

Office of the Communications Authority (OFCA)

Major Tasks and Projects for 2025-26

Major tasks and projects are categorised into “priority” and “normal” ones to indicate their relative importance.

I. Priority Tasks/Projects

(1) Support to Communications Authority (CA)

1. OFCA will continue to support CA to enable it to assume the full spectrum of its regulatory functions.

(2) Promoting the Development of the Fifth Generation (5G) or More Advanced Communication Technologies

2. Hong Kong’s 5G services were commercially launched in April 2020. Since then, rollout of 5G networks and take up of 5G services by consumers have continued to progress. As at December 2024, 5G coverage in Hong Kong has exceeded 99% of the population, covering core business districts, major locations in urban areas and all mass transit railway (MTR) lines.

(3) Ensuring Spectrum Supply

3. To support the sustainable development of mobile communications services and other innovative services in Hong Kong, the Government has all along strived to ensure adequate supply of spectrum. Having considered the development trend of 5G technology in the Mainland and other parts of the world, CA, during 2019 to September 2024, assigned a total of 3 330 MHz of spectrum in various bands (including 700 MHz, 3.3 GHz, 3.5 GHz, 4.9 GHz and 26/28 GHz bands) that can support the development of 5G communications services. At present, all mobile network operators (MNOs) have been assigned with sufficient amount of spectrum for provision of various 5G mobile communications services in the market to meet the demands of different users and economic activities.

4. The existing assignments of 20 MHz of spectrum in the 850/900 MHz bands and 90 MHz of spectrum in the 2.3 GHz band will expire in May 2026 and March 2027 respectively, and that for 50 MHz of spectrum in the 2.5/2.6 GHz band will expire in May 2028. To implement relevant measures as announced in the 2023 Policy Address, OFCA as the agent of the

Government conducted two auctions of spectrum in the 850/900 MHz and 2.3 GHz bands and the newly introduced 6/7 GHz band respectively in November 2024 to provide a total of 510 MHz¹ of spectrum for public mobile communications services. Among them, spectrum in the 6/7 GHz band can also support 6G development. Hong Kong is one of the first places in the world to make available the spectrum of the band for auction, and this will help promote market development and prepare in advance for the sixth generation mobile (6G) development. The re-assignment of the spectrum in the 850/900MHz and the 2.3 GHz bands will be arranged to new assignees upon expiry of the current assignment periods in 2026 and 2027 respectively. As for the 300 MHz spectrum in the 6/7 GHz band, it was assigned to assignees on 31 March 2025, with a validity period of 15 years. As announced in the 2024 Policy Address, the Government will continue to make available more suitable radio spectrum to the market in a timely manner to support wider and more advanced applications of communications technology (including 6G). As such, OFCA on behalf of the Government will conduct an auction of 50 MHz of spectrum in the 2.5/2.6 GHz band by the end 2025. Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (CEDB) and OFCA briefed the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting on the proposed arrangements for the 2.5/2.6 GHz band spectrum auction on 10 February 2025 and the Panel supported the proposal.

5. OFCA will continue to monitor technology and market developments as well as coordinate with the Mainland and neighbouring authorities, with a view to assisting CA in making available the relevant spectrum for the provision of public mobile services and other radiocommunications services while minimising interference. In addition, MNOs also have the flexibility to refarm the spectrum they currently hold in other frequency bands to provide various types of telecommunications services in Hong Kong.

6. Benefitting from the amendments to the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112), which came into effect in January 2024, MNOs can enjoy full tax deductions for Spectrum Utilization Fees (SUF) payable on radio spectrum acquired.

¹ The auction for the spectrum in the 850/900 MHz and 2.3 GHz bands was completed on 20 November 2024. 11 frequency blocks with a total of 110 MHz of spectrum were successfully acquired by four MNOs with a total amount of SUF at HK\$ 2,242,500,000. The auction for the spectrum in the 6/7 GHz band was completed on 29 November 2024 with a total of 300 MHz of spectrum in the band successfully acquired by three MNOs with a total amount of SUF at HK\$ 630,000,000.

(4) Facilitating Infrastructure Rollout

7. At present, MNOs have installed around 18 200 radio base stations (RBSs) across 18 districts in Hong Kong, including 33 RBSs situated in major country parks as well as rural/remote areas. According to OFCA's assessment, the overall mobile network coverage of country parks is around 80% and that along major government hiking trails is around 95%.

Rural and remote areas

8. In support of another policy initiative under the 2023 Policy Address, OFCA has formulated details of the Subsidy Scheme to Extend 5G Coverage in Rural and Remote Areas (Rural 5G Subsidy Scheme) to provide financial incentives for MNOs to establish mobile network infrastructure and facilities in rural and remote areas to improve the quality of life of the people and safeguard the safety of activities in rural and remote areas. CEDB and OFCA consulted the stakeholders including the industry and local community in 2024, and briefed LegCo Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting on 10 February 2025 on the proposed arrangements of the Rural 5G Subsidy Scheme. With relevant funding approved by LegCo, OFCA as the implementation agent of the Rural 5G Subsidy Scheme will launch the Subsidy Scheme as soon as possible within the 2025-26 fiscal year. OFCA will process applications from MNOs and closely monitor the implementation progress of MNOs to ensure that all relevant RBSs will be installed and put into service in phases within four years since the launch of the Rural 5G Subsidy Scheme.

