

June 14, 2013

Mr Leong Keng Thai
Chairman
Personal Data Protection Commission

Dear Mr Leong,

Public Consultation on Proposed Business Operation of the DNC Registry

We refer to the above Public Consultation exercise conducted by your Commission.

2. While the business community understands the rationale for having a Personal Data Protection Act and the setting up of a Do-Not-Call (DNC) Registry, it does introduce many areas of concern in terms of overall compliance, additional costs and an overarching impact on the SMEs.

3. Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry hereby attached the following documents for your reference and consideration:


- Feedback and comments from the business community,
- Speech delivered by Nominated Member of Parliament Mr Teo Siong Seng, during the Parliament debate before passing the Bill on October 15 2012.

4. For further clarifications, please contact the undersigned or my colleague:

Ms Fiona Hu
Senior Director (Communications, Research & Publications)
Tel: 6337 8381
E-mail: fiona@sccci.org.sg

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,



Tham Poh Cheong
Secretary-General

Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry



SCCCI's Response to the Proposed Business Operation of the DNC Registry

The Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI) acknowledges the move to establish the Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA) and Do-Not-Call (DNC) Registry is an important step in further enhancing Singapore's drive to build on its position as a trusted business and information technology hub.

However, the implementation process does introduce many areas of concern in terms of overall compliance, additional costs, and an overarching impact on the SMEs.

In response to the call for Public Consultation, the SCCCI has solicited feedback from the business community as well as business leaders serving in our Council. The consolidated comments are presented below:

Compliance Cost for Businesses

1. It is likely that the compliance cost of implementing the PDPA and DNC obligations will have a bigger impact on SMEs as compared to the larger companies

For the large companies, compliance is not something new and it is very likely that they will already have a compliance officer or administrative staff handling a massive customer database. Furthermore, large companies operating on a global scale will be less affected as they tend to be already compliant with protection standards in other countries.

On the contrary, the **SMEs are very likely to face increased costs** in ensuring that their business practices and operations are compliant with the requirements, **SMEs would also face considerable uncertainty in determining the appropriate security arrangements and database housekeeping practices to be implemented.**

Proposed measures during the first year of DNC Registry operation

2. First year fee waiver for DNC Registry Verification

The Commission should provide a fee waiver to micro-enterprises and SMEs during the first year of DNC registry operation, i.e. **no search fee during the entire year of 2014.** This will **allow micro-enterprises and SMEs to have sufficient time to comprehend what is required, do necessary checks and work out effective processes.** It is more reasonable to have the search fees kick in from the second year onwards.

To ensure that the above suggestions could be implemented effectively and efficiently to the targeted group, i.e. micro enterprises and SMEs, the Commission could **provide free credits for DNC Verification for the first 1,000 contacts submitted on an annual basis, for companies with less than 2 sub-accounts.**

3. Advisory guidelines and education materials for outreach purposes

SMEs that currently do not have any systems in place to safeguard and maintain personal data, as well as to conduct regular checks of their contact database against the DNC Registry, may find it onerous and difficult to adjust without guidance.

Hence, the business community would appreciate it very much if the Commission could **reduce the complexity of the legislation or produce easy-to-understand guidebooks** (in all major languages) so that there is no uncertainty about the obligations required under PDPA and the business operation of the DNC Registry.

We also suggest that Commission **works closely with Trade Associations and Chambers to offer training courses to SMEs with regard to the required process and obligations.**

Proposed assistance to SMEs, particularly micro-enterprises

4. Longer grace period for micro-enterprises

We noted from feedback gathered from various sources that SMEs, particularly micro-enterprises with annual turnover of less than S\$1 million, are the groups which require more time to adjust to the new requirements, even as they struggle hard to sustain their business operations during these challenging times.

Our suggestion is for the Commission **to grant a 24 months grace period**, i.e. 6 months longer than the proposed 18-month sunrise period, **to these micro-enterprises.** This would **also allow them to learn from the experience of the larger businesses.**

5. Productivity improvement through using shared service providers

In line with the Government's call on productivity improvement through effective utilisation of common pool of resources, SCCC feels there is a need to set up reliable and accredited **Registry Service Providers, so that SMEs could outsource this function to the shared service provider without having to manage it on their own.**

This provides an alternative for the SMEs to comply with the DNC Registry requirement without incurring additional overhead costs, especially if these SMEs do not have the economies of scale / database volume to handle the DNC Registry verification process cost effectively.

6. Expand certain existing Government Assistance Schemes to cover PDPA and DNC compliance costs

We are dismayed to learn that the Personal Data Protection Act has now removed the Data Protection Fund, which was originally intended to provide financing or incentives to any public authority, enterprise, education institution undertaking or facilitating any programme to promote data protection awareness or implementation and running costs of the Commission.

In view of this, we propose that the Commission could work closely with related agencies, particularly iDA and SPRING, to study the possibility of **expanding the scope of existing Government Assistance Schemes so as to alleviate or defray the compliance costs of fulfilling the requirement of the PDPA and DNC Registry.**

We suggest expanding the scope of the following schemes to cover consultancy, software procurement and project implementation costs in relation to the PDPA and DNC Registry:

<p>SPRING - ICV Innovation and Capability Voucher</p>	<p>Consultancy services: To include the consultancy service provided on the compliance process as one of the eligible services to qualify for the \$5,000 ICV voucher.</p>
<p>iDA - iSPRINT</p>	<p>Software procurement and implementation</p> <p>a) Data security management software</p> <p>b) CRM / database management tools that could facilitate DNC registry verification. e.g. export contact list from the system for submission for DNC verification, and import the result list into the system to “mark off” the contact which should not be contacted (i.e. those registered with DNC registry)</p>
<p>IRAS - PIC Scheme Productivity and Innovation Credit</p>	<p>Software procurement for automation and productivity improvement: To include the investment on the above software items as eligible items for PIC claim and PIC bonus.</p>
<p>Other schemes</p>	<p>Software development: To support the initiatives of local software developers in creating or introducing commercial software which could effectively assist enterprises in the compliance process</p>

Response to selected questions under the Public Consultation Paper

Question 3: In particular, are 20 sub-accounts sufficient for each main account and do you have any views/comments on the rights and functions of the main and sub-account holder?

Comments from SCCCI:

20 sub-accounts are hardly sufficient for large organisations with multiple sub-bodies and a structure which includes many functional departments running separate database. A process allowing the application for more sub-accounts should be included, to serve the business interests of the companies / organisations in question.

Question 4: With reference to paragraph 4.18, do you have any views/comments for not allowing foreign organisations to register an account with the DNC registry?

Comments from SCCCI:

Foreign organisations that need to engage local companies to promote their business in Singapore should be allowed to register an account if they include the UEN of the company they are representing, so that the process and payment for the use of the DNC registry is more streamlined.

Question 9: With reference to paragraphs 7.1 to 7.3, do you have any views/comments on the proposed format of the Results and the methods of retrieving the Results?

Comments from SCCCI:

The Commission suggested using the following abbreviations in the search results, i.e. letter "R" to represent Telephone Numbers registered with DNC Registry and hence must not be contacted, and letter "NR" to represent otherwise.

Besides the proposed result display format, SCCCI would like to suggest that a more direct way of representation should be used, such as "Do Not Call" which is obvious and leaves no room for doubt.

For further clarifications, please contact:

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Senior Director (Communications, Research & Publications)

Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry

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