

CommsWire

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Editor: Stan Beer

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MOBILE VOICE REGULATION TO CONTINUE: ACCC



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FIVE MORE YEARS OF WHOLESALE MOBILE VOICE REGULATION: ACCC

Regulation of Australia's domestic Mobile Terminating Access Service (MTAS) for mobile voice services is set to be continued by regulator, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, but MTAS SMS services regulation will be discontinued.

The ACCC flagged its intentions in a statement on Friday, saying the Mobile Terminating Access Service will be regulated for a further five years.

The current regulation, or declaration, of voice and SMS MTAS expires on 30 June.

The MTAS is an essential wholesale service that allows consumers on different mobile networks to make calls or send SMS to each other – and requires mobile network operators to connect or 'terminate' calls or SMS between their different networks.

The ACCC launched a public inquiry in August 2018 examining whether the declarations should be revoked, extended or varied.

The ACCC says that following the inquiry, and extensive consultation, it has decided to continue the declaration of voice terminating services until 2024, but will end declaration of the SMS MTAS service on 1 January, 2020.

"When we decided to regulate wholesale SMS termination services in 2014, mobile operators were charging each other significantly above cost for these services, with a flow-on impact for retail SMS prices," ACCC Commissioner Cristina Cifuentes said.

"We have found that this need to regulate SMS termination has disappeared over time because of increasing competition from over-the-top services like Whatsapp and iMessage, and because most mobile plans in the market now offer unlimited SMS."

The ACCC said that some stakeholders expressed concerns about the impact of ending SMS MTAS regulation on app-to-person (A2P) services, which are often used by businesses to communicate special deals or sales to customers.

"A2P service providers suggested that, without regulation, mobile network operators would be able to charge much higher prices for termination services for A2P uses," the ACCC said, adding that it "considered that there were sufficient alternatives to A2P SMS to constrain wholesale SMS MTAS prices, including over-the-top messaging services, emails and in-app chat platforms".

"However, over-the-top voice services are not yet substitutes for mobile voice calls, so it is appropriate to continue declaration of MTAS for voice services," Cifuentes said.

Peter Dinham

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ACCC TAKES OPTUS TO COURT OVER NBN DISCONNECTION CLAIMS

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, has instituted proceedings in the Federal Court against Optus Internet and Optus Mobile, alleging the company misled consumers about the need to move to the NBN or risk being disconnected.

The court action follows the ACCC's statement on 24 May 2018, that Optus sent an email offering its NBN broadband services to 138,988 of its mobile customers, and advising them that their broadband service would be "disconnected very soon" and encouraging them to "make the switch, before it's too late".



The ACCC alleges this was a false or misleading claim because, when the email was sent, Optus understood the recipients of the email were already being supplied with NBN-based services by a company other than Optus - and Optus did not have any reasonable basis for asserting they would be disconnected.

On 22 May 2018, following ACCC action, the Federal Court [ordered](#) Optus pay penalties of \$1.5 million for making misleading representations to customers about their transition from Optus' HFC network to the NBN.

"Moving to the NBN is an important decision for consumers, and it can also be a confusing process," ACCC Commissioner Sarah Court said.

"The ACCC has had to take action about Optus' advertising on several previous occasions, and it is concerning that we are again having to take them to court for alleged misleading statements about this issue.

"We are keeping a close eye on this sector and we will continue to take enforcement action where appropriate."

In a [statement issued on Thursday](#), the ACCC said it was seeking declarations, injunctions, pecuniary penalties, compliance orders and costs.

Optus has now responded to the ACCC's announcement of court action, with Andrew Sheridan, vice-president, Regulatory and Public Affairs, saying, "Optus acknowledges the ACCC's action today and its mistake.

"Optus has apologised to customers who received the mistaken communication and offered a costless exit for those who took out the offer.

"In October 2018, Optus committed to improving customer experience and customer service across our business and we continue to devote significant energy and resources to address issues like this and make the necessary changes and improvements so we can deliver great service to all our customers."