9. In support of the Government's policy initiative, OFCA implemented a subsidy scheme with a funding of \$770 million to provide financial incentives for fixed network operators (FNOs) to extend their fibre-based networks to 235 villages in remote areas. Following the award of all six tender projects under the scheme between November 2019 and May 2020, the selected FNOs have commenced their construction works and are extending their fibre-based networks to the villages concerned in phases from 2021 onwards. As of February 2025, fibre-based networks have been extended to over 210 villages under the scheme, offering broadband services with speed from 200 Mbps up to 2 Gbps. The whole scheme will cover 235 villages in total, benefiting some 110 000 villagers. OFCA will continue to monitor the implementation for the six projects to be completed in phases by 2026. OFCA will also continue to assist the FNOs in their negotiations for shared use of the network facilities.

Major event venues

10. The 2023 Policy Address announced that the 5G network capacity at major public event venues will be enhanced. OFCA has worked with MNOs to facilitate installation of RBSs at respective venues. The 5G RBSs installations by MNOs in the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, the AsiaWorld-Expo, the Hong Kong City Hall and the vicinity of Victoria Park were completed in 2024 with the provision of 5G services. For Hong Kong Coliseum, all antenna installations are completed. RBSs activation is scheduled for late June 2025, while the construction of RBSs at the Central Harbourfront Event Space will commence in 2025. For Kai Tak Sports Park, the 5G mobile network installation works at the Main Stadium, Arena and Youth Sports Ground have been completed, providing full 5G network coverage for mobile users. Installations of additional RBSs in the vicinity of the Kai Tak Sports Park are also in progress to further enhance the network coverage and capacity of the main dispersal routes, and are expected to be completed and ready for service by phases. OFCA will continue to work with relevant government departments and site managers of the venues with a view to completing the works at these venues in a timely manner. OFCA will also facilitate MNOs in setting up temporary 5G RBSs at major event venues to meet the increased network capacity demand during major events where necessary.

New buildings

11. Following LegCo's passage of the Telecommunications (Amendment) Bill 2023 on 21 February 2024 to implement the 2022 Policy Address initiative of allowing access for MNOs to install mobile communications facilities in reserved space in specified buildings with building plans approved on or after 1 April 2025, CA promulgated the "Code of Practice for the Provision of Mobile Access Facilities in Specified Buildings for the Provision of Public Mobile Radiocommunications Services" in September 2024, which sets out the specific requirements for developers and MNOs regarding the installation of the mobile communications facilities in specified buildings by MNOs. New government buildings and public housing estates are following the same arrangement for installation of mobile communications facilities. CA granted authorisation to the four MNOs on the access to specified buildings on 26 March 2025. OFCA will also work closely with Buildings Department and other government departments to ensure their smooth implementation of the new statutory requirements.

Government venues

12. With the support of relevant Government departments, OFCA introduced a streamlined application procedure to facilitate MNOs in installing RBSs at suitable government premises in March 2019. Having considered MNOs' suggestions and taking into account the technical feasibility and location of different venues, the Government has opened up about 1 500 venues managed by different government departments across different regions of Hong Kong to allow MNOs to install RBSs with nominal rent (\$1 per year). OFCA will coordinate with participating MNOs, relevant Government departments and site managers of selected Government venues to ensure the smooth operation of the streamlined application procedure and to expedite the relevant installation work for enhancement of 5G service coverage. In tandem, OFCA will continue to facilitate MNOs in rolling out their mobile services by deployment of RBSs at the hill-top sites and government buildings in remote areas.

Bus stops and public payphone kiosks

13. OFCA will continue to facilitate the installation of RBSs at sheltered bus stops and public payphone kiosks by MNOs, and will reserve space and loading capacity at multi-functional smart lampposts in various districts for the installation of RBSs, with a view to facilitating a broader expansion of 5G network coverage.

(5) Protection of Underground Telecommunications Infrastructure

14. Pursuant to sections 18A and 22A of the Telecommunications Ordinance (TO), it is a criminal offence for any person who does not take reasonable steps and measures to protect or prevent damage to an underground telecommunications line when carrying out any underground work near the line. CA issued the guidelines on work near underground telecommunications lines to provide relevant stakeholders with practical guidance for compliance with the provisions. Since a working party shall, in accordance with the guidelines, appoint a competent person to conduct detection work for underground telecommunications lines, OFCA has engaged two training institutions to offer relevant training courses for practitioners to undertake in order to be qualified as competent persons. As of October 2024, more than 840 persons have attended the training courses and over 350 of them are registered as competent persons. Separately, from the commencement of the provisions until October 2024, there were seven successful prosecution cases where the defendants were convicted and fined by the courts. OFCA will continue to enforce the relevant provisions and the guidelines for enhancing protection of underground telecommunications

lines.

(6) External Telecommunications Facilities

Chung Hom Kok Teleport

15. Lands Department awarded by tender three land lots at Chung Hom Kok in March 2022, August 2022 and March 2023 for establishing external telecommunications facilities. The construction work of one of the land lots was completed in June 2024. OFCA will continue to work with relevant government departments and the operators to facilitate the development of the remaining land lots in Chung Hom Kok Teleport for external telecommunications infrastructure with a view to further enhancing the overall capacity and diversion capability of Hong Kong's external telecommunications network.

