

Spectrum Release Plan for 2021 – 2023

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 2021 – 2023 are listed below. Spectrum in the SRP may be made available for use by the industry 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.

Updated Spectrum Release Plan for 2021 – 2023

Frequency Band (MHz)	Bandwidth (MHz)	Earliest Release Date ^[1]	Target Consultation Date	Remarks
617 – 652 663 – 698	140	2021	Completed ^[2]	Assignment of new spectrum for provision of indoor mobile services
703 – 738 758 – 793				Assignment of new spectrum for provision of mobile services
4800 – 4840 4920 – 4960	80	2021	Completed ^[3]	Assignment of new spectrum for provision of mobile services

Frequency Band (MHz)	Bandwidth (MHz)	Earliest Release Date ^[1]	Target Consultation Date	Remarks
24250 – 26550	2300	2021 ^[4]	Completed	Assignment of available spectrum for provision of mobile / wireless fixed services
27750 – 28350	600			
825 – 832.5 870 – 877.5	15	2021	Completed ^[5]	Re-assignment of existing spectrum for provision of mobile services from Q4 2023 ^[6]
2500 – 2515 2540 – 2570 2620 – 2635 2660 – 2690	90	2021	Completed ^[7]	Re-assignment of existing spectrum for provision of mobile services from Q1 2024 ^[8]
39500 – 43500	4000	2022/ 2023 ^[9]	2022/ 2023 ^[9]	Assignment of new spectrum for provision of mobile / wireless fixed services

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 arrangements for the assignment of the new spectrum in the 600 MHz and 700 MHz bands and the related spectrum utilisation fee was completed in October 2020.
- [3] The public consultation on the arrangements for the assignment of additional new spectrum in the 4.9 GHz band and the related spectrum utilisation fee was completed in September 2020.
- [4] The CA plans to invite applications for administrative assignment of 2500 MHz of spectrum (24250 – 26550 MHz and 27750 – 27950 MHz) on a non-shared basis when market demand so warrants. 400 MHz of spectrum (27950 – 28350 MHz) is available for application for administrative assignment on a shared basis any time.
- [5] The public consultation on the arrangements for the re-assignment of existing spectrum in

the 850 MHz band and the related spectrum utilisation fee was completed in October 2020.

- [6] The existing assignment in these bands will expire on 19 November 2023.
- [7] The public consultation on the arrangements for the re-assignment of existing spectrum in the 2.5/2.6 GHz bands and the related spectrum utilisation fee was completed in November 2020.
- [8] The existing assignments in these bands will expire on 30 March 2024.
- [9] Subject to technology and market developments, the exact timing for public consultation and release of the new spectrum in the 39500 – 43500 MHz band will be determined nearer the time.

Spectrum included in previous versions of Spectrum Release Plan

Frequency Band (MHz)	Bandwidth (MHz)	Remarks
216 – 223	7	<p>Use of Channel 11C (219.584 – 221.120 MHz) for Digital Audio Broadcasting services has ceased since 4 September 2017.</p> <p>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.</p>
832.5 – 837.5 877.5 – 882.5	10	<p>The spectrum in these bands was 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 services.</p>
885 – 890 930 – 935	10	<p>The spectrum in these bands was 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 services.</p>
890 – 915 935 – 960	50	<p>The spectrum in these bands was re-assigned on 12 January 2021 for the provision of public mobile services based on the results of the auction conducted in December 2018.</p>
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 market.</p>

Frequency Band (MHz)	Bandwidth (MHz)	Remarks
1710 – 1785 1805 – 1880	150	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 70 MHz of spectrum in the frequency bands of 1710 – 1720 MHz, 1730 – 1740 MHz, 1770 – 1785 MHz, 1805 – 1815 MHz, 1825 – 1835 MHz and 1865 – 1880 MHz was auctioned off in December 2018. All the 150 MHz of spectrum in these bands will be re-assigned on 30 September 2021 for the provision of public mobile services.
1904.9 – 1919.9 2019.7 – 2024.7	20	The spectrum in these bands was 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. The spectrum in the 1904.9 – 1915.0 MHz band was assigned for use by the Government in 2019.
1930.2 – 1940.0 1960.0 – 1969.8 2120.2 – 2130.0 2150.0 – 2159.8	39.2	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). The spectrum in these revised bands was assigned through the auction held in December 2014 for the provision of public mobile services.

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
2010 – 2019.7	9.7	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 services but was not acquired by any bidder in the auction. The CA will review the demand for this band.
2300 – 2390	90	The spectrum in this band was assigned through the auction of spectrum for broadband wireless access service held in February 2012.
2515 – 2540 2635 – 2660	50	The spectrum in these bands was assigned through the auction of spectrum for broadband wireless access service held in March 2013.
3300 – 3400	100	The spectrum in this band (limited to indoor use) was auctioned off in November 2019, with the assignment taking effect from December 2019.
3400 – 3600	200	The spectrum in this band was auctioned off in October 2019, with the assignment taking effect from April 2020.
4840 – 4920	80	The spectrum in this band was auctioned off in October 2019, with the assignment taking effect from December 2019.
26550 – 27750	1200	The spectrum in this band was administratively assigned for the provision of large scale public mobile services in April 2019.
27950 – 28350	400	The CA has made available the spectrum in this band for assignment on a geographically sharing basis for the provision of innovative localised wireless broadband services. Application for assignment is open on an on-going basis, with the first assignment made in October 2019.