



Cayman Islands
Chamber of Commerce

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3rd December 2004

Mr. David Archbold
Managing Director
Information, Communications and Technology Authority (ICTA)
P.O. Box 2502 GT
Alissta Towers
Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands

Dear Mr. Archbold:

Further to our Chief Executive's discussion with Mr. Philip Brazeau recently, the Council of the Cayman Islands Chamber of Commerce considers number portability is an issue that could have far-reaching consequences for businesses and individuals in the Cayman Islands, and therefore merits our careful attention in order to submit views that are well considered and beneficial to the ICTA's deliberations.

The Chamber Council intends to appoint a Task Force to review the issue, examine the pros and cons by consulting the major telecommunication licensees currently providing service and discussing it with others who are telecommunication users in both business and consumer situations, and submit to the Chamber Council recommendations for our input to the ICTA public consultation proceeding.

The Chamber of Commerce is by far the largest and most influential business organisation in the country. It is regarded as "the ultimate business resource in the Cayman Islands". The Chamber represents a broad cross-section and a major portion of commercial interests in the Cayman Islands, with over 600 corporate members including the largest enterprises as well as individually operated businesses: some 85% of our members are small businesses with 25 or fewer employees. Our mission is to promote and protect the trade, business, commerce, agriculture, industries and manufactures, and public welfare of and in the Cayman Islands. Therefore, we feel well justified in asserting that the Chamber's submission on a topic of this nature is a very important one for the ICTA to consider in its proceeding.

Given the urgent priorities we have been attending to and in view of the upcoming holiday season however, the Chamber will not be able to properly complete before the first part of next year the process that would produce a comprehensive submission. We also note that up to this point, none of our

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members had raised this topic to the Council as one in need of immediate change in the status quo. Indeed by and large it appears that number portability has not inhibited the market entry of competitors and the introduction of vigorous competition in telecommunications and the benefits derived from that.

On the one hand there appear to be potential benefits to consumers such as the convenience of not having to change numbers upon changing carriers. On the other hand from a cursory view of this topic as it occurred in the USA, it appears that the decision-making, planning and implementation took a considerable number of years and as a whole it was very costly in terms of funding, expert attention, and resources. Even after all that, there have been reports of some outcomes considered unsatisfactory, and the implementation is still incomplete. This is obviously not a trivial exercise.

Moreover we note that the public consultation was launched 30th August 2004, with a currently published closing date of 19th November 2004, allowing just over two and a half months for public consultation and input. For more than two months of that period, the public in general and organisations such as the Chamber have been heavily preoccupied with the preparations for and aftermath of Hurricane Ivan.

Given all these factors, on behalf of the Chamber I strongly suggest and request that the ICTA allows the Chamber at least until the end of March 2005 to allow the Task Force to properly complete its work and enable a well-considered submission from the Chamber, thus giving the ICTA proceeding the benefit of input from such an organisation. The Chamber Council would be very concerned if the ICTA proceeded with a decision on this topic without having received and thoroughly considered our submission, because whatever decisions the ICTA takes on this in all likelihood will have some elements of both positive and negative consequences for our members, business activities and the general public in the Cayman Islands.

In order for us to be assured that our efforts will be beneficial, please confirm that the Chamber submission deadline will be extended to 31st March 2005 or later.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "JH", written over a horizontal line.

Joseph Hew
President