Submarine cables

16. Since 2010, OFCA has been offering a single point-of-contact service to assist operators in application for the necessary statutory approvals for landing new submarine cables in Hong Kong. The overall response of the industry is positive. Further to four regional and transcontinental submarine cable systems and two domestic submarine cable systems that had come into operation in Hong Kong since 2013, two new submarine cable systems and four domestic submarine cable systems have commenced operation since 2021. Eight new regional submarine cable systems are under planning or construction and will be put into service in Hong Kong between 2025 and 2029. OFCA will continue to provide the service to facilitate the landing of new submarine cables in Hong Kong.

(7) Review of the Use of Telephone Exchange Sites

17. The Chief Executive in Council (CE in C) decided in April 2019 in principle not to extend or renew the existing land grants for use as telephone exchanges and other telecommunications-related facilities upon expiry of their respective terms. For the 42 sites where land grants will expire in June 2025 (the Sites), OFCA has reviewed the representations submitted by relevant lessees in light of technical information and findings obtained from the consultancy studies as well as further information obtained from site inspections. OFCA will continue to provide technical advice to Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (SCED) and other bureaux/departments from telecommunications perspective to facilitate the Government's consideration of the arrangement of the Sites.

(8) Regulation of Telecommunications Services and Equipment

18. With the support of OFCA and other government departments, PCCW-HKT Telephone Limited and Hong Kong Telecommunications (HKT) Limited (HKT), the universal service provider (USP) which is responsible for providing public payphone service, commenced a trial of smart payphone kiosks (Smart Kiosks) in March 2023 to revitalise traditional kiosk-type public payphones. HKT installed two trial Smart Kiosks in Causeway Bay and Central in April and May 2023 respectively. Apart from public payphone and free Wi-Fi services, the Smart Kiosks also provide information services such as transportation and public facilities available in the vicinity, contact information of social welfare services, tips for caregivers, and news and weather information, as well as a USB charging port provided to the public free of charge. OFCA will continue to provide coordination support to HKT.

(9) Review of Licensing Arrangement for Low Earth Orbit (LEO) Satellites

19. The 2024 Policy Address and the 2025-26 Budget announced that the Government will conduct a study on streamlining the vetting procedures of licence applications for operating LEO satellites to enhance the attractiveness and competitiveness of Hong Kong in the global satellite communications market. CEDB and OFCA are conducting the review and aim to complete the relevant work this year.

20. In addition to our continued coordination with local, the Mainland and overseas satellite operators and administrations on satellite launching, coordination and interference matters, OFCA will continue to provide support to satellite operators in Hong Kong by attending satellite co-ordination meetings and issuing licences for the launching and operation of new or replacement satellites.

(10) Support on Development of Low-altitude Economy (LAE)

21. Under the 2024 Policy Address, the Government has established the Working Group on Developing LAE to formulate development strategies and inter-departmental action plans. As a member of the Working Group and its Task Force, OFCA is actively participating and contributing from the telecommunications perspective to support the development of LAE.

22. Among the various infrastructure facilities, public mobile network is an indispensable part for promoting low-altitude flying activities. To promote the effective use of spectrum and prevent interference among different services, CA takes into account multiple factors in planning

spectrum, including recommendations of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), development trends in the Mainland and worldwide, relevant users' demand for various radio equipment, technological development etc., for designating the uses of relevant spectrum bands, such as public mobile services, fixed services, broadcasting services and fixed satellite services. OFCA will continue to closely monitor telecommunications market developments in the Mainland and worldwide.

23. On conducting tests, OFCA will assist CA in issuing permits pursuant to section 7E of the TO for short-term assignment of frequencies in different frequency bands to MNOs and other interested parties free of charge, so that they can use their radio equipment for various radio transmission tests and applications, including unmanned aircrafts. OFCA will also support CA in respect of the creation of a new licensing regime for use of designated spectrum in the 1.4 GHz band by unmanned aircrafts.

(11) Tackling Fraudulent Calls and Messages

Implementing measures arising from joint collaboration with the trade and the Police

24. With a view to safeguarding the integrity of telecommunications services and the security of communications networks, OFCA has been adopting a multi-pronged approach in collaboration with the law enforcement agencies and telecommunications operators to combat fraudulent calls and messages. In view of the growing prevalence of telephone and SMS scam cases, OFCA took the lead to set up a working group with the Police and telecommunications operators to formulate a series of measures to tackle fraudulent calls and messages from the telecommunications perspective. Such measures include –

- (a) the implementation of voice/text alerts for incoming external calls with “+852” as calling line identity (CLI) prefix;
- (b) updating relevant guidelines to provide practical guidance to telecommunications operators to block external “+852” calls involving suspicious/spoofed CLI;
- (c) setting up a liaison protocol between the Police and telecommunications operators to facilitate suspension of telecommunications services of numbers being used in suspected deception cases and blocking of access to fraudulent websites based on the Police's information;
- (d) establishing the “SMS Sender Registration Scheme” to help members of the public identify the registered senders and their registered SMS sender IDs with the prefix “#”;
- (e) promulgating a code of practice to provide practical guidance to telecommunications operators in managing suspected scam calls made

- and scam SMS sent from local telecommunications networks and systems; and
- (f) the implementation of voice alert to called parties of new pre-paid Subscriber Identification Module (SIM) cards.

