

Offer of spectrum assignments in 26 GHz and 28 GHz bands for provision of 5G services

The Office of the Communications Authority (OFCA) announced today (March 27) that a total of 1 200 MHz of spectrum in the 26 GHz and 28 GHz (26/28 GHz) bands has been offered for assignment to three mobile network operators (MNOs), namely China Mobile Hong Kong Company Limited (CMHK), Hong Kong Telecommunications (HKT) Limited (HKT) and SmarTone Mobile Communications Limited (SmarTone), for the provision of the fifth generation mobile (5G) services.

Following a public consultation, the Communications Authority (CA) decided on December 13, 2018, to allocate 4 100 MHz of spectrum in the 26/28 GHz bands to mobile service and adopt an administrative approach for spectrum assignment in view of the abundant supply of spectrum in the two bands, and the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development decided that no spectrum utilisation fee (SUF) will be charged unless 75 per cent of the available spectrum in these bands is assigned or occupied.

The CA invited applications for spectrum assignment in the two bands on December 21, 2018, for the provision of large-scale public mobile services, and received three applications, from CMHK, HKT and SmarTone, by the close of the application period on February 22, 2019. Having completed the evaluation of their applications, the CA decided to offer assignment of 400 MHz of spectrum to each of the three applicants as per their applications.

"The spectrum can be used from April 2019 onwards for deployment of 5G services to provide high-capacity transmission at both outdoor and indoor locations of high traffic demand. As the total amount of spectrum to be assigned accounts for less than 75 per cent of the total available spectrum supply in the 26/28 GHz bands, the assignees do not need to pay any SUF for the use of the spectrum," a spokesman of the CA said.

Details of the spectrum assignment offers to the three MNOs are as follows:

Successful Applicant	Spectrum Offered for Assignment	
	Frequency Range (GHz)	Amount (MHz)
a. SmarTone Mobile Communications Limited	26.55 – 26.95	400
b. China Mobile Hong Kong Company Limited	26.95 – 27.35	400
c. Hong Kong Telecommunications (HKT) Limited	27.35 – 27.75	400

The assignment of the spectrum to each of the successful applicants will be subject to their submission of a performance bond to guarantee compliance with the network and service rollout obligations specified by the CA and payment of the relevant licence fees.