Peter Dinham



John de Ridder

Telecommunications Economist

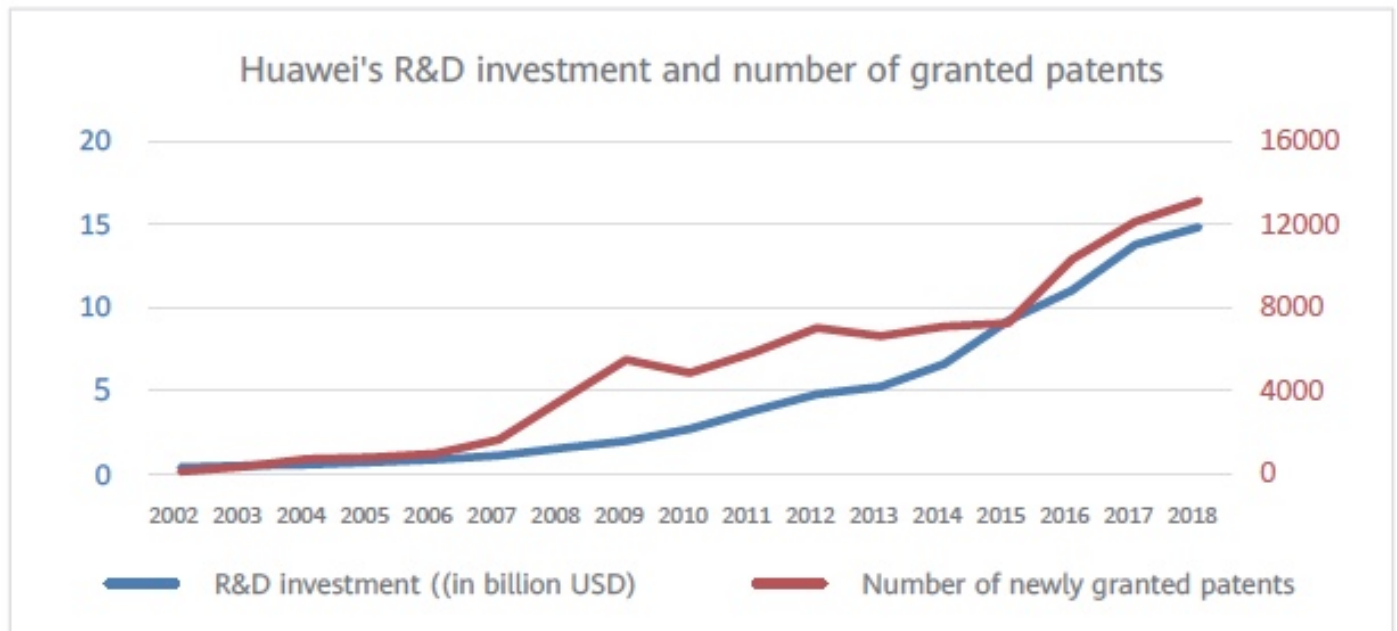
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HUAWEI WARNS 'POLITICALISATION' OF IP ISSUE THREATENS PATENTS

Chinese telecommunications equipment vendor Huawei Technologies has warned against the issue of intellectual property (IP) being politicised and says that using IP as a political tool will destroy confidence in patent protection.

Speaking at the company's headquarters on Thursday, Song Liuping, Huawei's chief legal officer, said that IP is the "cornerstone of innovation and its politicisation threaten progress across the world".



"If politicians use IP as a political tool, they will destroy confidence in the patent protection system.

"If some governments selectively strip companies of their IP, it will break the foundation of global innovation," Song warned.

Song's comments coincide with Huawei's release of a white paper on innovation and intellectual property (IP).