25. To promote self-vigilance among members of the public and enhance their awareness of the available measures against fraudulent calls and messages, OFCA issued a code of practice in October 2024 to provide practical guidance to telecommunications service providers for promulgating anti-scam messages to subscribers of public telecommunications services in Hong Kong through their publicity channels and means. OFCA will continue to collaborate with the Police and telecommunications operators to enhance publicity and public education through different channels, such as issue of press releases and consumer alerts, Announcements of Public Interest for both radio and television, exhibitions, community seminars and other consumer education programmes and activities.

Ensuring the effective implementation of the Real-name Registration (RNR) Programme for SIM Cards (RNR Programme)

26. With the full implementation of the RNR Programme on 24 February 2023, all SIM cards (including SIM service plans and pre-paid SIM cards (PPS cards) issued and used for local person-to-person communications (including voice, data and/or SMS services) shall comply with RNR requirements and complete registration of all relevant SIM cards before service activation. CA has issued guidelines to provide practical and administrative guidance to telecommunications service providers for implementation of the RNR Programme in compliance with the Telecommunications (Registration of SIM Cards) Regulation (Cap. 106AI). Starting from October 2024, completing RNR through the mobile application “iAM Smart” for pre-paid SIM cards became the default arrangement for Hong Kong identity card (HKID) holders or else manual inspection by telecommunications service providers should be done before service activation. For online registrations by non-HKID holders, licensees should conduct manual inspection of the RNR records. OFCA will continue to work with telecommunications service providers to enhance the registration platforms taking into account the operational experiences since the implementation of the RNR Programme, and to conduct regular sample checks on the registration information to safeguard the integrity of the registration records. To further enhance the RNR Programme, OFCA will support SCED in reviewing the overall operation of the RNR Programme, including the limit on the number of PPS cards, as well as prohibiting the resale of registered SIM cards, with a view to drawing up relevant legislative amendment proposals for consultation with the relevant LegCo Panel.

Regulation of unsolicited commercial electronic messages

27. The Unsolicited Electronic Messages Ordinance (UEMO) has been in operation since December 2007. OFCA will continue to maintain the Do-not-call Registers for fax, short message and pre-recorded telephone messages respectively for use by the general public, and for businesses/organisations as senders of commercial electronic messages. OFCA will continue to handle and investigate reports of suspected contravention of the UEMO and take appropriate actions following the technology neutral principle. OFCA will also provide support and advisory services to SCED on spam-related issues.

28. Besides, with a view to minimising the inconvenience that may be caused to the public by marketing calls, OFCA has encouraged seven industries including finance, insurance, telecommunications, call centres, beauty, estate agency and money lenders to implement the Enhanced Industry Regulatory Scheme for Marketing Calls. Trade associations of these industries have joined the scheme since June 2024 with the issue of their respective codes of practice with reference to the Benchmark Code formulated by OFCA. OFCA will continue to encourage trade associations in other industries to implement a similar arrangement for marketing calls.

29. In addition, to help the public differentiate calls from Government departments, OFCA has provided dedicated/special telephone numbers such as 1823, 18222, etc. for use by these departments. OFCA has also encouraged the telecommunications service providers to offer call filtering services to its users and uploaded onto OFCA's dedicated website tips on the use of call-filtering applications on smartphones.

30. OFCA will continue to liaise with local, the Mainland and overseas anti-spam organisations and enforcement agencies to facilitate cooperation in spam control and sharing of experience and intelligence of anti-spam issues.

Strengthening district anti-fraud promotion

31. OFCA invited all District Councillors and their offices' staff members in October 2024 to join a new scheme titled "District Anti-Phone Deception Ambassador Scheme" (the Scheme) so that Ambassadors could help relay anti-phone and SMS scams messages to the public through their daily work and contacts with residents in their districts. OFCA held the launch ceremony of the Scheme, with over 300 District Council members and staff members of their ward offices from all 18 districts in Hong Kong

appointed as Ambassadors in January 2025. OFCA will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the Scheme and collaborate with Ambassadors to further enhance public alertness against phone and SMS scams at the community level.

(12) Regulation of Broadcasting Services and Equipment

32. The domestic free television programme service (free TV) licences of HK Television Entertainment Company Limited, Television Broadcasts Limited and i-CABLE HOY Limited are due to expire in March 2027, November 2027 and May 2028 respectively, whereas the domestic pay television programme service (pay TV) licence of Now TV Limited is due to expire in September 2027. Under the Broadcasting Ordinance (BO), free TV and pay TV licensees are required to submit applications for licence renewal not less than 24 months before the date of expiry. In response to OFCA's invitation, three free TV licensees have submitted their renewal applications. OFCA will support CA in handling their applications and assessing their performance during the validity of the current licences, including conduct of a two-month public consultation between August and September 2025. CA's recommendation on renewal of free TV licences will be submitted to the CE in C in March 2026. Subject to the submission of the licence renewal application by the pay TV licensee in September 2025, OFCA will assist CA in reviewing the application and arranging the relevant public consultation with a view to submitting the recommendation to CE in C by September 2026.

