

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

[Update on cases of Legionnaires' disease](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (June 11) reported the latest number of cases of Legionnaires' disease (LD), and stressed the importance of using and maintaining properly designed man-made water systems, adding that susceptible groups should strictly observe relevant precautions.

From June 2 to 8, the CHP recorded four community-acquired LD cases:

1. A male patient, aged 69 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Eastern District;
2. A male patient, aged 95 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Yau Tsim Mong District;
3. A male patient, aged 69 with good past health, who lives in Eastern District; and
4. A male patient, aged 66 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Tsuen Wan District.

"Epidemiological investigations are ongoing to identify potential sources of infection, high-risk exposure and clusters, if any," a spokesman for the CHP said.

As of June 8, 41 LD cases had been recorded this year. In 2023 and 2022, there were 121 and 80 cases respectively.

"Men, people aged over 50, smokers, alcoholics and persons with weakened immunity are more susceptible to LD. Some situations may also increase the risk of infection, including poor maintenance of water systems; living in areas with old water systems, cooling towers or fountains; using electric water heaters, whirlpools and spas or hot water spring spas; and recent stays in hotels or vessels," the spokesman said.

Legionellae are found in various environmental settings and grow well in warm water (20 to 45 degrees Celsius). They can be found in aqueous environments such as water tanks, hot and cold water systems, cooling towers, whirlpools and spas, water fountains and home apparatus that support breathing. People may become infected when they breathe in contaminated droplets (aerosols) and mist generated by artificial water systems, or when handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes.

Immunocompromised persons should:

- Use sterile or boiled water for drinking, tooth brushing and mouth rinsing;
- Avoid using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices; and
- If using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices, fill the water tank with only sterile or cooled freshly boiled water, and not water directly from the tap. Also, clean and maintain humidifiers/devices regularly according to manufacturers' instructions. Never leave stagnant water in a humidifier/device. Empty the water tank, wipe all surfaces dry, and change the water daily.

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â€‹The public should observe the health advice below:

- Observe personal hygiene;
- Do not smoke and avoid alcohol consumption;
- Strainers in water taps and shower heads should be inspected, cleaned, descaled and disinfected regularly or at a frequency recommended by the manufacturer;
- If a fresh-water plumbing system is properly maintained, it is not necessary to install domestic water filters. Use of water filters is not encouraged as clogging occurs easily, which can promote growth of micro-organisms. In case water filters are used, the pore size should be 0.2 micrometres (μm) and the filter needs to be changed periodically according to the manufacturer's recommendations;
- Drain and clean water tanks of buildings at least quarterly;
- Drain or purge for at least one minute infrequently used water outlets (e.g. water taps, shower heads and hot water outlets) and stagnant points of the pipework weekly or before use;
- Seek and follow doctors' professional advice regarding the use and maintenance of home respiratory devices and use only sterile water (not distilled or tap water) to clean and fill the reservoir. Clean and maintain the device regularly according to the manufacturer's

instructions. After cleaning/disinfection, rinse the device with sterile water, cooled freshly boiled water or water filtered with 0.2 µm filters. Never leave stagnant water in the device. Empty the water tank, keep all surfaces dry, and change the water daily; and

- When handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes:

1. Wear gloves and a face mask;
2. Water gardens and compost gently using low pressure;
3. Open composted potting mixes slowly and make sure the opening is directed away from the face;
4. Wet the soil to reduce dust when potting plants; and
5. Avoid working in poorly ventilated places such as enclosed greenhouses.

â€‹â€‹The public may visit the CHP's [LD page](#), the [Code of Practice for Prevention of LD](#) and the [Housekeeping Guidelines for Cold and Hot Water Systems for Building Management](#) of the Prevention of LD Committee, and the CHP's [risk-based strategy](#) for prevention and control of LD.

