

<b>Case Reference</b>	R/E/I/065
<b>Title</b>	SingTel's Failure to Comply with IDA's Fixed Network Telecommunications Services Quality of Service Standards
<b>Case Opened</b>	23 January 2008
<b>Case Closed</b>	8 May 2008
<b>Complainant</b>	IDA initiated enforcement proceeding
<b>Respondent</b>	Singapore Telecommunications Ltd (" <b>SingTel</b> ")
<b>Case Summary</b>	<p>SingTel, as the designated public telecommunication licensee, is required to comply with IDA's Fixed Network Telecommunications Services ("FNTS") Quality of Service ("QoS") Standards.</p> <p>In December 2007, SingTel failed to meet the QoS standards for the following indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) 90% of faults fixed within 24 hours (Residential) – SingTel achieved 81.66%;</li> <li>(b) 99.9% of faults fixed within 72 hours (Residential) – SingTel achieved 99.21%; and</li> <li>(c) 95% of calls handled – SingTel achieved 92.43%.</li> </ul> <p>SingTel explained that the non-compliances were due to an unexpected surge in the volume of fault reporting calls and fault repair work arising from heavy rainfall in early December 2007. The telecommunication cables in most areas in Singapore are laid underground via conduits and pits. During periods with heavy rainfall and prolonged wet weather, the moisture seeps into the cables resulting in line noise, interference, general wear and tear and other faults.</p>
<b>IDA's Determination</b>	IDA noted that in December 2002, January 2006 and December 2006, SingTel was similarly non-compliant with IDA's QoS standards, and had similarly explained that the non-compliances were a result of an unexpected surge in the volume of fault reporting calls and fault repair work due to heavy rainfall in the December to January period. In those instances, IDA had accepted SingTel's explanations and granted waivers.

In March 2007, IDA advised SingTel to plan ahead and cater for increased manpower, in view of the expected surge in volume of fault reporting calls and fault repair work during the December to January heavy rainfall period.

IDA's investigation revealed that:

- (a) In preparing for the surge in fault repair work in December 2007, SingTel adopted an approach similar to that undertaken in January and December 2006, i.e. to require its existing pool of technicians as well as technicians from other departments to work extended hours and to recall them on their rest days. This approach had proven inadequate in January 2006, and although the same approach allowed SingTel to meet the QoS requirement in December 2006, it was again insufficient to meet the QoS standard for fault repair in December 2007; and
- (b) SingTel's failure to meet the QoS requirement on percentage of fault reporting calls handled in December 2006 was evident that the manpower deployed to handle fault reporting calls was insufficient. Instead of increasing the manpower, SingTel had reduced the manpower in December 2007.

Based on the above, IDA was not convinced that the non-compliance was unforeseen, or that SingTel had taken every reasonable effort to ensure compliance with the QoS standards. IDA therefore rejected SingTel's justification of unexpected heavy rainfall resulting in a surge in call volume and fault repair work. Based on SingTel's past QoS failures, it was clear that heavy rainfall during the December to January period, resulting in a surge in call volume and fault repair work, should be expected and be adequately catered for.

IDA had also previously advised SingTel to plan ahead for the year end rainy season. On those grounds, IDA believed that SingTel had been given sufficient opportunities to ensure compliance with the QoS standards, but SingTel had failed to take adequate measures to ensure compliance. IDA imposed a financial penalty of **S\$15,000** on SingTel for its failure to comply with the standards for the three indicators.