

## Government To Continue To Push For Improvement Of Telcos

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KUALA LUMPUR, 21 May (Bernama) -- The government has reaffirmed its commitment to improve the infrastructure for the transition from analog to the digital system, although the global economic crisis is expected to suppress the domestic telecommunications industry over the next two years.

Information, Communications and Culture deputy minister senator Heng Seai Kie said while it was important for the government to continue to improve the infrastructure and encourage advancement of the digital age, network operators too need to do more to encourage content growth of their services and provide value-added products.

"We encourage smart partnerships and initiatives that allow for transfer of technology that not only benefits parties involved but also the industry and ultimately the nation," she said.

The deputy minister said this in her speech at the soft launch of Segi Maju Consortium's Digital Trunked Radio Service (DART) and the signing of a memoranda of understanding between SLW Corporation Sdn Bhd and EADS Secure Networks, the world leading provider of mission critical communication and command and control solutions.

Segi Maju is the license holder to provide trunked radio service, whereas SLW Corporation Sdn Bhd is the system integrator utilising the TETRA system infrastructure supplied by EADS Secure Networks.

The digital EADS TETRA system is one of the world's most advanced security systems, approved by the European Telecommunications Standards Institute, for digital trunked radio.

Heng said the global financial crisis was now playing out in full proportions and had spread to all industries and the telecommunication industry is not an exception.

She said the impact of the recession in the western world and economic slowdown in emerging countries were felt in a big way by all players in the telecommunication ecosystem.

"It has been predicted that 2009-2010 will mark a very difficult and crucial period for the entire telecommunication industry. Although with such a slowdown, the easy adoptability and ease of transition will still encourage analog users to move to the digital system," she said.

Heng said last year the government announced that RM147 million had been set aside to construct 1,250 telecommunications towers with targeted completion set for end-2010.

She said with the advent of digital trunked radio technologies alongside improved capabilities, the industry had to ensure that digital trunked radio network was part of the national infrastructure.

Meanwhile, Segi Maju Consortium director Azizan Abdul Razak in his speech said SLW Group had invested more than RM5 million to bring the open standard digital trunked radio system that supported any manufacturer's terminal equipment to Malaysia.

Segi Maju Consortium, a member of the SLW Group of Companies, he said was looking at investing another RM15 million over the next five years to upgrade the current digital trunked radio service infrastructure.

SLW Corporation or Supreme Landmobile & Wireless Corporation Sdn Bhd is a 100 percent Malaysian owned company involved in the provision of telecommunication products, customised solutions and support services to various industries such as oil and gas, airports, seaports, public transport, security and tourism.

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