

Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) and Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for enhanced cooperation to combat scam and spam communications

SINGAPORE, 21 Jul 2022 - The Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) and Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) have signed an MOU to enhance cooperation between both countries to combat scam and spam.

The MOU was signed on 18 July 2022 by the Chief Executive of IMDA, Mr Lew Chuen Hong and the Chair of ACMA, Ms Nerida O' Loughlin at a physical signing ceremony in Singapore.

This MOU has been developed in connection with the Australia-Singapore Digital Economy Agreement, as well as the Joint Declaration by the Prime Ministers of Australia and Singapore on a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership's objective to deepen bilateral relations and cooperation and enhance the integration of the economies of Australia and Singapore.

The MOU covers cooperation in key areas such as information sharing and assistance in investigations relating to scam and spam calls and short message services. Parties have also agreed to mutual exchanges of knowledge and expertise and collaboration on technical and commercially viable solutions in relation to such scam and spam communications.

Commenting on the MOU signing, Mr Lew Chuen Hong, Chief Executive of IMDA said "The burgeoning digital economy sees growing international cooperation between regulators. This MOU, developed in connection with the Australia-Singapore Digital Economy Agreement, is an important step to address global issues that do not respect geographical boundaries for e.g., harms perpetrated by scams. The MOU forms the foundation for broadening collaboration, in the overall telecommunication and digital space, to ensure that it remains a trusted domain."

Mr Nerida O' Loughlin, Chairman of ACMA said she was pleased to further strengthen the ACMA's strong working relationship with the IMDA. She added "Almost every Australian is impacted by unwanted calls, SMS and emails, and we know that many of our international colleagues are dealing with the same issues. This agreement will see us building stronger ties with our Singaporean counterparts to crack down on unsolicited calls and messages, particularly when cross-border issues are involved."

Background

Scam and unsolicited commercial electronic messages and calls are an international problem with scammers continuing to prey on unsuspecting and innocent parties. Both Singapore and Australia recognise the importance of developing a global and coordinated approach to address these threats and for different stakeholders to work together. This MOU forms part of IMDA's broader international approach where countries and stakeholders can work together to better combat scam calls/SMSs.

IMDA has implemented multiple upstream measures with the Telcos to disrupt scammers' reach to potential victims –

- i. The Singapore SMS Sender ID Registry (SSIR) was established in March 2022 to block SMSes that spoof the sender IDs of participants, which includes Government agencies and banks
- ii. Blocking of scam calls, including robocalls and those spoofing numbers of local Government agencies and emergency services
- iii. Inserting "+" prefix for international incoming calls so that public will not pick up such calls if they are not expecting calls from overseas



Chairman of ACMA, Mr Nerida O' Loughlin (right) and Mr Lew Chuen Hong, Chief Executive of IMDA (left) signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 18 July 2022 at a physical signing ceremony

ISSUED BY INFOCOMM MEDIA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
21 Jul 2022

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