of centres under the prestigious project of Common FM Transmission Infrastructure for multiplexed operation of FM Transmitters.

3. STUDIO CONFIGURATION

3.1 ON AIR STUDIO

The basic requirement of a Community Radio Station would be for a common 'On-Air' and 'Programme Production Studio', which will be acoustically treated. The equipment complement will meet the requirements of recording, editing and storage in the analog and digital domains, besides meeting the requirements of an 'On-Air Studio'. The recording and playback facilities will center around a hard disk based system assisted by compact disc and cassette players etc.

3.2 VOICE OVER BOOTH (DISCUSSION STUDIO)

The next step is to include a voice over booth (VOB) in addition to the On-Air Cum Production Studio. VOB is an acoustically treated booth designed to optimize on the requirements of spoken word programming. The room will be suitable to accommodate 4 participants and the proceedings from there can either be recorded or put live on the air through the 'On-Air Studio'. Provision is available for the participants to listen to the programmes on high quality headphones.

3.3 PRODUCTION STUDIO

A Separate Production Studio can be provided for the stations where more quantum of in-house production is anticipated. The production studio will be equipped with recording / editing and storage devices. This will enable uninterrupted production activities even while the station is on air. The production studio can also serve the purpose of a 'Backup Studio' for 'On-Air Studio' in case of any emergency.

4. TRANSMISSION CONFIGURATION

Major components in a transmitting chain consist of Transmitter, Antenna, Feeder Cable and Tower. Various combinations can, therefore, be worked out to suit individual requirements and keeping in view the availability of funds. These combinations will, however, revolve around the following parameters.

- Maximum Effective Radiated Power : 100 W
- Configuration : Single or 1 +1
- : Minimum Permitted height of antenna above ground: 15 Meters.
- : Maximum Permitted height of antenna above ground: 30 Meters.

Note; In case of proven need where the applicant organization is able to establish that it needs to serve a larger area or the terrain so warrants, higher transmitter wattage with maximum ERP up to 250 Watts can be considered on a case to case basis, subject to availability of frequency and such other clearances as necessary from Ministry of Communication & IT Requests for higher transmitter power above 100 watts and up to 250 watts shall also be subject to approval by the committee constituted under the chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

5. OPTIMUM SOLUTION

The costs involved in bringing up a Community Radio Station will depend upon facilities to be provided and may range between Rs. 9.0 to 29 lakhs. For the purpose of illustration, three modules have been described in the following paragraphs. A combination of various transmission and studio facilities can be worked out depending upon the requirements.

5.1 BASIC MODULE

The basic module would consist of minimum complement of equipment required to set up a radio station. This module can be designed on the concept of a common "On Air and Programme Production Studio" to be acoustically treated to provide an optimum reverberation time. The recording and playback facility will centre around a CD player and cassette recorder/MD recorder. Automated playout system through a computer can be added at nominal extra cost. The transmission facility can be designed around a single 50 Watt professional grade transmitter with single element roof mounted antenna. The cost for this module shall be about Rs. 9.5 Lakhs.

5.2 MID RANGE MODULE

The mid range module can be designed to include a voice over booth (VOB) in addition to the one studio of Basic Module. VOB is an acoustically treated booth designed to optimize on the requirements of spoken word programming. The room has to be suitable to accommodate 4 participants and the proceedings from there can either be recorded or put live on air through the "On Air Studio". The transmission facility can be designed around a single 50 Watt professional grade transmitter with two elements antenna mounted on a 30 meter high self supporting tower. The cost of this module shall be about Rs. 15 Lakhs.

5.3 HIGH END MODULE

The high end module can be designed for stations where more quantum of in-house production is anticipated. For this purpose an additional production studio with necessary equipment will have to be provided to meet the requirement. The high end module will enable uninterrupted production activities even while the station is on air. The production studio can also serve the purpose of a "Backup Studio" for "On- Air Studio" in case of any emergency. The transmission facility can be designed in a 1+1 configuration of 50 Watt professional grade transmitters. This module shall be available at a cost of about Rs. 25 Lakhs.

6. BECIL Project Management Services

BECIL shall provide entire range of services required for setting up of the Community Radio Station starting from the initial stage of filing the application up to completion of the project to the full satisfaction of the clients. Broadly the services to be provided by BECIL are as follows:

A. Services during project conceptualization

- i) Preparation of a conceptual project report covering the preliminary design of the project.
- ii) Prediction of coverage and estimation of field strength
- iii) Cost estimate of the project

B. Services during project implementation

- i) Selection of site / building & evolving of detailed design for making it suitable for the project.
- ii) SACFA Clearance
- iii) Procurement of equipment including drawing of specifications of Transmitter equipment:
 - Speech input equipment
 - Antenna
 - Tower
 - Feeder cable
 - Studio equipment
 - Power supply equipment
 - Ventilation equipment
- iv) Installation of various equipment
- v) Testing, Integration and Commissioning
- vi) Advice on maintenance
- vii) Training of staff

7. BECIL FEE

BECIL shall undertake the turnkey execution of the project to the entire satisfaction of the client at a fee of Rs.2.00 Lakhs. Service tax as applicable on the fee shall be payable extra and inclusive of BECIL'S above mentioned services, traveling, lodging and boarding cost of BECIL team.

8. TIME FRAME

Studio facility can be established in three months time. The transmission equipment import can however be undertaken only after obtaining government clearance. The entire process of setting up of Community Radio Station is stipulated to get completed in six months time from the date of signing of agreement.

