

Communications Authority announces results of second round spectrum assignment for 26 GHz and 28 GHz bands for provision of 5G services

The Office of the Communications Authority announced today (June 11) the results of the second round assignment of the spectrum in the 26 GHz and 28 GHz (26/28 GHz) bands. A total of 1 200 MHz of the spectrum will be assigned in the third quarter this year to four mobile network operators (MNOs), namely China Mobile Hong Kong Company Limited (CMHK), Hong Kong Telecommunications (HKT) Limited (HKT), Hutchison Telephone Company Limited (HTCL) and SmarTone Mobile Communications Limited (SmarTone), to provide fifth generation mobile (5G) services.

To further promote 5G development, the Communications Authority (CA) issued a public invitation for the second round assignment in February this year for interested parties to submit applications for the 2 500 MHz of the non-shared spectrum available in the 26/28 GHz bands. By the application deadline on April 18, a total of four MNOs submitted applications. Having reviewed the applications, the CA decided to assign 600 MHz of the spectrum to HTCL and an additional 200 MHz of the spectrum to each of the three MNOs, namely, CMHK, HKT and SmarTone, on top of the 400 MHz of the spectrum already assigned to each of them in 2019. In other words, the four MNOs will each receive 600 MHz of the spectrum. In addition, to enhance the efficiency of spectrum utilisation, the CA, after considering the four MNOs' proposals, decided to reorganise the assigned spectrum in order to ensure that each MNO can receive contiguous spectrum.

"The spectrum assignment will enable the MNOs to further expand their 5G networks and enhance capacity, particularly in providing better 5G services at locations with high traffic demand to meet the public expectation for high-speed and reliable mobile services, while also promoting the development of various innovative applications, thereby fostering the development of Hong Kong's smart economy," a spokesman for the CA said.

Apart from the aforementioned assignment of spectrum in the 26/28 GHz bands, the 2023 Policy Address announced that the Government will conduct auctions for spectrum in the 850/900 MHz, 2.3 GHz, and the newly introduced 6/7 GHz bands in the fourth quarter of this year, providing a total of 510 MHz of spectrum for 5G mobile communications services with a view to further supporting the development of Hong Kong's communications services and high value-added economy.

The MNOs must meet all licensing requirements, including the payment of the required licence fees, for the assignment of the relevant spectrum. They must also comply with the service provision requirements set by the CA for the 26/28 GHz bands. According to the current policy on the spectrum

utilisation fees (SUF) for spectrum to be assigned administratively, as the total amount of spectrum to be assigned will be less than 75 per cent of the total amount of spectrum in the 26/28 GHz bands, the assignees are not required to pay SUF for the use of the spectrum.

Details of the spectrum assignment offers to the four MNOs are as follows:

Assignees	Existing spectrum assignment in 26/28 GHz bands		Spectrum assignment after offer of second round assignment	
	Frequency range (GHz)	Amount (MHz)	Frequency range (GHz)	Amount (MHz)
CMHK	26.95 – 27.35	400	26.15 – 26.75	600
HKT	27.35 – 27.75	400	27.35 – 27.95	600
HTCL	–	–	25.55 – 26.15	600
SmarTone	26.55 – 26.95	400	26.75 – 27.35	600