

Mediacorp Pte Ltd

Response to

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION PAPER ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY OF
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION**

**REVIEW OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT (Cap. 323) AND RELATED
AMENDMENTS TO THE MEDIA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE
ACT (Cap. 172)**

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1. Summary of major points

Mediacorp welcomes the opportunity to response to MCI's public consultation paper on review of the telecommunications act (Cap. 323) and related amendments to the Media Development Authority of Singapore act (Cap. 172)

Mediacorp would like the MDS to include provision for its digital TV equipment installation. Mediacorp supports most of the proposals and the details of our comments are in Section 3.

MediaCorp will be happy to work with MCI, IDA, MDA and other stakeholders to facilitate the deployment of telecommunication systems in Singapore.

2. Statement of interest

Mediacorp is, amongst its many other businesses, a Free-To-Air Broadcaster, and Mediacorp is currently building and rolling out its indoor digital TV network. This indoor digital TV network is being built for rollout across the whole of Singapore for access by the entirety of Singapore to be able to receive terrestrial television broadcast signals without reliance on any wired connections.

As the builder and owner of this indoor digital TV network, Mediacorp is concern with the high rental cost and the availability of space for equipment installation.

Mediacorp also foresees the urgency to provide coverage to new residential buildings and the co-existence of new and existing technologies.

3. Comments

Question 1: MCI invites views and comments on the proposal to revise Sections 19 and 21 of the TA to provide IDA with the powers to establish a framework to regulate and facilitate the use of/access to rooftop space for mobile deployments

I) FTA broadcast services should be allowed to use the mobile deployment space

With the blurring line between telecommunication and media services, Mediacorp submits that the use of the mobile deployment space in the building should be extended to include Free-to-Air (FTA) broadcasting services such as Digital TV services.

FTA broadcasting services are free services and provides critical public services to all residents in Singapore. It is important that Mediacorp, as a broadcast service providers, can be provided with the necessary deployment space to meet these objectives.

Presently, Mediacorp faces the same difficulty as mobile operators in getting and obtaining the necessary roof space to provide the FTA broadcasting services. All such access are necessary in order for Mediacorp to build its network and ensure delivery of the FTA broadcasting services to residents.

In this regard, the Media Development Authority also has certain requirements and expectations for indoor coverage of FTA broadcasting services and it is incumbent on Mediacorp to achieve the same. Unfortunately, Mediacorp's efforts are often hindered, hampered or delayed as a result of the same difficulties.

II) Specially constructed structures should be excluded in the MDS

Mediacorp submits that special structure(s), such as transmission towers and platforms that were specifically built by the building owner for its own specialized business needs and/or requirements, should be excluded from the mobile deployment space.

These special structures are part of their business requirements and strategic assets and it is not reasonable nor fair that these special structures are available for any other operators to simply take advantage of.

In fact, such special structures often also form the basis of its very own business opportunities and revenue stream. To include the same in the

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MDS would amount to cutting off a revenue stream for the business and in a way, “nationalizing” a private business asset.

III) *[Redacted]*

IV) Support the 14 days timeframe to raise objection

It is important that a timeframe be specified for building owners to raise objection. There were many instances that we could not get any response from building owners when we requested for roof top space and these had caused delay to the deployment.

Question 2: MCI invites views and comments on the proposal to amend Sections 14 and 21 of the TA to clarify the notification and objection process for telecommunication licensees’ entry to land/buildings.

Mediacorp would like to seek a clarification if state land and government buildings (e.g. army camps, civil servant quarters) are included in the TA.

Question 7: MCI invites views and comments on the proposed amendments in relation to the new Section 11A, and Sections 2, 5, 5B, 8, 26, 32D, 33(1), and 74 of the TA as described above.

I. FTA broadcasting services should be included in the definition of “Telecommunication services”

Mediacorp submits that FTA broadcasting service should also be included in the definition of “telecommunication services” as FTA broadcasting service is a critical service that are freely provided to all residents.

Mediacorp submits that FTA broadcasting service performs important and vital social and public functions by the delivery of public content; messaging and often important public notification.

II. Second party using the same frequency should not interfere with the original party

In the new clause 11A of TA, it is specified that operators operating in shared frequency must accept any interference from legitimate operation. Mediacorp submits that this is unreasonable. It is a reasonable and legitimate expectation and requirement that the first party’s service should not be affected by the interference of the second party. In the event that second party’s transmission is interfering with the first party’s service, the second party shall stop transmission and work with the first party to resolve the interference issue before it is allowed to start transmission.

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If legitimized, this may lead to an intentional interference deliberately caused by the second party in a competitive market to disrupt the services of the first party. Further, the first party would also likely be bound by its own statutory or licensing requirements and the first party would be liable for such interference under its own statutory or licensing requirements when it itself had not caused the interference nor been negligent in its obligations.

Such a provision is providing a lacuna and will invariably lead to abuses (at worst) or lack of care (at best).

4. Conclusion

High operating cost will deter FTA service provider to provide good coverage to the residents. One of the most expensive costs is the rental of space. Hence, it is necessary to provide usable space for free to install telecommunication equipment.

As the landscape of the island changes rapidly, the telecommunication network will need to be optimized timely to enhance its coverage. All the stack holders, including the service providers, building owners, building management, authorities and etc must work closely and understand the urgency of providing these services.

New technologies must be tested thoroughly. The authorities should monitor the situation during the actual field deployment to ensure these new technologies do not cause any interference to the existing ones.