

Spectrum Release Plan for 2019 – 2021

Introduction

In accordance with the Radio Spectrum Policy Framework announced by the Government in April 2007, the Communications Authority (“CA”) will publish a spectrum release plan (“SRP”) to inform the industry of the potential supply of radio spectrum for the following three years. The SRP is updated every year on a rolling basis, or as required, taking into account the latest developments. Details of the SRP for 2019 – 2021 are listed below. It includes potential supply of spectrum which may be made available through open bidding, tendering process or other appropriate means.

2. This SRP is for information of the industry and the public. Publication of the SRP does not constitute any allocation or assignment of the spectrum. The SRP does not bind the CA in exercise of its discretion in the actual spectrum allocation and assignment. The CA will conduct separate consultation exercises before exercising its powers under sections 32H(2)(a) and (b) and 32I(1) of the Telecommunications Ordinance (Cap. 106) as is reasonable in all the circumstances of the case. In making a decision on spectrum allocation and/or assignment, the CA will also take into account all relevant matters of the case. The CA is entitled to depart or deviate from the SRP where the circumstances so warrant. The SRP is subject to annual review and may from time to time be amended, as and when it is considered necessary in the light of latest developments.

Updated Spectrum Release Plan for 2019 – 2021

Frequency Band (MHz)	Bandwidth (MHz)	Earliest Release Date ^[1]	Target Consultation Date	Remarks
24250 – 27500	3250	2019	Completed ^[2]	Assignment of new spectrum for provision of mobile / wireless fixed services
27500 – 28350	850			
3300 – 3400	100	2019	Completed ^[3]	Assignment of new spectrum for provision of indoor mobile services

Frequency Band (MHz)	Bandwidth (MHz)	Earliest Release Date ^[1]	Target Consultation Date	Remarks
4830 – 4930	80 ^[4]	2019	Completed ^[3]	Assignment of new spectrum for provision of mobile services
3400 – 3600	200	2019	Completed ^[5]	Assignment of new spectrum for provision of mobile services from April 2020
617 – 698	Maximum 160 ^[6]	2020 ^[7]	2019 ^[7]	Assignment of new spectrum for provision of indoor mobile services from July 2021 the earliest ^[7]
703 – 803				Assignment of new spectrum for provision of indoor mobile services from July 2021 the earliest ^{[7][8]}

Notes

- [1] “Earliest release date” refers to the earliest date when the spectrum concerned is expected to be available for release to the market through auction, tendering or other appropriate means, subject to the outcome of consultation and enactment of the relevant subsidiary legislation. It does not necessarily refer to the actual date of spectrum assignment.
- [2] The public consultation on the allocation of the 26 GHz and 28 GHz bands to mobile service and the associated arrangements for spectrum assignment and spectrum utilisation fee was conducted during July and August 2018. On 13 December 2018, the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (“SCED”) and the CA issued a joint statement announcing their respective decisions on the matter (see https://www.coms-auth.hk/filemanager/statement/en/upload/480/joint_statement_st_0520_18.pdf).
- [3] The public consultation on the arrangements for spectrum allocation and assignment as well as the related spectrum utilisation fee for the 3300 – 3400 MHz and 4830 – 4930 MHz bands was conducted during August and September 2018. On 13 December 2018, SCED and the CA issued a joint statement announcing their respective decisions on the matter (see https://www.coms-auth.hk/filemanager/statement/en/upload/482/joint_statement_st_0720_18.pdf).
- [4] 80 MHz of spectrum in the sub-band of 4840 – 4920 MHz, configured as two 40-MHz blocks, will be made available for auction, while two 10-MHz blocks (i.e. 4830 – 4840 MHz and 4920 – 4930 MHz) will be reserved and may be combined with the spectrum which may be made available in the future for assignment at a later stage.

- [5] The public consultation on arrangements for spectrum allocation was conducted from July to September 2017. The CA issued a statement in March 2018 promulgating its decision to change the allocation of radio spectrum in the 3.4 – 3.7 GHz band from fixed satellite service to mobile service for the provision of public mobile telecommunications services with effect from 1 April 2020. The public consultation on the arrangements for the spectrum assignment and the related spectrum utilisation fee was conducted during May and June 2018. On 13 December 2018, SCED and the CA issued a joint statement announcing their respective decisions on the matter (see https://www.coms-auth.hk/filemanager/statement/en/upload/481/joint_statement_st_062018.pdf).
- [6] Based on the band plans of the Third Generation Partnership Project, a maximum of 160 MHz of spectrum within the 617 – 803 MHz band is planned to be released.
- [7] The target consultation date, the earliest release date and the assignment date are subject to the progress of work relating to the switching off of analogue television broadcasting services and the outcome of frequency coordination with the Mainland on the use of the 617 – 803 MHz band to avoid mutual radio interference across the boundary.
- [8] 20 MHz of spectrum in the 703 – 803 MHz band can be used for outdoor deployment as well.