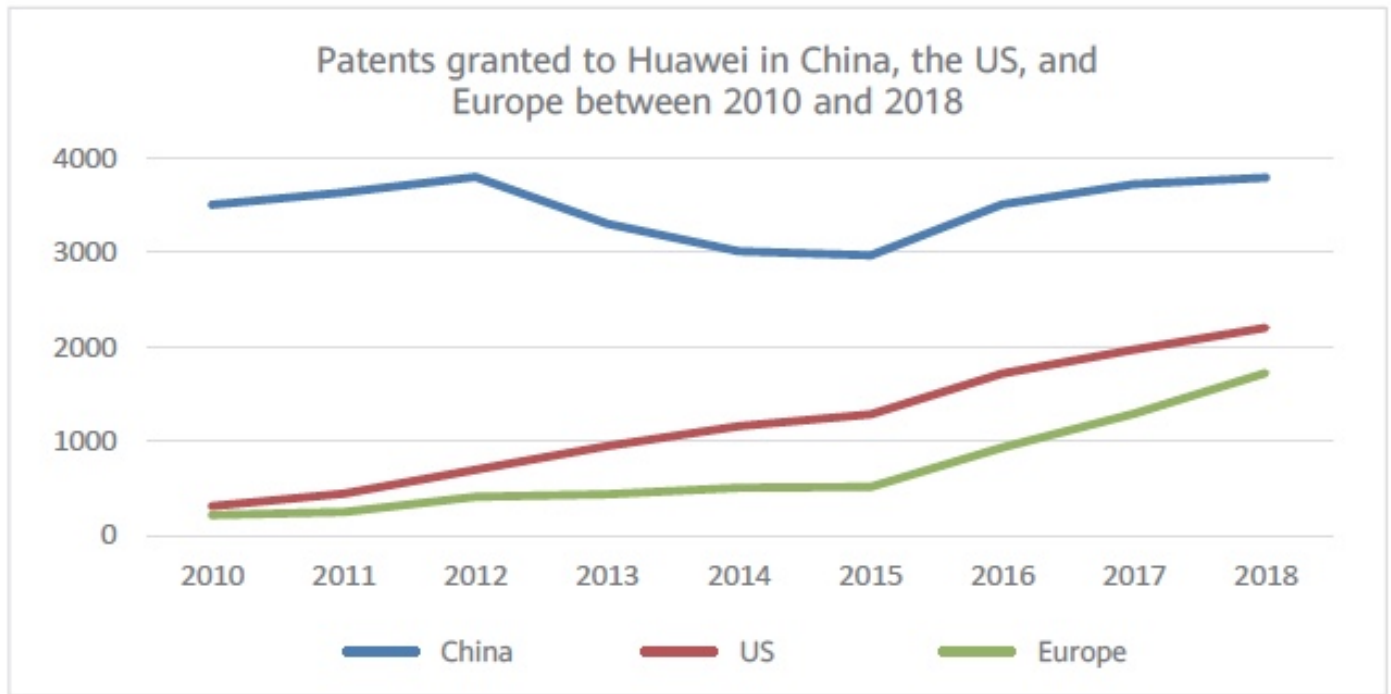
The paper, titled '[Respecting and Protecting Intellectual Property: The Foundation of Innovation](#)', elaborates on Huawei's practices in and contributions to innovation and the protection of IPR.

According to the paper, innovation and intellectual property protection lie at the heart of Huawei's success over more than 30 years.

In its statement on Thursday, Huawei say that, as of the end of 2018, it has been granted 87,805 patents, of which 11,152 are US patents, and since 2015, has received over 1.4 billion US dollars in licensing revenue.

"Aside from accumulating patents of its own, Huawei has also paid more than 6 billion US dollars in royalties to legally implement the IP of other companies, with nearly 80% of that paid to American companies, according to the document," Huawei says.

Song warns that intellectual property is private property, protected by the law, and disputes should be resolved through legal proceedings.



He added that in the past 30 years, “no court has ever concluded that Huawei engaged in malicious IP theft, and Huawei has never been required by the court to pay damages for this”.

According to Song, Huawei’s “collaborative and respectful approach to IP is demonstrated by the simple fact that many of its technology breakthroughs are incorporated into the open standards that govern 3G, 4G and 5G”.

“As a result, even though some countries do not buy products directly from Huawei, they still use the essential patents of Huawei, and share in the benefits of the technology Huawei creates,” Song notes.

Song also addressed Huawei’s stance on its use of patents.

He said the company will not weaponise its portfolio of patents – and, rather, Huawei will adopt an open and cooperative attitude and follow the FRAND principle, or “fair, reasonable, and non-discriminatory,” when engaging with relevant parties in the industry on patents licensing.

“As always, Huawei is ready and willing to share our technology with the world. That includes 5G. It includes US companies and US consumers.

“Together, we can drive our industry forward and advance technology for all mankind,” Song concluded.

