

## **NOTIFICATION TO TELECOMMUNICATION SYSTEM LICENSEES OF COMMENCEMENT AND PERFORMANCE OF EARTHWORKS**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 With effect from 1 July 2000, the Info-communications Development Authority of Singapore (IDA) has introduced a licensing scheme for telecommunication cable detection workers. The objective is to prevent damages to underground telecommunication cables which cause disruptions to telecommunication services. Under the licensing scheme, contractors are required to engage qualified licensed telecommunication cable detection workers to locate underground telecommunication cables before the commencement of any earthworks (e.g. excavation, levelling, piling, dredging, boring, tunnelling etc.).
- 1.2 In connection with the licensing scheme, contractors involved in earthworks are also required to comply with the provisions with regard to telecommunication cable detection work under the Telecommunications Act (Cap. 323) (the “Act”).

### **2 Definition**

#### **2.1 Earthworks**

Earthworks is defined in the Act as follows:

- a) any act of excavating earth, rock or other material (by whatever means) in connection with:
- i) any works for or relating to the construction, reconstruction, extension, renovation, alteration, demolition or repair of any building, road, railway, bridge, viaduct, flyover, sewer or sewage works;
  - ii) any works for or relating to the laying, inspecting, repairing or renewing of any mains, pipes, cables, fittings or other apparatuses; any soil investigation works; or
  - iii) such other works as are usually undertaken by a person carrying on business as a contractor in the construction industry or as a professional civil or structural engineer;



- b) any act of boring, dredging, jacking, levelling, piling or tunnelling on or under any premises or street by any mechanical means; and
- c) the driving or sinking of any earth rod, casing or tube into the ground.

## 2.2 Telecommunication System Licensee

Telecommunication System Licensee means a person licensed by IDA under section 5 of the Act to operate a telecommunication system.

## 3 Telecommunication Cable Detection Work

3.1 With effect from 1 July 2000, principals/contractors involved in earthworks are required under section 29 (1) of the Act to:

- a) submit a notice 7 days before the commencement of intended earthworks to the telecommunication system licensee;
- b) obtain from the telecommunication system licensee the necessary information on the location of such telecommunication cable (e.g. cable plant, cable route map) for the area of intended earthworks and consult the licensee on the steps to be taken to prevent the telecommunication cable from damage while the earthworks are being carried out; and
- c) cause telecommunication cable detection work to be performed or carried out by a licensed telecommunication cable detection worker in order to confirm the location of the telecommunication cable.

## 4 Failing To Submit Notices In Time

- 4.1 A contractor who fails to submit the requisite notices in time to the telecommunication system licensee is guilty of an offence under section 29 of the Act.
- 4.2 The contractor is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$100,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 years or to both.
- 4.3 Contractors are to submit the required attachments together with the "Notice for Commencement of Earthworks" to the telecommunication system licensee without fail. This is not to compromise the processing time thereby delaying the commencement date of the earthworks allowed.

## 5 Emergency Works

- 5.1 A contractor can however carry out earthworks without notifying the telecommunication system licensee in advance, if he has reasonable cause to believe that it is necessary to do so in the interest of public or private safety. However, he must give the telecommunication system licensee a notice in writing stating the nature and extent of those earthworks not more than 7 days after the commencement of such.

## **6 Responsibilities of Contractor**

### **6.1 Contractors shall do the following:**

- a) buy the service layout plan from the telecommunication system licensee(s) to obtain necessary plant information at the vicinity of intended excavation;
- b) engage a licensed telecommunication cable detection worker to detect the cable routes;
- c) give the telecommunication system licensee(s) not less than 7 days' notice in writing of the date which it is proposed to commence the earthworks; and
- d) refer to the Do's & Don'ts provided by the telecommunication system licensee(s) before earthworks and shall consult the telecommunication system licensee(s) on the steps to be taken to prevent telecommunication cable from damage.

### **6.2 It shall also be the duty of the contractors to:**

- a) comply with all reasonable requirements of the telecommunication system licensee(s) for the prevention of damage to the telecommunication cable;
- b) ensure that reasonable precautions such as trial holes by manual works are taken when carrying out earthworks;
- c) allow the telecommunication system licensee(s) reasonable access to the work site for the purpose of inspecting or taking any necessary measures to protect the telecommunication cable; and
- d) stop all earthworks, when telecommunication cables are damaged and to immediately inform the telecommunication system licensee concerned.

## **7 Responsibilities of Telecommunication System Licensee**

### **7.1 It shall be the duty of the telecommunication system licensee(s) to whom a notice under section 29(1)(a) of the Act has been given:**

- a) to promptly inform the person who has given him the notice of the location of the telecommunication cable and to provide such person with any other information as may be necessary to enable him to ascertain the exact location of the telecommunication cable;
- b) to advise the person who has given him the notice on the precautions to be taken to prevent damage to the telecommunication cable; and
- c) to take reasonable and necessary measures at the work site for the protection of the telecommunication cable from damage and, in so doing, the telecommunication system licensee shall have regard to the potential risk and dangers that can arise from any damage to the telecommunication cable.

### **7.2 The telecommunication system licensee must ensure that the information with regard to the location of the telecommunication cable such as plant route plan is up-to-date.**

## **8 List of Telecommunication System Licensees**

- 8.1 Contractors can obtain the service layout plans, administration procedures and form for submission of notice of commencement of earthworks from the [telecommunication system licensees](#).