

Telecommunications Regulatory Affairs Advisory Committee

Minutes of the Twenty-Eighth Meeting Held on Tuesday, 4 February 2025 at 2:30 p.m. in OFCA Conference Room, 20/F Wu Chung House

Members Present

Mr Esmond Chiu	Office of the Communications Authority ("OFCA") ("Chairman")
Mr Sidney Tsan	OFCA ("Secretary")
Mr Michael Kan	Consumer Council
Mr Ben Li	The Institution of Engineering and Technology Hong Kong
Mr Alex Wong	Communications Association of Hong Kong
Mr Francis Fong	Hong Kong Information Technology Federation
Ms Noel Chu	China Mobile Hong Kong Company Limited ("CMHK")
Mr Karson Ng	China Telecom Global Limited
Ms Lillian Liu	China Unicom (Hong Kong) Operations Limited
Miss Katherine Kwok	HGC Global Communications Limited
Ms Sophia Yap	Hong Kong Broadband Network Limited / HKBN Enterprise Solutions Limited / HKBN Enterprise Solutions HK Limited ("HKBN")
Mr Raymond Chan	Hong Kong Cable Television Limited
Mr Kevin Chu	Hong Kong Telecommunications (HKT) Limited / PCCW-HKT Telephone Limited and Hong Kong Telecommunications (HKT) Limited / PCCW Global (HK) Limited / Genius Brand Limited
Ms Sarah Hui	Hutchison Telephone Company Limited
Mr Patrick Ng	NTT Com Asia Limited
Mr Tin-Lun Or	SmarTone Communications Limited / SmarTone Mobile Communications Limited ("SmarTone")

Mr Tony Tsang	VNET Group Limited
Mr Tung-Leong Chan	Unified Carrier (External Fixed Services)
	Licensees as a group
Ir Chi-Wah Tang	Hong Kong Police Force (“HKPF”)
Dr Ivan Ho	Ad Personam

In Attendance

Mr Alex Tsang	CMHK
Mr Kenneth Kwok	ComNet Telecom (HK) Limited (“ComNet”)
Mr Kit Chan	Easy Tone Network Limited (“Easy Tone”)
Mr Tak-Chi Chow	SmarTone
Miss Shelley Ng	Village Telephone Limited (“VTL”)
Mr Angus Chung	HKPF
Mr Eddy Ng	OFCA
Ms Christine Chim	OFCA
Mr KL Yeung	OFCA
Mr Desmond Young	OFCA
Ms Vera Chung	OFCA
Mr Alvin Li	OFCA
Mr Gap Cheuk	OFCA
Ms Maggie Fung	OFCA
Mr Penny Lo	OFCA
Mr Anson Chong	OFCA
Ms Andreas Law	OFCA
Mr Bill Law	OFCA
Ms Sherrine Lo	OFCA
Mr Keith Tse	OFCA

Observers

Ms Abbie Lo	HKBN
Mr Stephen Ng	SmarTone
Ms Ling Wong	Towngas Telecommunications Fixed Network Limited (“Towngas”)

Members Absent

Ir George Chan	The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers
Mr Dickson Ip	ComNet
Mr Law Jia	Easy Tone
Mr Hing-Wah Ngan	Towngas
Mr Terence Ho	TraxComm Limited
Ms Clio Ip	VTL
Mr Haining Hu	Vodafone Enterprise Hong Kong Limited
Mr David Ong	Xenith IG Hong Kong Limited
Mr Tony Lam	External Telecommunications Services Operators as a group
Mr Derek So	Localised Wireless Broadband Service / Localised Wireless Broadband System (Private) / Public Radiocommunications Service / Wireless Internet of Things Licensees as a group
Mr Yu Yang	Services-based Operator Licensees as a group
Mr Ricky Chong	Ad Personam
Ms Katy Lau	Ad Personam
Dr Yaru Fu	Ad Personam

The Chairman welcomed all participants to the meeting. The Chairman expressed appreciation to all Members for participating in the new term of TRAAC for the period from 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2026.