Peter Dinham

HUAWEI BRINGING EMUI 9.1 OS UPDATE TO MORE MOBILE PHONES

COMMENT: Huawei's EMUI 9.1 already exists on the P30 and P30 Pro, but now it will come with a range of benefits and features from mid-July to the Mate 10, 20, 10 Pro and 20 Pro, the Nova 3i and 3e, and the P30 lite from August.

Owners of the P30 and P30 Pro smartphones have already been enjoying the various benefits and features of the EMUI 9.1 operating system with Android 9 Pie for several months, and now it's time for owners of a range of older Huawei smartphones to start enjoying the benefits of "a faster, smoother and smarter smartphone experience".

The update shows Huawei's commitment and support of and to its customers, despite fallout from the US and China trade war that has seen Huawei caught in the metaphorical crossfire, and is a clear sign that Huawei has every intention of fighting the fight to win the hearts and minds of its past, present and future customers worldwide.

EMUI 9.1 is Huawei's custom-made OS based upon Android 9 Pie, the 16th version of the Android mobile operating system, with the company stating that EMUI "provides an immersive experience, with innovative performance and system speed enhancements to help customers lead a more intelligent life".

As a user of EMUI 9.1 on a P30 Pro myself, I can attest to the fact EMUI is indeed a great version of the Android 9 Pie operating system, with a raft of useful features that improve upon stock Android, right down to the ability to swipe at either the left or right hand side of the screen to go back, similar to the way Apple's iOS lets users swipe from the left side of the screen to go back.

Although P30 and P30 Pro users have enjoyed EMUI 9.1 since the launch of those models earlier this year, the Mate 10, 20, 10 Pro and 20 Pro, and the Nova 3i and 3e will finally get this update from mid-July, with the P30 lite set to get the update in August.

Huawei also notes that it will "continue to provide ongoing Android services and security updates to ensure all customers can have the best possible experience on their Huawei smartphones".

Huawei Australia's Consumer Business managing director, Larking Huang, said: "Our customers come first, and we are pleased to be delivering an improved user experience for Australians with the EMUI 9.1 update.

"The update provides time-poor and tech savvy users with an even more streamlined and secure experience by introducing the latest Android security patches along with a new and improved gaming experience, courtesy of GPU Turbo 3.0.

"Other improvements include a smoother user experience when customers use HUAWEI Share OneHop - which enables the easy transfer of content between the smartphone and PC - and an increased number (500 to 1,500) of scene recognition capabilities with the Master AI camera mode, elevating all Aussies' photographic experiences."

Alex Zaharov-Reutt

CHINA LEADS THE WORLD IN DEPLOYMENTS OF IOT SAYS GSMA

Chinese mobile operators are leading the world in the deployment of “transformative” Internet of Things (IoT) solutions with 64% of the 1.5 billion global cellular connections including the “rapidly growing” Mobile IoT licensed LPWA technologies, says GSMA.

According to the GSMA - the mobile operators trade body - by connecting an estimated 960 million devices via cellular networks, China is realising the value of the IoT and “transforming society through mass market deployments of smart home, smart industry and smart city solutions”.



“Backed by proactive government support, China is now at the forefront in the development and mass deployment of innovative and transformative IoT based solutions based on Mobile IoT technology,” said Alex Sinclair, Chief Technology Officer, GSMA.

“These new technologies are being implemented across multiple different vertical sectors fundamentally altering the way we live and work, delivering real-time information and making our cities smarter and our lives easier and more productive.”

The GSMA report says there are a wide variety of different examples of large scale IoT deployments in China across a number of different sectors.

“For example, Sunsea AIoT with partner, China Telecom has installed over 500,000 NB-IoT sensors covering over 37km in the Jing’an District, turning the area into a truly smart community,” the report notes.

“The devices monitor fire hydrant water pressure sensors as well as gas and smoke detectors and environmental monitors.

“Connected manhole covers also monitor gases and underground assets. An integrated platform centralises, monitors and analyses the data to help with real-time improvements.

“China Mobile has installed over 100,000 NB-IoT intelligent fire alarm systems including fire alarms, temperature sensors, smoke and gas detectors across China.

“China Unicom has installed over 25,000 gas and water meters utilising an NB-IoT solution that combines the IoT with big data to make energy management more intelligent.”

Peter Dinham

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