

Applications open for assignment of shared spectrum in 26 GHz and 28 GHz bands

The Office of the Communications Authority (OFCA) today (July 15) invited applications for assignment of spectrum in the 26 GHz band (24.25 – 27.5 GHz) and the 28 GHz band (27.5 – 28.35 GHz) (26/28 GHz bands) on a geographically sharing basis (shared spectrum), for the provision of innovative wireless broadband services based on the fifth generation (5G) or other advanced mobile technologies.

This invitation follows the decisions of the Communications Authority (CA) and the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development on December 13, 2018, to set aside 400 MHz of spectrum in the 26/28 GHz bands as shared spectrum for the provision of localised and innovative wireless broadband services. To facilitate the entry of a wide range of service providers, assignment of the shared spectrum will be made under a newly created localised wireless broadband service (LWBS) licence with less stringent requirements as compared with conventional public mobile services licensed under the Unified Carrier Licence. A sample LWBS licence is available at the CA's website:

www.coms-auth.hk/filemanager/common/licensing/sample_lwbs_licence.pdf.

"The shared spectrum will be assigned for use in different specified locations such as university campuses, industrial estates, the airport and technology parks on a geographically sharing basis, with the total network coverage of each assignee not exceeding 50 square kilometres. Such an arrangement will allow the shared spectrum to be deployed for a great variety of innovative 5G services and applications," a spokesperson for the OFCA said.

"To encourage innovation, the shared spectrum will not be assigned for the provision of conventional public mobile services. Also, assignees already assigned spectrum in the 26/28 GHz bands designated for the provision of conventional large-scale 5G services will not be eligible for assignment of the shared spectrum," the spokesperson added.

Detailed arrangements and relevant information for submission of applications are set out in the Guidelines for Submission of Applications for Assignment of Shared Spectrum in the 26 GHz and 28 GHz Bands, which together with the application form can be downloaded from the OFCA's website (www.ofca.gov.hk/en/industry_focus/radio_spectrum/administrative_assignment_of_spectrum/26_ghz_and_28_ghz_bands_licensing/index.html). Subject to the merits of proposals in applications received, the CA will decide whether and, if so, how much of the shared spectrum should be assigned to an applicant. An LWBS licence will be issued to each successful applicant to effect the spectrum assignment.

Parties interested in the assignment of the shared spectrum should submit their applications to the OFCA in accordance with the requirements set out in the Guidelines. Assignment will be made on a first-come, first-served basis.