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Mr. Andrew Haire
Deputy Director General (Telecoms & Post)
Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore
8 Temasek Boulevard
#14-00 Suntec Tower Three
Singapore 038988

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Dear Mr Haire,

PUBLIC CONSULTATION PAPER ON THE PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE REGULATORY REQUIREMENT ON THE RESALE OF INTERNATIONAL LEASED CIRCUITS AND INTERNATIONAL SIMPLE RESALE

We refer to the above consultation paper, released by the Authority on 29 April 2009. StarHub Ltd (“StarHub”) is grateful for the opportunity to comment on this paper, and our observations on the issues raised by the Authority are set out below.

Q1 IDA invites views on market and technology trends and developments in the international capacity services market. In particular, are there other important developments that IDA should take into consideration when reviewing the RLC restrictions?

In regard to market trends, StarHub would note that an increasing number of countries have liberalized their telecoms markets. We would also note that, to date, there have not been glaring examples of foreign operators (from non-liberalized countries) providing RLC to their home country, but restricting the ability of Singapore’s other licensees to do the same.

Q2 IDA invites views on whether the restrictions on the resale of international leased circuits should be lifted, and if so, whether there is a need for any other restrictions to prevent anti-competitive behaviour?

StarHub agrees with the consultation paper that the existing restrictions on the resale of international leased circuits may not be serving a useful purpose. StarHub therefore has no objections to those restrictions being lifted.

However, StarHub has seen cases of foreign operators taking actions which are to the detriment of consumers in Singapore, and which Singapore’s other licensees have not able to respond to. We therefore believe that, even if the existing RLC restrictions are lifted, the Authority will still need to closely follow the behavior of foreign operators (from non-liberalized countries) operating in Singapore. In the event that these operators take actions which restrict competition, the Authority should be prepared to respond, using its powers under the Telecommunications Act, the Telecoms Code of Practice, and the relevant licenses. As part of this process, we believe that it would be necessary for the Authority to take into account whether a foreign operator could restrict competition in Singapore by leveraging on its position in its home market.



Q3 IDA invites views on market and technology trends and developments in the international telephony services market. In particular, are there other important developments that IDA should take into consideration when reviewing the ISR restrictions?

StarHub would agree with the consultation paper that IP telephony is transforming the international telephony services market. We would also agree that the original need for regulatory protections in regard to ISR may no longer be needed.

Q4 IDA invites views on the proposal to remove the requirement for route-by-route approval by IDA for the provision of ISR services and whether there is a need for any other restrictions to prevent anti-competitive behaviour?

StarHub would have no objections to removing the requirement for route-by-route approval for the provision of ISR services. We do not believe that this requirement is still appropriate for the current telecoms market.

However, as with the relaxation of the regulatory requirements for RLC, we believe that it will still be necessary for the Authority to: (i) monitor the sector; and (ii) take appropriate action in the event of any anti-competitive actions by foreign operators in regard to ISR.

StarHub is grateful for the opportunity to comment on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me, should anything in this letter require clarification or elaboration.

Yours sincerely
For and on behalf of
StarHub Ltd

Tim Goodchild
Head (Government & Strategic Affairs)