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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

PETER RUDOLPH, individually and on behalf  
of all others similarly situated,

No. C 07-04578 SI

Plaintiff,

**ORDER DENYING DEFENDANT YING  
WU'S MOTION TO DISMISS**

v.

UT STARCOM, INC., HONG LIANG LU,  
YING WU, MICHAEL SOPHIE, THOMAS  
TOY, and FRANCIS BARTON,

Defendant.

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Defendant Ying Wu has filed a motion to dismiss plaintiffs' second amended complaint pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(5) for insufficient service of process. The motion is scheduled for hearing on February 6, 2009. Pursuant to Civil Local Rule 7-1(b), the Court finds this matter appropriate for resolution without oral argument and hereby VACATES the hearing. Having considered the arguments of the parties and the papers submitted, and for good cause shown, defendant's motion to dismiss is DENIED.

**BACKGROUND**

Named plaintiff Peter Rudolph brought this securities class action against UTStarcom, Hong Liang Lu, Michael Sophie, Francis Barton and Thomas Toy on September 4, 2007. On September 13, 2007, the aforementioned defendants signed waivers of service pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 4(d).

On January 25, 2008, plaintiffs filed an amended complaint, adding Ying Wu as a defendant.

1 Wu's counsel subsequently informed plaintiffs' counsel that they would not accept service or waiver  
2 of service on behalf of Wu, who resides in China. (Def.'s Mot. to Dismiss at 3.) Wu's counsel  
3 reiterated this position in the Joint Case Management Statement filed with the Court on April 9, 2008.

4 Defendants, including Wu, filed a motion to dismiss plaintiffs' first amended complaint pursuant  
5 to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6) on February 29, 2008. Plaintiffs filed a second amended  
6 complaint on May 16, 2008, which defendants again moved to dismiss under Rule 12(b)(6) on June 6,  
7 2008.

8 After being party to the litigation for over nine months and participating in two Rule 12(b)(6)  
9 motions to dismiss, Wu filed the instant motion to dismiss all of plaintiffs' claims against him pursuant  
10 to Rule 12(b)(5) for insufficient service of process.

## 11 12 LEGAL STANDARD

13 Rule 12(b)(5) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure authorizes a defendant to move for  
14 dismissal due to insufficient service of process. *See* Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(b)(5). When a defendant  
15 challenges service, the plaintiff bears the burden of establishing the validity of service as governed by  
16 Rule 4. *See Brockmeyer v. May*, 383 F.3d 798, 801 (9th Cir. 2004). If the plaintiff is unable to satisfy  
17 its burden of demonstrating effective service, the court has discretion to either dismiss or retain the  
18 action. *See Stevens v. Sec. Pac. Nat'l Bank*, 538 F.2d 1387, 1389 (9th Cir. 1976).

## 19 20 DISCUSSION

21 Wu seeks to dismiss all claims against him for insufficient service of process because plaintiffs  
22 failed to effectuate service of process within the 120-day time limit imposed by Rule 4(m). The Court  
23 finds that Wu waived his right to challenge the sufficiency of service when he failed to raise the defense  
24 in his previous motion to dismiss. Additionally, even if Wu had not waived his right, the 120-day time  
25 limit imposed by Rule 4(m) does not apply because Wu is a foreign defendant.

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1 **I. Wu Waived His Objection for Insufficient Service of Process**

2 The Court finds that Wu waived his defense under Rule 4(m) for insufficient service of process  
3 when he failed to raise this issue in his previous motion to dismiss.

4 Under Rule 12(h)(1), the defense of insufficiency of service is waived if omitted from a motion  
5 filed under the circumstances described in Rule 12(g)(2). *See* Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(h)(1). Rule 12(g)(2)  
6 in turn requires a defendant to raise certain Rule 12 defenses — including insufficient process and  
7 failure to state a claim — in a single motion. *See* Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(g)(2); *see also Am. Ass’n of*  
8 *Neuropathic Physicians v. Hayhurst*, 227 F.3d 1104, 1107 (9th Cir. 2000) (“[A] party ‘who by motion  
9 invites the court to pass upon a threshold defense should bring forward all the specified defenses  
10 [personal jurisdiction, improper venue, insufficient process, or insufficient service] he then has and thus  
11 allow the court to do a reasonably complete job.’”) (citing Fed. R. Civ. P. 12, advisory committee’s  
12 note). A responsive pleading by a defendant that fails to dispute personal jurisdiction waives any defect  
13 in service or personal jurisdiction. *See Benny v. Pipes*, 799 F.2d 489, 492 (9th Cir. 1986) (citing  
14 *Jackson v. Hayakawa*, 682 F.2d 1344, 1347 (9th Cir.1982)).

