

Subsidy Scheme to Extend 5G Coverage in Rural and Remote Areas

Telecommunications Users and
Consumers Advisory Committee

14 August 2025



Launch of Subsidy Scheme to Extend 5G Coverage in Rural and Remote Areas

- Hong Kong's 5G network coverage is among the highest in the world and has exceeded 99% of the population, covering major urban locations and all MTR lines
- Given the geographical span in rural and remote areas as well as the ruggedness of the terrain, mobile network coverage in some of these areas are not comparable to those in the urban areas
- After consultation and detailed planning, the Government launched in **July 2025** the **Subsidy Scheme to Extend 5G Coverage in Rural and Remote Areas** to expedite the expansion of mobile network infrastructure in rural and remote areas through subsidies, with a view to enhancing the mobile communications network coverage and quality of life in these areas, as well as safeguarding the safety of rural activities



Implementation Arrangements of the Subsidy Scheme (1)

(A) Implementation Department

- OFCA will assist the Government in handling and approving applications, monitoring installation progress of approved radio base stations (RBS), as well as coordinating mobile network operators and relevant Government departments



(B) Coverage and RBS Site Locations

- Subsidise the installation of about 50 new RBS at sites across 10 districts (North, Sai Kung, Tai Po, Sha Tin, Yuen Long, Tuen Mun, Tsuen Wan, Southern, Eastern and Islands Districts)
- Utilise existing government premises with basic power infrastructure and sufficient space for RBS installation to enable speedy completion of approved RBS for provision of services



(C) Amount of Subsidy

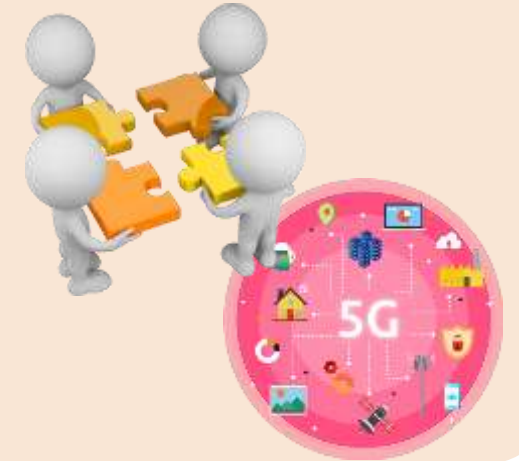
- Subsidy amount for each RBS project will be capped at HK\$2 million
- An additional subsidy of not more than HK\$2 million will be provided for RBS projects involving more complex works (i.e. a cap of HK\$4 million)
- Subsidy will be provided on a reimbursement basis, after vetting the actual expenditure incurred by mobile network operators (MNOs)



Implementation Arrangements of the Subsidy Scheme (2)

(D) Eligibility and Sharing of Facilities

- All licensed MNOs are eligible to submit application
- Should adhere to the “shared-use principle” by allowing other MNOs to install their mobile network facilities at the sites



(E) Technical Requirements

- 5G (or more advanced communications technologies) services
- A minimum average download speed of no less than 100Mbps
- After completion of RBS installation and commencement of services, need to submit necessary documentation to demonstrate provision of stable mobile communications services



