

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION FOR
MANAGING UNSOLICITED COMMERCIAL MESSAGES AND
THE PROVISION OF GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT INNOVATION
IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY**

**SUBMISSION BY THE STARHUB GROUP TO
THE PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION COMMISSION**

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1. INTRODUCTION

StarHub welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Public Consultation for Managing Unsolicited Commercial Messages and the Provision of Guidance to support Innovation in the Digital Economy (the “Consultation”).

StarHub is pleased to provide its comments on Questions 3 and 5 of the Consultation in the following section 2.

2. STARHUB’S COMMENTS ON THE CONSULTATION

(a) **Question 3: What are your views on the proposed reduction of the period for effecting withdrawal of consent to 10 business days, in line with the period to effect an unsubscribe request under the Spam Control Provisions?**

StarHub takes the view that the proposed timeframe of 10 business days is too short for organisations to effect an unsubscribe request. Effecting an unsubscribe request would involve manual and system checks, and too short a time period may result in issues with accuracy, negatively affecting our customers. For example, in relation to the marketing messages that are sent via hard copy, a certain lead time is required for data extraction, and messages that have been sent to the printer may not be able to be recalled within such a short lead time.

In addition, most organisations would already have put in place processes to comply with the DNC Provisions and Spam Control Provisions separately. To now have to merge both, would result in increased compliance costs which may be passed on to consumers.

We would also respectfully note that the processes, systems and work involved in effecting: (a) the withdrawal of consents under the PDPA; and (b) an unsubscribe request under the Spam Control Provisions are entirely different. Therefore, there is no logical reason for setting a common processing time for the two sets of activities. Given that the work involved in consent withdrawals and unsubscribe requests is very different, we submit that the two timelines should be kept separate.

If the Commission is minded to reduce the period for effecting withdrawal of consent notwithstanding the above, StarHub suggests a longer period of 18 business days instead, to allow organisations more time to effect an unsubscribe request.

(b) **Question 5: Should B2B marketing messages be subject to the requirements under the DNC Provisions, in alignment with the coverage under the Spam Control Provisions?**

StarHub takes the view that B2B marketing messages should not be subject to the requirements under the DNC Provisions.

Personal information that is provided by an employee in relation to their employment, should not be treated the same way as personal data because this is provided in furtherance of their employment in the organisation. If employees were to be permitted to place their business contact numbers in the DNC Registry, this would cause significant difficulties to the organisation because their contact person cannot be reached, and would be particularly problematic if an employee leaves and another employee takes over that contact number. Should an individual wish to avoid receiving B2B marketing messages, he is free to use a personal mobile number that is in the DNC Register.

Further, as mentioned above, since the DNC Provisions were implemented more than four years ago, most organisations would already have put in place processes to deal with B2B marketing messages separately from consumer marketing messages. Merging the two at this point, when processes are already established, would result in operational difficulties and cost issues for organisations. B2B messages should be permitted to be sent freely in the spirit of promoting trade and commerce, so long as there is proper record keeping on the part of the organisations.

3. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, while StarHub welcomes the direction of the Consultation, StarHub is of the view that organisations should be permitted to retain their existing processes where possible.

StarHub is grateful for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Consultation, and we hope that the Commission will consider our comments. Thank you.

StarHub Group

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