33. The sound broadcasting licences of Hong Kong Commercial Broadcasting Company Limited and Metro Broadcast Corporation Limited are due to expire in August 2028. Under their licences, the licensees are required to submit applications for licence renewal not less than 24 months before the date of expiry. Subject to the receipt of their applications, OFCA will support CA in handling the application and assessing their performance during the validity of their current licences, including the public consultation exercises, with a view to submitting recommendations to the CE in C in relation to the renewal of the sound licences in 2027.

34. With the Government's policy support, OFCA has identified and assigned a number of FM frequencies to Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) since June 2022 for the provision of a new FM programme channel (i.e. Radio The Greater Bay) on a territory-wide coverage basis. All the FM frequency coordination work between OFCA and the Mainland authorities was successfully completed in November 2023. OFCA has assigned all the required FM frequencies to RTHK for territory-wide coverage of the new FM programme channel by the end of 2024.

(13) Protection of Critical Infrastructures (Computer Systems) Ordinance (CIO)

35. LegCo passed the Protection of Critical Infrastructures (Computer Systems) Bill on 19 March 2025. The Bill, put forward by the Security Bureau, aimed to implement the 2023 Policy Address initiative to legislate for cybersecurity of critical infrastructure, under which CA is being specified as the designated authority in enforcing sections 19 to 25 of the CIO for the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors. CA will be responsible for designating critical infrastructure operators and critical computer systems in the telecommunications and broadcasting sector, and monitoring the discharge of organisational and preventive obligations by the designated operators under the CIO. OFCA would work with the Security Bureau in supporting CA on the implementation arrangements.

II. Other Routine Tasks/Projects

(1) Regulation of Telecommunications Services and Equipment

36. OFCA will continue to provide support to CA in handling unified carrier licence (UCL) applications and licence administration matters.

Localised Wireless Broadband Service (LWBS) Licence

37. Currently, the LWBS Licence is issued to facilitate the entry of a wide range of service providers and the development of various innovative 5G services and applications for the assignment of the Shared Spectrum in the 26/28 GHz bands. The Shared Spectrum is intended to be assigned for use in different specified locations such as university campuses, industrial estates, the airport and technology parks on a geographically sharing basis, subject to the restriction that the total network coverage of each assignee shall not exceed 50 square kilometres. The first LWBS Licence was issued to the Airport Authority in October 2019 for implementation of the smart airport initiatives. In addition, the Localised Wireless Broadband System (Private) Licence (LWBS (Private) Licence), given that its scope of operation is limited to private use and is of a smaller scale with more light-handed regulation and a lower level of licence fee as compared with the LWBS Licence, is issued in order to facilitate the use of the Shared Spectrum for the establishment of 5G systems for private use by different entities in the community, including in particular the small and medium-sized enterprises, educational institutions, research and technology institutes. The first LWBS (Private) Licence was issued in July 2024 to accelerate the digital transformation process within the licensee's premises. OFCA will continue to adopt suitable licensing arrangement to encourage the wide and early adoption of 5G and other advanced wireless technologies for innovative applications.

38. In April 2022, CA created a new Class Licence for 6 GHz Device which allows new wireless local area network (WLAN) devices to operate in the 6 GHz band. CA also varied the existing Class Licence for Provision of Public Wireless Local Area Network Services to allow the use of the new 6 GHz devices for the provision of public WLAN services. Since then, such devices, commonly known as Wi-Fi 6E and Wi-Fi 7 devices, have been launched onto the local market. As at 31 December 2024, CA has issued 123 and 72 type approval certificates for Wi-Fi access points and Wi-Fi client devices operating in the 6 GHz band respectively. OFCA will continue to monitor the market development and ensure the effective operation of the new 6 GHz devices in Hong Kong.

39. Internet of Things enables the provision of communications platforms and services for interconnected devices to generate, exchange and consume data with minimal human intervention. Since the creation of the Wireless Internet of Things (WIoT) Licence by CA in December 2017 for the provision of WIoT platforms and services with minimal human intervention using the shared frequency band of 920 – 925 MHz, four WIoT licences have been issued. Moreover, MNOs may also provide WIoT services using the spectrum assigned to them under their UCLs. With the introduction of a new WIoT device fee component under the UCL and Services-based Operator (SBO) Licence effective from 31 January 2019 and 1 August 2020 respectively, any WIoT device operated under the UCL or SBO Licence is subject to a fee of \$2 for each WIoT device, which is on a par with the fee level under the WIoT Licence. OFCA will continue to support CA to facilitate the development of WIoT services in the 5G era.

Monitoring compliance with guidelines on mitigating risk of gas explosion in telecommunications manholes

40. FNOs with manholes installed in public streets are required to follow the guidelines issued in June 2010 and revised in July 2016 in conducting inspections and implementing mitigation measures against the risk of gas explosion on their manholes in public streets. OFCA will continue to monitor the implementation work of the operators in accordance with the requirements set out in the guidelines.

