

Executive Summary

Consultation on Licensing Framework For Deployment of Broadband Wireless Access

The development of broadband wireless access (BWA) technologies for fixed telecommunications services has attracted substantial interest lately. There are technical trials and commercial deployments of BWA in the Mainland of China and some developed countries. In Hong Kong, there has been increasing interest expressed by network operators to deploy BWA in the local market.

2. The consultation paper discusses the various issues concerning the introduction of BWA services and consults the industry and interested parties on these issues prior to establishment of the regulatory framework for BWA services in Hong Kong.

3. BWA provides a possible alternative to the conventional wireline technologies (including digital subscriber line (DSL), fibre-to-the-building, cable modem and metro Ethernet) that an operator of Fixed Telecommunications Network Services may consider adopting for speedy rollout of a broadband network.

4. In the consultation, the TA proposes to allocate the 3.4 – 3.6 GHz frequency band gradually to BWA on a primary basis, depending on the actual requirement of BWA. Fixed Satellite Services may still be used in this band on a secondary basis, or in a 600 MHz band outside the 3.4 – 3.6 GHz band on a primary basis.

5. There are different industry standards for BWA, such as UMTS TDD, ETSI HiperMAN or IEEE 802.16 as advocated by the WiMAX Forum. Consistent with the technology neutrality principle, the TA does not intend to mandate the technology to be used in the delivery of BWA services in Hong Kong.

6. The TA is of the preliminary view that BWA in Hong Kong may initially be offered as a wireless extension of the conventional wireline based fixed network service. Under this proposal, the licensing of BWA services would therefore fall within the fixed carrier licensing regime. The TA is of the preliminary view that auction should be adopted for assigning the spectrum.

7. Any views expressed in this consultation are preliminary views of the TA only for consultation and do not represent the final position or decision of the TA on the issues. All submissions of comments should be sent by 21 February 2005 preferably in electronic format to BWA@ofta.gov.hk of OFTA. Any person who submits views and comments should also provide the supporting information or justifications and note that the TA may publish all or any part of the submission received and disclose the identity of the source in such a manner as the TA sees fit. Any part of the submission which is considered commercially confidential should be clearly marked. The TA would take such markings into account in making his decision as to whether or not to disclose such information. Submissions in hardcopy, if any, should be addressed to:

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[Attention: Senior Telecommunications Engineer
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Office of the Telecommunications Authority
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