

Provision of Wi-Fi Facilities at Government Premises

(a) Information on the mechanism and measures to assess the cost-effectiveness of the proposed Wi-Fi Programme

For cost-effectiveness, we will provide Wi-Fi facilities at premises with high public patronage. We will make reference to the number of visitors to respective premises in determining the premises to be included in the Wi-Fi Programme. With our current estimates, we will provide Wi-Fi facilities at about 350 sites, with expected users of about 21,000 per day after the full rollout.

To assess and ensure cost effectiveness, we will require the contractors to keep statistics on the usage of Wi-Fi services at respective premises, perform annual review on service requirements after service rollout, and adjust the bandwidth arrangement of individual sites on need basis.

(b) The Administration's response to Members' concerns on the Government's competition with commercial service providers for profit, unfair competition and issue relating to the Class Licence regime under Telecommunications Ordinance (Cap 106)

The Government will be adopting a user role in this Programme but not the role of a carrier or service provider to the extent of competing with the commercial service providers. The choice of Wi-Fi standards and technologies for the Programme is the result of an extensive and careful study of international and industry developments. The adoption of Wi-Fi technologies does not constitute any form of subsidy to any operator or service provider.

Under the Telecommunications Ordinance, a person who is registered with the Telecommunications Authority in accordance with the Class Licence (i.e. a class licencee) can provide public wireless Local Area Network (LAN) services within the pre-defined frequency bands. The scope of wireless LAN services is subject to the condition that the services must not be provided across unleased Government land or public streets. If the services are provided across unleased Government land or public streets, a Fixed Carrier Licence is required.

In the proposed Wi-Fi Programme, we will acquire services through open tendering and require the service providers and operators concerned to comply with the relevant requirements of the law for implementing the programme. We will set out clearly the requirements in the tender document that the eventual contractor(s) must possess the necessary licences, where applicable, that enable them to provide the Wi-Fi services at the required government venues.