

# Filipino company ISOC Infrastructures offers to become common tower provider

By: Miguel R. Camus - @inquirerdotnet Inquirer Business / 06:15 PM July 25, 2018



Filipino company ISOC Infrastructures has teamed up with Malaysia's OCK Group Berhad to build 25,000 cell towers across the Philippines in seven years.

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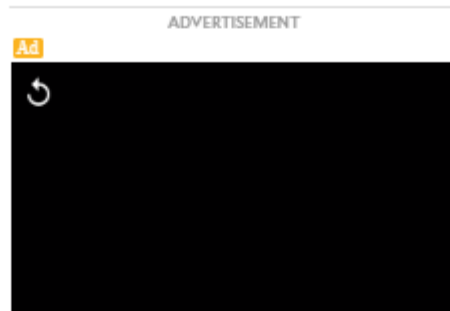
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The company submitted an offer to the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) on Wednesday. DICT acting secretary Eliseo Rio Jr. said they will study the proposal.



“We are trying to bring down prices for consumers, that’s what this is about,” Rio told reporters in a press conference on Wednesday.

The move was in line with the government’s common tower policy, which aims to encourage telco players to share their tower assets. This also comes as the DICT hopes to name a third telco player within 2018.

By sharing tower assets, the government hopes that telco providers can pass on lower costs to their subscribers.

ISOC chair Michael Cosiquien said on Wednesday they intend to spend around P100 billion to build the 25,000 towers. He said the rollout will be nationwide, with the first P20 billion to be spent in three years.

OCC Group was chosen to be ISOC’s technical partner, he added.

“The government will not spend anything here. It will just give permission for the proponent to go ahead and put up the common towers,” Rio said.

Rio was referring to the accreditation process that the government is currently finalizing. He said they were looking to accredit around two common tower providers.

The lack of cell towers in the country has been blamed by the telcos for spotty mobile services.



Globe Telecom and PLDT Inc. have around 16,000 cell towers. Rio said the Philippines needs another 50,000 towers, which would bring it closer to close neighbors such as Vietnam and Indonesia, which have about 70,000 and 90,000 towers, respectively.

Rio said the common tower providers will also get assistance in terms of securing permits. The telcos have blamed permitting bottlenecks as a key reason behind the slow rollout of cell towers.

The practice of using common tower providers is prevalent in countries such as China, Australia, Indonesia, Vietnam.