Item 1 Confirmation of Minutes of Last Meeting

2. The Chairman said that the draft minutes of the 27th meeting were circulated to Members for comment on 3 September 2024. With the adoption of some textual amendments suggested by a Member, the minutes of the 27th meeting were confirmed.

Item 2 Matters Arising

3. Regarding the SMS Sender Registration Scheme presented at the last meeting (TRAAC Paper No. 3/2024), the Secretary reported that the scheme received enthusiastic response and the number of registered senders under the scheme exceeded 440 as at 24 January 2025.

4. Following the update on the Progress of Implementation of the Subsidy Scheme to Extend Fibre-based Networks to Villages in Remote Areas (TRAAC Paper No. 4/2024), the Secretary reported that the number of villages reached by fibre-based networks under the scheme increased to 210 as at January 2025. OFCA would continue to liaise with fixed network operators to ensure extension of fibre-based networks to all 235 villages under the scheme by 2026.

5. Regarding the Subsidy Scheme to Extend 5G Coverage in Rural and Remote Areas presented in the last meeting (TRAAC Paper No. 5/2024), the Secretary reported that by January 2025, OFCA had completed the consultation with the industry, relevant District Councils, Rural Committees and local representatives. All parties welcomed and expressed support for the scheme. The target was to launch the scheme within this year subject to funding approval from the Legislative Council.

Item 3 Code of Practice for the Provision of Mobile Access Facilities in Specified Buildings for the Provision of Public Mobile Radiocommunications Services (TRAAC Paper No. 1/2025)

6. The Chairman invited Mr Gap Cheuk to brief Members on the Code of Practice for the Provision of Mobile Access Facilities in Specified Buildings for the Provision of Public Mobile Radiocommunications Services (“Mobile CoP”) issued by the Communications Authority (“CA”).

7. Mr Ben Li enquired about the arrangements for buildings other than the four types of specified buildings, such as private sports centres, cinemas, funeral parlours and farms. The Chairman said that the relevant arrangements had obtained support from all the relevant stakeholders in the telecommunications, building and construction industries and relevant Government departments, and the majority of

buildings in Hong Kong would be covered by the four types of specified buildings. In case of any other buildings not covered under the new arrangements, mobile network operators (“MNOs”) could still make use of space and mobile access facilities (“MAFs”) in other specified buildings in the vicinity to extend mobile network coverage nearby.

8. In response to Mr Michael Kan’s suggestion to include relevant information of the radio base station installation locations in the sales brochures for first-hand residential properties, the Chairman said that OFCA had followed up the matter with the Sales of First-hand Residential Properties Authority and would continue to do so to ensure the availability of the relevant information to the public.

9. Mr Kevin Chu enquired about whether the number of specified buildings to provide space and MAFs in a development could be more than that required in the Mobile CoP and whether the new arrangement would be applied to existing buildings. Mr Gap Cheuk said that the requirements provided in the Mobile CoP set out the minimum number of specified buildings for the provision of space and MAFs. MNOs could liaise with building developers for the provision of space and MAFs in additional specified buildings during the initial design stage of a development, in which such floor space might also be exempted from gross floor area calculation. The Chairman added that the legislative amendments applied to new or redeveloped specified buildings only but would not apply to existing buildings. MNOs should continue to follow the existing practices through commercial negotiation with landowners concerned for access to existing properties.

10. Dr Ivan Ho expressed that MNOs might have concerns on radio signal attenuation by the materials of the rooftop telecommunications equipment room (“RTE room”). The Chairman said that the RTE room would have fixed opaque windows with materials that would allow effective penetration of radio signals (for example, glass or fibre glass window pane). The design of the RTE room would also aesthetically match with the design of the specified buildings to minimise any visual impact and concerns about radiation safety.