Review of licensing framework

41. CA reviewed and enhanced the licensing framework for SBO licensees in 2020, through extending the period of validity of the SBO licence from one year to two years to enhance regulatory certainty, streamlining the categories of services authorised under the SBO Licence, and adopting a new licence fee structure to ensure regulatory symmetry between the SBO Licence and other licences. The enhanced framework has taken effect since 1 August 2020. To facilitate the SBO licensees to renew their licences under the enhancing framework, an automated electronic platform was launched to enable the licensees to submit and update their business information online. OFCA will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the enhanced licensing framework for SBO.

42. The Class Licence for Offer of Telecommunications Services (CLOTS) regulates persons who offer telecommunications services to the general public without establishment of any means of telecommunications. Under the previous version of the “Guidelines for Administration of CLOTS” (CLOTS Guidelines), only CLOTS licensees with a customer base of 10 000

subscriptions or more were required to register their business information with CA. To tie in with the implementation of the RNR requirements for SIM cards, OFCA assisted CA in updating the CLOTS Guidelines to require all CLOTS licensees intending to offer SIM services during the course of business, irrespective of the size of their customer base, to register their information with CA before commencing the offer of SIM services. To facilitate CLOTS licensees to register with CA under the enhanced requirements, an automated electronic platform was launched to allow the licensees to submit and update their business information online. OFCA will continue to monitor developments in the market and ensure compliance by the industry with all the regulatory requirements under the revised CLOTS Guidelines for enhancing consumer protection.

43. Following the successful implementation of two-year validity period for SBO Licence in 2020, OFCA has implemented the same two-year validity period for Ship Station Licence, Broadcast Radio Relay Station Licence, Hotel Television (Transmission) Licence and Satellite Master Antenna Television Licence since March 2024, in order to provide the trades with greater certainty in business continuity and reduce the administrative burden for licence renewal. Following similar consideration, OFCA will extend the implementation to the other types of licences issued under the TO in 2025-26.

Labelling Scheme for Buildings with Optical Fibre Access

44. In November 2022, OFCA launched the Labelling Scheme for Buildings with Optical Fibre Access to promote the awareness of the public including building owners, building management offices and property developers on the merits of having optical fibre access in their buildings. As of 30 June 2025, 72 253 residential buildings were registered with the scheme, representing about 93.2% of the total number of permanent living quarters in Hong Kong. 6 974 non-residential buildings were also registered with the scheme. OFCA will continue to encourage participation of industry players.

Taking enforcement actions against illicit telecommunications activities

45. OFCA will continue to combat unauthorised telecommunications activities, including the sale, establishing, maintaining, possessing and/or using unauthorised telecommunications systems and devices, which are in breach of the TO, the relevant regulations and the conditions of the various telecommunications licences.

Digital Maps for Mobile Coverage of Hiking Trails in Country Parks

46. In order to provide hikers with the necessary information on mobile network coverage in country parks and the Hong Kong Geopark, OFCA has prepared 171 digital maps which show such coverage in those areas and posted them on OFCA's website for public information. OFCA will continue to update the maps when new RBSs are installed.

Numbering Plan

47. Since the implementation of the number fee framework in August 2008, as at 30 June 2024, a net amount of 8.17 million numbers had been returned by the operators. OFCA will continue to facilitate the operators' return of numbers and review the usage of the numbering resources in a timely manner to promote the effective and efficient use of telecommunications numbers and codes.

Monitoring universal service contributions and payphone kiosks

48. Telecommunications licensees holding telephone numbers for the provision of fixed and mobile telephone services are required to pay universal service contribution (USC) to the USP for the net cost of meeting the universal service obligation. The last review of the level of USC for the year 2023 was completed with the results approved by CA promulgated in December 2024. OFCA will continue to calculate the USC in a fair, reasonable and efficient manner, and promulgate the calculated USC levels on a regular basis.

Telecommunications infrastructure

49. Mandatory Type II Interconnection at exchange level and at buildings with more than one self-built customer access networks was withdrawn in full on 30 June 2008. OFCA will continue to monitor the network rollout of the alternative self-built customer access networks of FNOs.

50. OFCA has coordinated with the operators and liaised with the relevant Government departments and the Mainland authorities on the operators' proposals of utilising new cross-boundary infrastructures, such as the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) for installation of cross-boundary optical fibre cables to increase the capacity and enhance the diversity of their cross-boundary facilities. Some FNOs have commenced provision of cross-boundary telecommunications services via the optical fibre cables installed along HZMB since October 2020. OFCA will continue

to coordinate the matter with the relevant parties.

51. OFCA will continue to facilitate access to buildings by FNOs for installation of in-building fixed telecommunications facilities for the conveyance of telecommunications and broadcasting services.

Broadband Performance Test

52. The system which enables and facilitates end users of fixed and mobile broadband services to test the performance of their broadband services has been in operation since December 2010. As of 31 August 2024, an accumulated total of more than 125 million tests were performed with an average daily hit rate of 25 176. OFCA will continue to monitor the technology and market developments for provision of the test service.

