

## OFCA conducts market surveillance and monitoring on real-name registration for SIM cards (with photos)

The Office of the Communications Authority (OFCA) conducted today (May 25) an ad hoc market surveillance around Apliu Street in Sham Shui Po, and distributed pamphlets to members of the public and traders to remind them not to use, purchase or sell SIM cards from unknown sources or allegedly having completed registration.

"To raise public awareness on the Real-name Registration Programme for SIM Cards (Real-name Registration Programme), OFCA regularly conducts market surveillance and publicity activities to remind members of the public and traders not to defy the law and to complete the real-name registration with their own identity document, with a view to protecting their own interests and avoiding any loss and criminal liability," a spokesman for OFCA said.

Under the Real-name Registration Programme, all SIM cards issued and used locally (including service plan SIM cards and pre-paid SIM (PPS) cards) must have their real-name registration completed before service activation. Since the full implementation of the Real-name Registration Programme on February 24, OFCA has been carrying out a series of monitoring and enforcement actions to ensure that the real-name registration systems of telecommunications service providers comply with the requirements of the law and relevant guidelines.

OFCA and telecommunications service providers also conduct sample checks on the registration information from time to time. According to the law and relevant guidelines, if a telecommunications service provider has reasonable grounds to believe that the registration information of the relevant SIM card is incomplete or irregular, the telecommunications service provider must take reasonable steps to request the relevant user to rectify. If the users subject to sample checks are unable to verify pursuant to the instructions of the respective telecommunications service providers, the relevant PPS cards will be deregistered and cannot be used afterwards.

The spokesman added, "Upon the receipt of an SMS from his/her telecommunications service provider using the designated sender address 'SIMREG', the user subject to sample check should provide his/her own identity document again by following the instructions provided in the SMS for verification of the registered information. Please be reminded that telecommunications service providers would not ask users to transfer money or provide bank account number and password, etc. under any circumstances. If in doubt, users should contact the telecommunications service providers concerned for more information."

In addition, OFCA has been maintaining close contact with telecommunications service providers, requesting them to strengthen the

inspection of the user information of the registered PPS cards. In case of any suspicious cases of real-name registration, they should promptly be referred to law enforcement agencies for follow-up. Recently, based on a telecommunications service provider's report the Police arrested suspects of using fake identity card information to register a large number of PPS cards.

The spokesman emphasised that providing false information and/or false document under the Real-name Registration Programme may constitute a criminal offence. Depending on the nature of the act and proof of evidence, the applicable offences include obtaining services by deception under section 18A of the Theft Ordinance (Cap. 210) and/or using false instrument under section 73 of the Crimes Ordinance (Cap. 200). In addition, any person who knowingly transfers PPS cards for illicit purpose may be liable for aiding and abetting the commission of the relevant offence under section 89 of the Criminal Procedure Ordinance (Cap. 221).

For details of the Real-name Registration Programme, please visit OFCA's website ([www.ofca.gov.hk/simreg/en](http://www.ofca.gov.hk/simreg/en)).