Implementation Timetable and Expected Benefits

Implementation Timetable

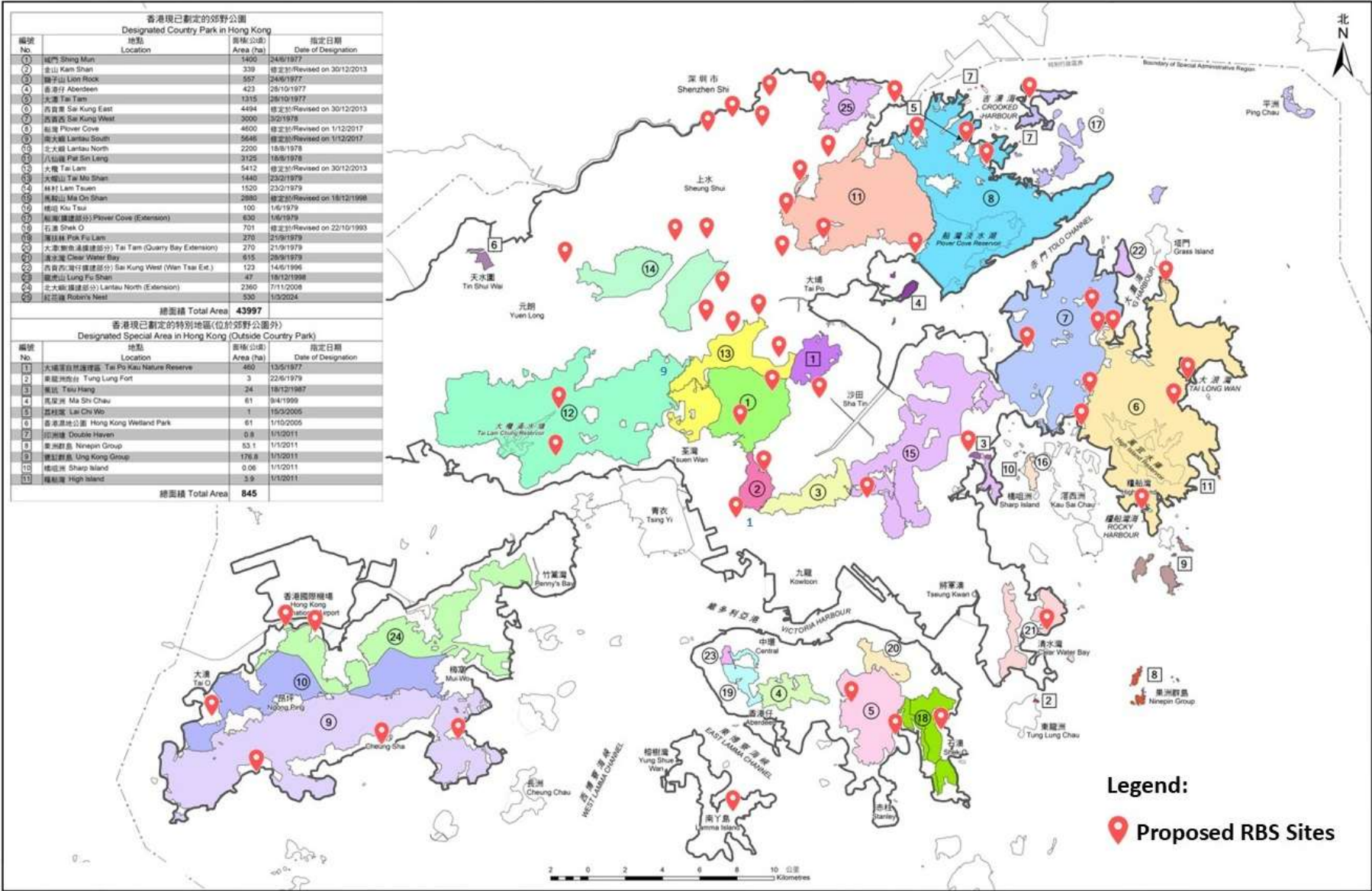
- Complete relevant RBS installation works and commence services within 12 months from the approval of OFCA
- Installation of about 50 RBS under the Scheme will be completed within four years after launch of the Scheme



Expected Benefits: Approximately 70 villages located in the vicinity of the RBS, involving about 20 000 villagers, will benefit from the enhancement concurrently, and there are about one million visitors to country parks per month on average



Geographical Distribution of Proposed RBS Sites under the Subsidy Scheme



Note: The final RBS sites will be subject to actual circumstances, including the actual applications by MNOs, the feasibility to perform the work at the time, etc.

Monitoring Mechanism

- The application guidelines have clearly set out the obligations of MNOs and the detailed application procedures
- MNOs are required to submit RBS construction work plan and schedule in their applications and sign an undertaking to comply with all relevant terms and conditions
- Upon approval of applications, MNOs are required to complete all works in accordance with the work plan and schedule. Subsidy will be disbursed after acceptance by OFCA



Way Forward

- Encourage MNOs to actively submit applications in accordance with the requirements stipulated in the application guidelines
- Assess the subsidy applications received
- Upon approval of relevant applications, monitor MNOs' commencement and completion of relevant RBS construction works
- Enhance access to higher-quality mobile network services for citizens, villagers and tourists in rural and remote areas as soon as possible



Latest Progress of Subsidy Scheme to Extend Fibre-based Networks to Villages in Remote Areas

Subsidy Scheme to Extend Fibre-based Networks to Villages in Remote Areas

Subsidy Scheme

- OFCA will continue to implement the scheme and monitor selected fixed network operators to extend fibre-based networks to 235 villages in nine districts in the New Territories and on outlying islands



Achievements

- Completed three submarine fibre cables connecting Lamma Island, Cheung Chau and Peng Chau in May 2023
- Completed rollout of fibre-based networks for more than 220 remote villages



Benefits

- Provide 1Gbps or above high-speed, stable broadband services, significantly improving the quality of life of villagers
- Enable provision of different types of high-speed and innovative mobile services including 5G services to the areas



Target

- Complete rollout of fibre-based network to all target villages by 2026



Thank you