9. COMMUNITY RADIO STATION INSTALLED BY BECIL

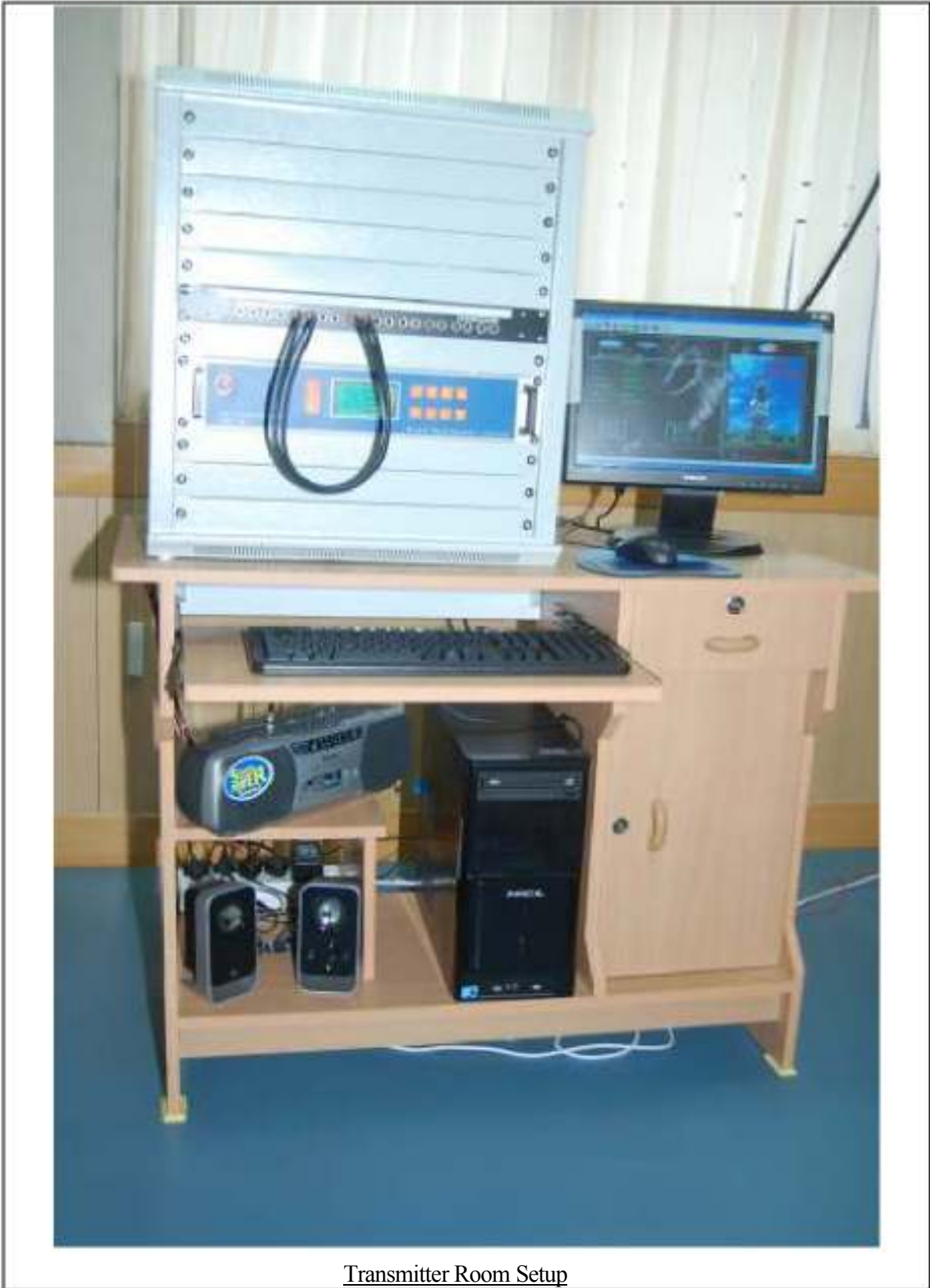




Audio Mixer used in the Studio



VOB Voice Over Booth(Discussion Room)



Transmitter Room Setup



Logger Software



Digital Clock used in the Studio

9. PUBLIC NOTICE

SETTING UP OF COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS

Applications are invited from the following Institutions / Organizations for grant of licenses for setting up and operating Community Radio Stations: -

- a) Well established educational institutions.
- b) State Agricultural Universities (SAUs), ICAR institutions and Krishi Vigyan Kendra.
- c) Community based organizations like civil Society and voluntary organizations which satisfy and adhere to the following principles:-
 - i. It should explicitly constituted as a 'non-profit' organization and should have a proven record of at least three years of service to the community.
 - ii. The CRS to be created by it should be designed to serve a specific well defined local community.
 - iii. It should have an ownership and management structure that is reflective of the community that the CRS seeks to serve.
 - iv. Programmes for broadcast should be relevant to the educational, developmental, social and cultural needs of the community.
 - v. It must be a legal Entity i.e. it should be registered under the Societies Act or any other Act relevant for the purpose and having a proven record of at least three years of service to the local community at the time of application.

The detailed guidelines and application form are available in this Ministry's website: www.mib.nic.in. Eligible Institutions / Organizations are requested to apply in the prescribed format along with a processing fee of Rs.2500/- in the form of a demand draft drawn in favor of Pay & Accounts Officer, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, New Delhi and payable at Delhi.