Labelling Scheme for Buildings with 5G Indoor Coverage

53. A Labelling Scheme for Buildings with 5G Indoor Coverage was launched on 30 May 2024 to provide 5G indoor coverage information to members of the public. As of September 2024, the four MNOs have registered over 600 buildings, including residential, commercial and industrial buildings. OFCA will continue to regularly update the list of registered buildings with indoor 5G equipment installed.

Radiation Safety

54. On radiation safety of RBSs, OFCA will continue to vet the applications for installing RBSs in strict accordance with the non-ionising radiation safety standard recognised by the World Health Organization. OFCA will keep in view the international developments and best practice in this regard for continual enhancement of the process for approving RBSs installations in the local environment to safeguard public health whilst facilitating effective rollout of radiocommunications networks. OFCA will also continue to proactively conduct site visit at RBSs to measure radiation level and conduct radiation measurement in relevant premises in response to request of members of the public. Relevant publicity and education efforts will be stepped up to address the concern of the community over radiation emitted by the RBSs.

(2) Phasing out of Second Generation and Third Generation Mobile Services

55. While second generation mobile (2G) services are primarily using spectrum in the 900 MHz band and 1 800 MHz band, MNOs have

re-farmed part or all of the assigned frequency spectrum in these two bands to provide more advanced mobile services. With diminishing number of users of 2G services, MNOs will gradually scale down or cease their provision of 2G services. In this regard, CA granted prior consent to three MNOs to cease their provision of 2G services and the cessations were completed in September 2021, October 2022 and November 2024 respectively. In assessing the applications for the service cessation, CA took into account the need to protect consumer interests pursuant to the relevant Special Condition under the UCL.

56. With diminishing number of users of third generation mobile (3G) services, one MNO has applied for cessation of its 3G services and CA granted prior consent to its application after considering similar criteria adopted on cessation of 2G services. The cessation of service took effect in June 2025.

57. OFCA will keep monitoring the remaining MNOs for provision of 2G and 3G services and ensure that MNOs comply with their licence obligation in phasing out any generation of mobile services to safeguard consumer interest.

(3) Monitoring of Broadcasting Licensees and Their Services

58. OFCA will continue to monitor the performance of the broadcasting licensees and ensure their compliance with the relevant legislation and licence conditions. All broadcasting licensees are required to observe the relevant codes of practice issued by CA. OFCA will assist CA in reviewing and revising the codes of practice as necessary.

59. By virtue of the Charter of RTHK promulgated in August 2010, RTHK should also ensure that all its TV and radio services comply with the relevant codes of practice of CA. To ensure the compliance with the codes of practice by broadcasting licensees and RTHK, OFCA will continue to act on complaints lodged by the public in a rigorous and transparent manner.

60. Since the launch of Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) services in late 2007, a total of 29 transmitting stations have been constructed by the free TV licensees, bringing the overall DTT coverage to at least 99% of the population. OFCA will continue to work with the relevant free TV licensees to improve the reception in the few areas in Hong Kong where DTT reception problems are identified. In addition, to assist the public with their DTT reception, OFCA will continue to provide technical advice and conduct on-site investigations as necessary.

61. Following the switch-off of analogue television services on 30 November 2020, the DTT channels in the 600/700 MHz bands have been migrated to the 500 MHz band since 1 December 2021, thus making available spectrum in the 600/700 MHz bands for public mobile services. OFCA will continue to coordinate with the Mainland authorities on the use of DTT spectrum in Hong Kong and nearby areas in Guangdong.

62. OFCA will continue to regulate the technical performance of the licensed broadcasters and improve the reception of the existing sound broadcasting in the territory, especially in areas where reception is not satisfactory. In addition, to ensure service compatibility between the Mainland and Hong Kong, OFCA will continue to coordinate the use of FM frequencies with the Mainland authorities. Using the monitoring system upgraded in 2023, OFCA will continue to monitor licensed non-domestic television programme services and keep the public informed about the list of satellite television channels receivable in Hong Kong.

(4) Competition Affairs

63. CA is conferred concurrent jurisdiction with the Competition Commission (the Commission) to enforce the Competition Ordinance (CO) in respect of the conduct of undertakings in the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors. CA and the Commission have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to coordinate the performance of their functions on which they have concurrent jurisdiction under the CO. OFCA will continue to assist CA in enforcing the CO in the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors.

(5) Advisory and Support Services

64. OFCA will continue to provide support to the Government in overseeing the operation of the Emergency Alert System (EAS), which the Government engaged the MNOs to set up their network for dissemination of time-critical emergency messages to the public. The EAS, launched in November 2020, was established with government funding covering operation until mid-August 2025. To ensure continued operation of the EAS in the long run, a new Special Condition has been incorporated in the UCLs requiring MNOs to establish, maintain and operate the EAS at their own expenses. OFCA will assist relevant bureau/department in disseminating emergency messages via the EAS, and monitor MNOs' operation and maintenance of the EAS.

65. OFCA will continue to provide support to SCED and Trade and Industry Department (TID) on the implementation and further expansion of the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement

(CEPA) and the closer co-ordination with the Mainland authorities with respect to further liberalisation measures to facilitate the Hong Kong operators to extend their provision of telecommunications services on the Mainland.

66. OFCA will also continue to support SCED and TID in establishing free trade agreements with other economies with a view to facilitating market access and the provision of telecommunications services.