[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected cocaine worth about \\$1.2 million at airport \(with photo\)](#)

â€‹â€‹Hong Kong Customs on June 9 detected a passenger drug trafficking case at Hong Kong International Airport and seized about 1.3 kilograms of suspected cocaine with an estimated market value of about \$1.2 million. A man was arrested.

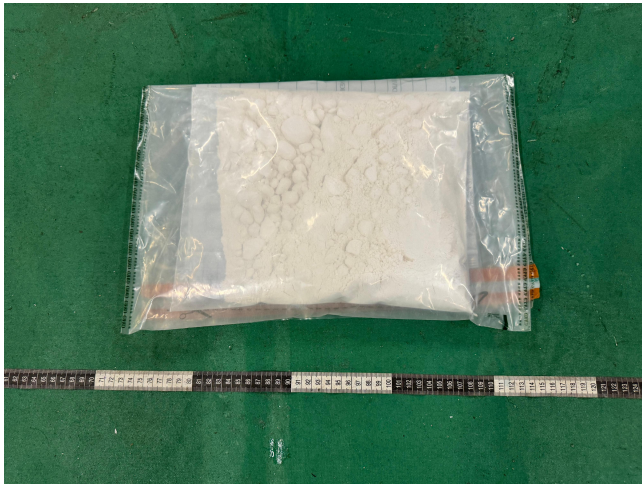
A 43-year-old male passenger arrived in Hong Kong from Nairobi, Kenya, via Doha, Qatar, yesterday. During customs clearance, Customs officers found a metal part in his checked-in luggage, which contained the batch of suspected cocaine concealed inside. The man was subsequently arrested.

After an investigation, the arrested man has been charged with one count of trafficking in a dangerous drug. He will appear at the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (June 12).

Following the increasing number of visitors to Hong Kong, Customs will continue to apply a risk assessment approach and focus on selecting passengers from high-risk regions for clearance to combat transnational drug trafficking activities.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/).



[Government announces establishment of investigation and study group on recent internal operational affairs of HKU](#)

The Government today (June 11) announced the establishment of an investigation and study group (the group) on the recent internal operational affairs of the University of Hong Kong (HKU).

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Recently, there have been wide media coverage and discussions on the HKU's internal operational affairs. The Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, has tasked the Education Bureau (EDB) to learn about the matter and report to him.ã€€

As the EDB has gathered from relevant parties, there is inconsistency in the information provided by different parties and a need to clarify the facts and study how to deal with the matter. The Government and the public have high expectations of universities. The Government provides funding for their operations every year and has to ensure their proper use of public funds.

Under the existing mechanism, the University Grants Committee (UGC) plays an important role in the governance, funding allocation arrangements and strategic development of all funded universities. When providing funding, the UGC signs a University Accountability Agreement with each funded university, setting out requirements on governance, accountability and

resource utilisation of the universities to ensure that their operations are in line with the interests and development of Hong Kong. At the institutional level, apart from providing resources, the EDB is responsible for formulating Hong Kong's overall education policy and development strategy. The funding allocation arrangements of the UGC and operations of the UGC-funded universities should tie in with the Government's overall education policy direction.

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The EDB has proposed to the Chief Executive to establish the group to conduct investigations and studies on the recent controversies relating to the HKU's internal operations. The goals of the group are: 1) to clarify facts and understand issues of all parties; 2) to facilitate internal co-ordination, assist various parties to work together and strengthen mutual co-operation; and 3) to provide advice based on the investigations and studies, and propose recommendations regarding the improvement measures and good practices to ensure that the HKU operates in accordance with the requirements of the University Accountability Agreement and uses public funds properly. The Chief Executive has accepted the proposal.

The group is composed of the Permanent Secretary for Education, Ms Michelle Li, and the Chairman of the UGC, Mr Tim Lui, and will commence work as soon as possible. A support team will be formed by the EDB and the UGC Secretariat.€€€€

A Government spokesman said, "Society has high expectations of UGC-funded universities to enhance their institutional governance effectively. We particularly cherish the HKU's hard-won, remarkable achievements thanks to both the hard work of generations and the teamwork of the university community. We believe that establishing the group will help the HKU raise its governance effectiveness and scale new heights with concerted efforts."

