

Handover between Access Points for Public Wi-Fi Service

Telecommunications Regulatory Affairs Advisory Committee
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Public Wi-Fi Service: Existing Licensing Framework

- ✚ Class Licence for Provision of Public Wireless Local Area Network (“LAN”) Services (created in 2003)
 - Provision of public Wi-Fi service within private premises
 - The services must **not** be provided across unleased Government land or public streets
- ✚ Provision of public Wi-Fi service under Fixed Carrier Licence (“FCL”) / Fixed Telecommunications Network Service (“FTNS”) Licence (authorised in 2007)
 - Provision of services across unleased Government land and public streets is allowed
 - In line with the scope of public fixed telecommunications services, handover between access points (“APs”) is **not** allowed

Public Wi-Fi Service: Existing Licensing Framework (2)

- ✚ Provision of public Wi-Fi service under the Unified Carrier Licence (“UCL”) (since 2008)
 - Five fixed network operators (“FNOs”) authorised to provide public Wi-Fi service took up the UCLs in 2010 and 2015 upon expiry of their FCLs / FTNS Licences
 - All the terms in the FCLs / FTNS Licences regarding the provision of public Wi-Fi service were transplanted to the UCLs, including the restriction on handover between APs

Public Wi-Fi Service with Handover between APs

- ✚ Handover between APs has become technically feasible and is supported by new Wi-Fi equipment
- ✚ No regulatory concern to authorise handover between APs under the UCL
- ✚ It is timely to update the licensing arrangement to enable carrier licensees to provide public Wi-Fi service without handover restriction

The Updated Licensing Arrangement

✚ Schedule 1: Service authorisation

- Public Wi-Fi service with handover between APs is neither a full-fledged mobile service nor a conventional fixed service
- The service will be named as “***public wireless local area network (‘LAN’) services***” (same name as the Class Licence)

The Updated Licensing Arrangement (2)

- ✚ Schedule 3: Assignment of frequency spectrum
 - Spectrum to be assigned for provision of public wireless LAN services
 - 2400 – 2483.5 MHz
 - 5150 – 5350 MHz
 - 5470 – 5725 MHz
 - 5725 – 5850 MHz
 - Output and spurious emission levels to be specified as technical particulars (same as those specified in the Class Licence for Provision of Public Wireless LAN Services)
 - Shall not be used for provision of traditional mobile services (e.g. LTE-U)

The Updated Licensing Arrangement (3)

- ✚ Special Condition (“SC”) 37: Registration for public wireless LAN services
 - Register with the Communications Authority (“CA”) information about the locations of the APs and the frequency bands used

- ✚ Licence fee payable for customer connection
 - Each AP connected to the broadband access line = one customer connection
 - Multiple APs connected to the same broadband access line: each AP = one customer connection
 - Broadband access line: self-provided or leased

Licence Application

- ✚ All operators, including existing FNOs and mobile network operators, may apply for authorisation to provide the “public wireless LAN services” under UCL
- ✚ Existing FNOs authorised to provide public Wi-Fi service
 - May return their UCLs to the CA for amendments in order to provide public Wi-Fi service without handover restriction
- ✚ OFCA will amend UCL application guidelines to make clear the licensing arrangement

Thank You