Spectrum included in previous versions of Spectrum Release Plan

Frequency Band (MHz)	Bandwidth (MHz)	Remarks
216 – 223	7	Use of Channel 11C (219.584 – 221.120 MHz) for Digital Audio Broadcasting services has ceased since 4 September 2017. Channel 11A to 11D (within the range of 216 – 223 MHz) may be used for new digital broadcasting and telecommunications services, including broadcast-type mobile TV services.
832.5 – 837.5 877.5 – 882.5	10	These bands were assigned through the auction of radio spectrum in the 850 MHz, 900 MHz and 2 GHz Bands held in February/March 2011 for the provision of public mobile telecommunications services.
885 – 890 930 – 935	10	These bands were assigned through the auction of radio spectrum in the 850 MHz, 900 MHz and 2 GHz Bands held in February/March 2011 for the provision of public mobile telecommunications services.
890 – 915 935 – 960	50	The right of first refusal for 80 MHz of spectrum in the frequency bands of 1720 – 1730 MHz, 1740 – 1770 MHz, 1815 – 1825 MHz and 1835 – 1865 MHz (“RFR Spectrum”) was offered to the incumbent spectrum assignees administratively in July 2018. All of them exercised their right of first refusal to acquire the relevant RFR Spectrum. The remaining 120 MHz of spectrum was assigned by way of the auction conducted in December 2018. These bands will continue to be used for the provision of public mobile telecommunications services upon expiry of the existing assignments in 2021.
1710 – 1785 1805 – 1880	150	

Frequency Band (MHz)	Bandwidth (MHz)	Remarks
1466 – 1480	14	<p>This band may be used for new digital broadcasting and telecommunications services, including broadcast-type mobile TV services.</p> <p>As a result of the second consultation on the development of mobile TV services which took place in January 2008, this band has been reserved subject to further development of the worldwide market.</p>
1904.9 – 1919.9 2019.7 – 2024.7	20	<p>These bands were previously assigned to mobile network operators for the provision of 3G mobile services. The assignments expired on 21 October 2016. In accordance with the decision of the CA announced on 15 November 2013,¹ these bands were put back to reserve following the expiry of the relevant assignments in October 2016.</p>
1930.2 – 1940.0 1960.0 – 1969.8 2120.2 – 2130.0 2150.0 – 2159.8	39.2	<p>In accordance with the decision of the CA announced on 15 November 2013,¹ these bands were planned to be released through auction towards end 2014 and were therefore included in previous SRP. Following the decision of the CA announced on 2 May 2014,² the bands to be released through auction were revised to 1920.3 – 1935.1 MHz, 1960.0 – 1969.8 MHz, 2110.3 – 2125.1 MHz and 2150.0 – 2159.8 MHz instead (with a total bandwidth of 49.2 MHz). These revised bands were assigned through the auction held in December 2014 for the provision of public mobile telecommunications services.</p>
2010 – 2019.7	9.7	<p>This band was included in the auction of radio spectrum in the 850 MHz, 900 MHz and 2 GHz Bands held in February/March 2011 for the provision of public mobile telecommunications services but was not acquired by any bidder in the auction. The CA will review the demand for this band.</p>

¹ See http://www.coms-auth.hk/filemanager/statement/en/upload/237/ca_statements20131115_en.pdf.

² See http://www.coms-auth.hk/filemanager/statement/en/upload/270/decision_20140502_e.pdf.

Frequency Band (MHz)	Bandwidth (MHz)	Remarks
2300 – 2390	90	This band was assigned through the auction of spectrum for broadband wireless access service held in February 2012.
2500 – 2515 2620 – 2635	30	These bands were assigned through the auction of spectrum for broadband wireless access service held in January 2009.
2515 – 2540 2635 – 2660	50	These bands were assigned through the auction of spectrum for broadband wireless access service held in March 2013.
2540 – 2570 2660 – 2690	60	These bands were assigned through the auction of spectrum for broadband wireless access service held in January 2009.

Office of the Communications Authority
11 February 2019