

Communications Authority press release

The following is issued on behalf of the Communications Authority:

This press release summarises the decisions of the Communications Authority (CA) following its 116th meeting held in April 2022.

New class licence for regulating the use of and trade in 6 GHz devices for Wireless Local Area Network (WLAN)

Having considered the views and comments received in response to a public consultation conducted at the end of 2021, the CA today (April 29) created a class licence for regulating the use of and trade in 6 GHz devices for WLAN (the WLAN Device Class Licence) and varied the existing class licence for provision of public WLAN services (the WLAN Service Class Licence).

With the advance of technology, there are new WLAN devices operating in the 5925 – 6425 MHz band (such as the commonly known Wi-Fi 6E devices and collectively referred to as 6 GHz devices) which support faster data rates and low latency, and hence higher performance. Under the light-handed approach adopted by the CA, the WLAN Device Class Licence enables the general public and business entities to use and trade 6 GHz devices for WLAN applications without the need to individually apply for a licence or pay any licence fee. Pursuant to the new WLAN Device Class Licence, it is a compulsory requirement for manufacturers, suppliers and vendors to seek for certification of access points of 6 GHz devices against the stipulated technical requirements and affix the CA prescribed label on them for sale in Hong Kong so as to facilitate easy identification of compliant products by the general public and deter the supply of non-compliant products which may cause potential radio interference to other legitimate telecommunications uses. Service providers may also use 6 GHz devices for provision of WLAN services under the varied WLAN Service Class Licence.

A copy of the concerned class licences is available at www.coms-auth.hk/en/licensing/telecommunications/class/index.html.

Approval for changes in shareholding structures of Hong Kong Cable Television Limited (HKCTV) and Fantastic Television Limited (Fantastic TV)

The CA has approved the applications by HKCTV and Fantastic TV for the changes in their shareholding structures arising from the general offer made by Celestial Pioneer Limited (Celestial Pioneer) to acquire the shares of i-CABLE Communications Limited (i-CABLE), the major shareholder of HKCTV and Fantastic TV, with retrospective effect from February 23, 2022.

On January 20, 2022, the CA approved the applications by HKCTV and

Fantastic TV for the first stage of changes in their shareholding structures. As the subsequent general offer required under the Codes on Takeovers and Mergers and Share Buy-backs promulgated by the Securities and Futures Commission resulted in further changes in their shareholding structures, HKCTV and Fantastic TV made another application to the CA for this second stage of changes.

According to HKCTV and Fantastic TV, the shareholding changes did not bring about any material change to the legal and beneficial ownership of the licensees. Upon completion of the changes in the shareholding structures of HKCTV and Fantastic TV, which took effect over the period from February 23, 2022, through March 17, 2022, Celestial Pioneer's direct and indirect shareholding (through Forever Top (Asia) Limited (Forever Top)) in i-CABLE is 50 per cent (see Note).

In approving the applications, the CA is satisfied that HKCTV and Fantastic TV will continue to comply with all applicable regulatory requirements under the Broadcasting Ordinance (Cap. 562) and the licences concerned, and that they will be able to honour the investment and programming commitments they have made under their respective licences after completion of the shareholding changes.

Renewal of other licensable television programme service (Other Licensable TV) licences

The CA approved the applications by Guest Tek Asia Pacific Limited and MVI Systems Limited for renewal of their other licensable TV licences for the provision of television programme services to hotel rooms in Hong Kong for 12 years.

Following the renewal of the above licences, there will be 20 other licensable TV licensees providing television programme services to 60 hotels in Hong Kong.

Note: At present, Celestial Pioneer's direct shareholding in i-CABLE is 6.78 per cent. Forever Top's shareholding in i-CABLE remains at 43.22 per cent.