

1. Video conferencing- G/TBT/N/USA/2029 dated 8 August 2023

Notifying Member	United States of America
Type of Notification	Regular Notification
Economic relevance	High
Technical Relevance	Technical-Amendment

Proposal in brief

- a. USA Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has proposed to amend its rules to ensure that interoperable video conferencing services (IVCS) are accessible to people with disabilities and to facilitate the integration and appropriate use of telecommunications relay services (TRS) with video conferencing.
- b. The said amendments are proposed to meet the need for people with disabilities to participate fully in video conferences, a technology that appears to have permanently altered the norms of modern communication in the workplace, healthcare, education, social interaction, and civic life.
- c. The commission proposed the following amendments:
 - a. to include the provisions of speech-to-text (captioning of all voice communications in a video conference) and text-to-speech and enable the use of sign language interpreting.
 - b. The Commission also seeks comments on whether technical standards are available or could be fashioned for use as safe harbours, whereby certain performance objectives of IVCS can be satisfied by providing access to relevant forms of TRS.
 - c. Proposed certain modifications to its rules specifying conditions under which the TRS fund will support the provision of TRS with video conferencing.
 - d. Proposed mandatory minimum standards such as prohibition on disclosing the content of any relayed conversation (and any non-relayed conversation) in a video conference regardless of content, and with a limited exception for STS Cas from keeping records of the content of any conversation beyond the duration of a call, even if to do so would be inconsistent with state or local law.

Analysis

The Commission has proposed amendments to the rules that the video conferencing services are accessible to the disabled people.