

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 129th meeting held in November 2023.

Joint request by China Mobile Hong Kong Company Limited (CMHK), Genius Brand Limited (GBL), Hong Kong Telecommunications (HKT) Limited (HKT) and Hutchison Telephone Company Limited (HTCL) to swap and transfer part of their assigned frequency spectrum in the 2.5/2.6 GHz band

The CA approved the joint request from CMHK, GBL, HKT and HTCL (collectively referred to as the Parties) to:

(a) swap the following 2 x 5 MHz of spectrum each in the 2.5/2.6 GHz between GBL and CMHK from March 31, 2024, until the expiry of their existing assignments on May 31, 2028 (Proposed Swap):

(i) 2515 – 2520 MHz paired with 2635 – 2640 MHz currently assigned to GBL; and

(ii) 2530 – 2535 MHz paired with 2650 – 2655 MHz currently assigned to CMHK.

(b) transfer equal amounts of 2 x 5 MHz of spectrum in the 2.5/2.6 GHz band from each of HTCL and HKT to GBL (Proposed Transfer) whereby:

(i) 2540 – 2545 MHz paired with 2660 – 2665 MHz will be transferred from HTCL to GBL for 15 years from March 31, 2024, until the expiry of its next assignment on March 30, 2039;

(ii) 2535 – 2540 MHz paired with 2655 – 2660 MHz will be transferred from HKT to GBL for four years from March 31, 2024, to March 30, 2028; and

(iii) 2545 – 2550 MHz paired with 2665 – 2670 MHz will be transferred from HKT to GBL for 11 years from March 31, 2028, until the expiry of its next assignment on March 30, 2039.

The Parties submitted the joint request for the Proposed Swap and Proposed Transfer to the CA in order to remove the fragmentation in the 2.5/2.6 GHz band after the reassignment of 2 x 45 MHz of spectrum on March 31, 2024, with a view to achieving the technical benefits including increased spectral efficiency and therefore also improved service quality.

Having considered the detailed assessment of the Office of the Communications Authority (OFCA), the CA is of the view that the Proposed Swap and Proposed Transfer will result in more efficient use of the radio spectrum which is a scarce public resource and consumers will also benefit from improved service quality. The CA therefore decided to grant its approval subject to a number of conditions imposed. For details, please refer to the [CA's Statement](#) which is published on the CA's website today (November 9).

Financial penalty imposed on Hong Kong Broadband Network Limited (HKBN) for its billing errors

Between January and April 2023, there were three incidents of billing error involving HKBN's fixed and mobile telecommunications service users. The three incidents affected over 10 000 customers while the erroneous charges involved amounted to a total of about \$990,000. The OFCA conducted an investigation into the three incidents. Having considered the OFCA's assessment and HKBN's representations, the CA concluded that HKBN had breached Special Condition (SC) 9.1 of its Unified Carrier Licence (Licence No. 045) and SC 5.1 of its Services-based Operator Licence (Licence No. 094), both of which require that the licensee shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that the billing system used in connection with the service is accurate and reliable. The CA decided to impose a financial penalty of \$80,000 on HKBN. For details, please refer to the [CA's Decision](#) published on the CA's website.

Application for "other licensable television programme service" licence

The CA approved the application by Rediffusion Technology Services Limited for an "other licensable television programme service" licence for the provision of television programme services to hotel rooms in Hong Kong. The period of validity of the licence is 12 years, from November 14, 2023, to November 13, 2035 (both dates inclusive).

Following the issue of the above licence, there are 21 "other licensable television programme service" licensees providing television programme services to about 60 hotels in Hong Kong.

Broadcast complaint

The CA considered a complaint case about the radio programme "Brunch with Noreen" broadcast on April 21, 2023, on Radio 3 Channel of Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK). The CA decided that RTHK should be advised to observe more closely the relevant provision of the Radio Code of Practice on Programme Standards. Details of the case are in [Appendix](#).