11. Mr Alex Wong asked about the technical requirements of the RTE room such as height of RTE room and ventilation measures. The Chairman said that the Mobile CoP stipulated the technical requirements

of MAFs, including the clear height of RTE room (i.e. 2.8 to 3 metres) and provision of sufficient ventilation. Under the arrangements provided in the Mobile CoP, building developers and MNOs should coordinate with each other on the technical requirements of MAFs during the initial building design stage of specified buildings.

Item 4 Use of iAM Smart for Real Name Registration of Pre-paid SIM Cards (TRAAC Paper No. 2/2025)

12. Ms Maggie Fung briefed Members on the use of “iAM Smart” for Real Name Registration (“RNR”) of Pre-paid SIM (“PPS”) Cards. The Chairman supplemented that as announced in the 2024 Policy Address, the Government would introduce legislative amendments in 2025 to criminalise the sale of registered SIM cards.

13. Mr Francis Fong suggested that a centralised database using HKID card information maintained by the Immigration Department should be set up for licensees’ verification of registration information by licensees. Mr Kevin Chu echoed Mr Francis Fong’s suggestion and asked if the Government would make “iAM Smart” as a mandatory method for RNR for all HKID card users for saving licensees’ manual effort and resources for verification.

14. The Chairman said that there might be legal uncertainties whether the relevant information could be used for the purpose of RNR. Moreover, as “iAM Smart” was not applicable to non-HKID card users, it was necessary to maintain other means of registration for those non-HKID card users. Licensees should enhance their RNR platforms and deploy effective measures to detect and take immediate actions to deregister any suspicious registrations.

15. Regarding the review of the RNR requirements, Mr Kevin Chu asked if the review would include waiving the requirement to obtain HKID copy for any registration via “iAM Smart” and whether the amendments would affect the registrations of SIM cards for the use by family members. The Chairman said that OFCA would take into account all the industry feedback in the review.

16. In response to Mr Ben Li’s enquiry about the handling

arrangements for PPS cards that were no longer in use, the Chairman advised that unused PPS cards should be deregistered, or would become unusable when expired. At the expiry of the PPS cards, the assigned numbers would only be re-assigned for other uses by the licensees concerned after a specific period of time.

Item 5 Voice Alerts for Calls Made by Newly Activated Local Pre-paid SIM Cards (TRAAC Paper No. 3/2025)

17. Mr Anson Chong briefed Members on the Voice Alerts for Calls Made by Newly Activated Local Pre-paid SIM Cards.

18. Mr Francis Fong enquired whether (a) the specified period for playing the Voice Alert after activation of PPS cards would be publicly announced; and (b) PPS cards with numbers ported from monthly service plans or those registered via “iAM Smart” could be exempted from playing the Voice Alert. The Chairman explained that the specified period would be kept undisclosed and no exemption would be provided so as to ensure the effectiveness of the measure. The specified period could also be suitably adjusted where necessary subject to implementation status. OFCA would review the implementation of the measure as appropriate and make adjustments where necessary.

19. Mr Michael Kan enquired about the reason for not including English in the Voice Alert. The Chairman replied that according to the information provided by the Police, the majority of victims of telephone scam cases in Hong Kong were Cantonese and Putonghua speakers. The reason for giving the Voice Alerts in Cantonese and Putonghua only was to strike a balance between raising public awareness on suspicious calls and reducing potential inconvenience caused to the call recipients due to Voice Alert.

20. Mr Kevin Chu asked whether it was possible to shorten the specified period for playing the Voice Alert at this stage. The Chairman stated that, subject to implementation status and crime statistics trend, OFCA would review the implementation as appropriate.

Item 6 Any Other Business

21. The Chairman advised that the next TRAAC meeting would tentatively be held in the second quarter of 2025. Members would be informed of the meeting arrangement nearer the time.

22. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

**Office of the Communications Authority
February 2025**