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Press Release

OFTA's Update on 2 January on the Restoration of External Telecommunications Services

The following is an update by the Office of the Telecommunications Authority (OFTA) on the restoration of external telecommunications services today (2 January) subsequent to the damages to submarine cables caused by the earthquakes near Taiwan on 26 December:

Latest Service Status

Over the past week there has been continued improvement in the access to the Internet. The major Internet service providers (ISPs) have recovered about 80% of their international connection capacity. While access to overseas web sites is generally slower than usual, no serious congestion report was received today (2 January). During the normal business hours, the Internet services for business users should basically be acceptable.

Users of residential services may occasionally experience a longer response time when they visit web sites in some overseas countries, particularly Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and the North America. Some real-time applications such as IP telephony may be adversely affected by the excessive response time as the traffic has to go through a longer alternative route.

IDD and roaming services functioned normally today.

Repairing Status

According to the latest schedule, one damaged submarine cable system will first be brought back to normal operation by the middle of this month. This should significantly improve the situation. The repair of the other damaged systems is expected to be completed progressively by the end of January or the beginning of February 2007, if the environment and the weather permit.

Advice to the Public

Internet users visiting overseas web sites may continue to experience slow response or various degrees of congestion. E-mails to and from overseas servers, especially those with large files such as images, may take a longer time than usual to reach destinations. During the restoration period, the public are advised to minimise non-essential visits to overseas web sites, uploading or downloading large files to/from these web sites, and other non-essential activities which demand large bandwidth over international connections.

Office of the Telecommunications Authority
2 January 2007