

**TECHNOLOGY**

# DTAC hustles to keep up with changes

## Focus on concession expiry remedy period

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After being overtaken by True Move for No.2 in the mobile arena last year, Total Access Communication (DTAC) is aggressively fighting to secure its position by focusing on customer-centric and cross-function operations.

DTAC's priority is preventing service disruption for 400,000 users on DTAC's 1800- and 850-megahertz network that is being operated under a concession with CAT Telecom.

DTAC's concession for both spectrum ranges is due to expire on Sept 15.

According to new DTAC chief executive Alexandra Reich, it is planning a strong strategic move in June 2019 to offer the most competitive network capacity, following the company's provision of mobile service on the 2300MHz spectrum from the second quarter this year.

Mrs Reich said the three assets that will secure success for DTAC are an amazing brand, more than 20 million customers, and its employees.

However, its most important task is preventing service disruption from the concession expiry, she said.

Previously, DTAC submitted a protection plan to the telecom regulator asking for permission to continue using 10MHz for upload and download on the 850MHz spectrum, as per the original conditions of the CAT concession, for a period of time.

The company said the existing network of the 850MHz concession needs time to optimise equipment in compliance with the NBTC's plan to upgrade the 850MHz block onto the 900MHz range as planned.

The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) tried to auction a 900MHz licence, but it was aborted when bid documents were not submitted in July.

The 900MHz licence comprised 10MHz of upload and download, which has been targeted to be upgraded from DTAC's 850MHz.

Another 10MHz on the 900MHz band



Mrs Reich has prioritised maintaining service for DTAC's 2G customers.

was allocated for the state's high-speed train project, but has not been used.

Mrs Reich said DTAC hopes to be given a remedy period by the NBTC for the 400,000 users on its 850MHz network under the concession.

There are 430,000 DTAC customers who still need to migrate from DTAC to DTAC TriNet.

Customers who have not migrated are

often the most vulnerable, with 70% being elderly, and many in remote areas or using very old devices that cannot be upgraded.

"These people are the ones who need connectivity the most and we should look out for them," she said.

The DTAC supremo said the company sent these people SMSs and rolled out numerous campaigns, but more time is needed to make sure they don't end

up disconnected.

The NBTC's Measure for Temporary Subscriber Protection is designed to ensure that customers are given sufficient time to migrate.

"It doesn't take days. It takes months," she said.

NBTC secretary-general Takorn Tantasith said its telecom subcommittee will discuss DTAC's requirements today.