

False Answer Supervision

What is FAS?

False Answer Supervision (FAS) occurs when providers terminate calls fraudulently, resulting in the calling party being overcharged for calls, or charged for calls that were never completed.

Our FAS identification and remediation process

- **Identification:**
In this stage, Fault Management (FM) compiles a list of tickets where confirmed FAS is identified through manual testing. Internal weekly reviews identify suppliers with increasing FAS faults
- **Watch List:**
Those suppliers whose FAS ticket counts increase are added to this list, which serves as a warning that their performance will now be closely watched and further penalties applied if the FAS is not corrected. The watch list affects the supplier's routing eligibility for the high-quality service level.
- **Chronic FAS Supplier List:**
Suppliers who continue to have a high incidence of FAS even after being watch listed, are then moved to the next list. The Chronic FAS Supplier List consists of two incremental stages, with increasing penalties if service isn't improved including; A-Z demotion from service level routing tables, extended removal periods for destinations where performance is symptomatic of FAS, and limited supplier testing of new routes.
- **Routing Disable:**
For those suppliers who are still performing poorly, they will be suspended from use for all routing purposes and may have all commercial relationships terminated.

Occurrences of FAS have rapidly increased within the past few years to become a global industry problem, with the most significant levels of fraud in regions with high termination rates and many competing suppliers. Combating FAS is significantly complicated by the many carriers reselling routes from other suppliers, making it difficult to trace the fraud to its source.

Tata Communications understands the critical importance of eliminating FAS in order to maintain high levels of call quality and customer satisfaction. Our stand is simple: we will not tolerate fraud on our network and are taking proactive measures to ensure that our partners support and work with us to achieve this goal.

Types of FAS

FAS can occur in one of three ways:

- Calls that are not successfully completed but that are billed anyway
- Deliberate rerouting of calls to an automated messaging platform designed to trick the customer into staying on the line
- Premature billing during Post Dial Delay (PDD) or ringing time prior to when the call is answered by the calling party (frequently due to a switch misconfiguration – accidental or intentional).

The Impact of FAS Across the Value Chain

FAS is a fraud perpetrated against consumers, who are billed for minutes they did not use, or calls that were never completed.

Consumer complaints about incorrect billing charges impose financial costs on retail carriers, who must allocate customer service resources to resolve billing issues. Additionally, FAS can damage brand perception, as well as lead to lowered customer satisfaction.

Meanwhile, carriers must compete against artificially lowered prices on routes from suppliers who are engaging in FAS, who use their fraudulent profits to subsidize below cost-per-minute rates.

Reinstating service

- **Chronic FAS Supplier List removal:**
If a supplier's FAS tickets over the last three months significantly reduces due to improved FAS prevention on their network and their performance on key network indicators supports this improvement, the supplier will be placed on the watch list (subject to other standard criteria).
- **Watch List removal:**
After being on the watch list for an extensive evaluation period without an increasing propensity for FAS, a supplier will be reinstated in good standing.

The Tata Communications' Difference

Tata Communications is undertaking comprehensive and proactive measures to eliminate FAS from our network. We monitor and measure key network parameters so we can take real-time action against potential instances of FAS before customers even know a problem exists.

Once FAS has been confirmed through comprehensive testing of suspicious routes the problem suppliers will immediately be removed as a route choice for the destination. In addition to the specific destination removals, we have implemented a process which includes a close monitoring and creation of a watch list and a Chronic FAS Supplier List that represent the worst chronic FAS offenders. Those suppliers where improvements have not been realized will have all commercial relations with Tata Communications terminated.

To ensure that FAS is comprehensively addressed, we have formed an internal working team, made up from members from various departments within Tata Communications, to evaluate supplier performance, design and implement FAS prevention strategies and processes to combat FAS on our suppliers' termination network.

Leading the Industry

Our methodology to eliminate FAS industry-wide is multipronged. We have taken our internal efforts farther, leveraging them to lead an external forum on FAS. The forum, made up of prominent retail carriers, provides educational outreach on FAS and is ensuring a unified approach to developing and implementing steps to eliminate this serious problem. To learn more about the forum, visit www.fightFAS.net.

Our internal and external efforts are varied and extensive but bring forth one clear, consistent message: we provide best-in-class service to carriers and end-users through a clean, reliable network, and will not tolerate fraud.

About Tata Communications

Tata Communications, a member of the \$62.5 billion Tata Group, is a leading global provider of a new world of communications. The emerging markets communications leader leverages advanced solutions capabilities and domain expertise across its global and Pan India Network to deliver managed solutions to multinational and Indian enterprises, service providers, and Indian consumers.

Tata Communications' range of services include transmission, IP, converged voice, mobility, managed network connectivity, hosting and storage, managed security, managed collaboration, and business transformation for global enterprises and service providers, as well as Internet, retail broadband, and content services for Indian consumers.

For more information on False Answer Supervision, visit www.tatacommunications.com/fas