(6) Technical Standards

67. OFCA will continue to monitor the process and performance of Local Certifications Bodies in the provision of testing and certification services under the accreditation scheme administered by OFCA.

68. OFCA will continue to implement the Mutual Recognition Arrangement for conformity assessment of telecommunications equipment led by the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Telecommunications and Information Working Group.

69. OFCA will continue to monitor the radiation exposure limit of uncertified mobile phones supplied in the market. In 2024-25, OFCA commissioned a laboratory to conduct measurement of the Specific Absorption Rate for 5 models of uncertified mobile phones. The tests indicated that the Specific Absorption Rate values of all the 5 models of mobile phones were below the 2W/kg limit as recommended by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection.

(7) Corporate Affairs and Handling of Consumer Complaints

70. OFCA will continue to promote the smart use of communications services through the launch of the annual consumer education campaign, which offers various activities and programmes for promoting and enhancing public awareness against phone scams, such as conducting roadshows in collaboration with District Council Members and their ward offices' staff members, who have been appointed by OFCA as the District Anti-Phone Deception Ambassadors in mid-January 2025, community and school talks, exhibitions to be held at government venues, schools and tertiary institutions, short videos, etc. Consumer messages will also be publicised on different mass media channels, including OFCA's website, the "CommBo" Facebook Fan Page, Instagram and Weibo platforms, CA's YouTube channel and other online platforms, as well as through OFCA's joint efforts with various user groups and industry organisations.

71. On the handling of consumer complaints, OFCA will ensure that complaints involving possible contraventions of the provisions of the TO, the BO, the UEMO, the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO) and the CO or licence conditions are attended to promptly. For complaints which fall outside the scope of the legislative provisions and relevant licence conditions, OFCA will ensure that they will be promptly referred to the operators concerned.

72. To help the industry, the media and the public understand the new developments in the communications market and OFCA's new initiatives, OFCA will continue to organise industry and media activities as necessary for effective communication.

(8) Consumer Protection

73. To safeguard consumer interests in the use of telecommunications services, OFCA takes proactive actions to implement various consumer protection measures and work with the industry to draw up and implement self-regulatory mechanisms to address new consumer issues that may arise from time to time. These include the voluntary Customer Complaint Settlement Scheme (CCSS) administered by the Communications Association of Hong Kong, an industry association. The CCSS aims to help resolve billing disputes in deadlock between telecommunications service providers and their customers by means of mediation.

74. Other self-regulatory mechanisms voluntarily implemented by the industry include the promulgation of the Code for the Provision of Chargeable Mobile Content Services to govern the practices of third party content service providers, and the Code of Practice for Telecommunications Service Contracts to improve the clarity of provisions in the telecommunications service contracts. Mobile operators have also adopted a series of preventive measures promulgated by OFCA to tackle the problem of mobile bill shock. The measures implemented by individual mobile operators are published on OFCA's website.

75. In order to enhance transparency of the service level of the mobile broadband service market, mobile operators publish their performance pledges and the actual performance statistics of their mobile broadband services. The pledges and statistics are updated quarterly, and are available on the respective websites of the mobile operators and on our website via hyperlinks. Regarding service termination of residential broadband services, OFCA publishes and periodically updates on website details of the arrangements adopted by major residential broadband service providers to handle service termination requests from service subscribers.

76. CA has issued a voluntary Code of Practice in relation to Billing Information and Payment Collection for Telecommunications Services to enhance the transparency of the pricing of chargeable items in the provision of telecommunications services by local fixed and mobile operators. To provide guidance to fixed and mobile broadband service providers on how they may implement Fair Usage Policy, CA has promulgated a set of mandatory guidelines setting out the relevant guiding principles for compliance by service providers.

77. OFCA will continue to monitor the effectiveness of various regulatory guidance given to the industry on the provision of service to end customers, including the Code of Practice on the Cessation Arrangements for Mobile Virtual Network Operator Services which took effect in October 2017 and the Code of Practice on the Verification of the Addresses of Potential Customers for Mobile Telecommunications Services which was revised in November 2022.

78. OFCA will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the various consumer protection measures adopted, and engage the industry where necessary to seek further improvement of the existing measures or introduction of new measures. CA is conferred concurrent jurisdiction to enforce the fair trading sections of the TDO in respect of the commercial practices of the telecommunications and broadcasting licensees which are directly connected with the provision of a telecommunications or broadcasting service under the TO or the BO. For cases involving unfair trade practices, OFCA will take enforcement actions where warranted in accordance with the powers conferred on CA under the TDO.

(9) Human Resources Management

79. A Training and Development Committee has been established to oversee the implementation of OFCA's training and development policies to meet the training needs of staff and to strengthen arrangements for grooming officers with strong potentials. OFCA will continue to promote a learning culture in the office and provide training opportunities for staff at all levels to enhance their professional and managerial competencies, ensure healthy succession, and keep pace with the advent of new technologies. OFCA will also arrange local/overseas leadership and management programmes as well as training on national policies and development of the Mainland, and explore opportunities for staff attachment to policy bureaux, overseas regulatory authorities and relevant authorities in the Mainland to broaden the horizons of staff and prepare them for greater challenges.

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