15 Wu, along with the other defendants in this case, filed two motions to dismiss: one seeking to  
16 dismiss plaintiffs’ first amended complaint on February 29, 2008 and one seeking to dismiss plaintiffs’  
17 second amended complaint on June 6, 2008. Wu neither challenged nor reserved his right to challenge  
18 the sufficiency of service of process in either motion.

19 Wu contends that he did not waive his right to file a Rule 12(b)(5) motion to dismiss when he  
20 participated in the motion to dismiss plaintiffs’ second amended complaint because the Rule 12(b)(5)  
21 defense was not available to him at that time. Specifically, Wu contends that the motion to dismiss  
22 plaintiffs’ second amended complaint was filed during the 120-day time limit for effectuating service,  
23 so the Rule 12(b)(5) defense was not then available to him.

24 The 120-day time limit imposed by Rule 4(m) expires 120 days after the *first* complaint in which  
25 the defendant is named, however. *See Bolden v. City of Topeka*, 441 F.3d 1129, 1148 (10th Cir. 2006).  
26 The 120-day time limit for service does not restart each time a plaintiff files a new amended complaint.  
27 *See id.* (holding that the 120-day time limit imposed by Rule 4(m) only restarts as to defendants newly  
28 added to the amended complaint). Because Wu participated in a Rule 12(b)(6) motion to dismiss more

1 than 120 days after he was named as a defendant in plaintiffs’ first amended complaint, his Rule  
2 12(b)(5) defense for insufficient service of process was available to him at that time. He therefore  
3 waived his right to challenge the sufficiency of service under Rule 12(b)(5).

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5 **II. Rule 4(m) Does Not Apply to Foreign Defendants**

6 Even if Wu had not waived his Rule 12(b)(5) challenge, his argument also fails because Rule  
7 4(m) does not apply to service on foreign defendants.

8 Rule 4(m) requires that a plaintiff properly serve process on each defendant within 120 days of  
9 filing a complaint. Fed. R. Civ. P. 4(m). Where a defendant is not served within 120 days, the Court  
10 must dismiss the action without prejudice against the defendant or order that service be made within a  
11 specific time. *Id.* Rule 4(m) specifically exempts service on individuals in foreign countries pursuant  
12 to Rule 4(f) from the 120-day time limit. *See* Fed. R. Civ. P. 4(m) (“This subdivision (m) does not apply  
13 to service in a foreign country under Rule 4(f) or 4(j)(1).”); *see also Lucas v. Natoli*, 936 F.2d 432, 432-  
14 33 (9th Cir. 1991) (“The plain language of [Rule 4(m)] makes the 120-day service provision  
15 inapplicable to service in a foreign country.”).<sup>1</sup> Rule 4(f), in turn, stipulates the requirements for service  
16 on individuals in foreign countries. *See* Fed. R. Civ. P. 4(f). Rule 4(f) does not impose any specific  
17 time limits. *See id.*

18 Wu argues that this exception does not apply here, because plaintiffs have not shown that they  
19 attempted to effectuate service on him abroad. Defendant cites two Second Circuit opinions for the  
20 proposition that plaintiffs must actually attempt service in a foreign country in order to trigger the  
21 exemption in Rule 4(f). However, the Ninth Circuit in *Lucas* expressly rejected this argument, declining  
22 to hold that a plaintiff must actually attempt service in a foreign country within 120 days of filing a  
23 complaint. *See* 936 F.2d at 433.

24 Thus, because Wu is a foreign defendant, the strict time limits imposed by Rule 4(m) do not  
25 apply to plaintiffs’ service of their second amended complaint on him.

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<sup>1</sup>When *Lucas* was decided in 1991, the current Rule 4(m) was numbered 4(j), and 4(f) was 4(i).  
The numbers have been adjusted in this Order for consistency.


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**CONCLUSION**

For all of the foregoing reasons, the Court hereby DENIES defendant's motion to dismiss plaintiffs' second amended complaint for insufficient service of process.

**IT IS SO ORDERED.**

Dated: February 2, 2009

  
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SUSAN ILLSTON  
United States District Judge