Quarterly business receipts indices for service industries for first quarter of 2024

Business receipts in value terms of most of the major service industries showed increases of varying magnitudes in the first quarter of 2024 when compared with the first quarter of 2023, according to the provisional figures of business receipts indices released today (June 11) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD).

Comparing the first quarter of 2024 with the first quarter of 2023, double-digit increases were recorded in business receipts indices of the accommodation services (+36.8%), insurance (+17.3%), transportation (+12.5%),

and administrative and support services (+10.9%) industries. On the other hand, the financing (except banking) industry recorded a decrease of 3.6% in business receipts index during the same period.

Analysed by service domain, business receipts index of the computer and information technology services domain increased by 108.6% year-on-year during the same period, while that of the tourism, convention and exhibition services domain also increased by 47.0% year-on-year.

On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, business receipts in value terms of almost all major service industries recorded increases of varying magnitudes in the first quarter of 2024 when compared with the fourth quarter of 2023. In particular, double-digit increases were recorded in business receipts indices of the insurance (+26.2%), accommodation services (+14.3%) and transportation (+11.9%) industries. On the other hand, business receipts index of the food services industry decreased by 1.8% during the same period.

Analysed by service domain, comparing the first quarter of 2024 with the fourth quarter of 2023 on a seasonally adjusted basis, business receipts index of the computer and information technology services domain increased by 15.4%, while that of the tourism, convention and exhibition services domain also increased by 4.6%.

Commentary

A Government spokesman said that business of most service industries continued to improve in the first quarter of 2024. Most service industries saw year-on-year increases in business receipts, notably the accommodation services, air transport, land transport, insurance, and administrative and support services industries. On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, business receipts of almost all service industries increased.

Looking ahead, further growth of the economy should continue to render support to the business of various service industries. Rising employment income and the Government's introduction of various initiatives to boost market sentiment should help those consumption-related service industries, though residents' changing consumption pattern still presents challenges. Some service industries may be more affected by a longer period of tight financial condition and uncertainties brought about by geopolitical tensions.

Further information

Table 1 presents the business receipts indices and their corresponding year-on-year rates of change in respect of selected service industries and service domains for the recent five quarters, while Table 2 shows the corresponding quarter-to-quarter rates of change in the business receipts indices for the recent five quarters based on the seasonally adjusted series.

The revised figures of business receipts indices for the first quarter of 2024 will be released at the website of the C&SD

(www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/web_table.html?id=660-69001) on July 19, 2024.

Data for compiling the business receipts indices are mainly based on the Quarterly Survey of Service Industries conducted by the C&SD, supplemented by relevant data provided by the Hong Kong Monetary Authority and the Hong Kong Tourism Board.

A service domain differs from a service industry in that it comprises those economic activities which straddle different industries but are somehow related to a common theme. It may include all activities carried out by all establishments in a service industry that is closely related to the domain. For a service industry that is less closely related, however, only a portion of the establishments in the industry or even only part of the economic activities of the establishments is related to the domain. Taking the tourism, convention and exhibition services domain as an example, it includes all services of convention and exhibition organisers, short-term accommodation services and services of travel agents, and some of the services (only those involving visitors as customers) of restaurants, retailers and transport operators.

The classification of service industries follows the Hong Kong Standard Industrial Classification Version 2.0, which is used in various economic surveys for classifying economic units into relevant industry classes.

More detailed statistics are given in the report "Quarterly Business Receipts Indices for Service Industries, First Quarter 2024". Users can browse and download this publication at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1080006&scode=520).

For enquiries about the business receipts indices, please contact the Business Services Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel.: 3903 7267 or e-mail: business-receipts@censtatd.gov.hk).