

## Telecommunications - Taiwan

### NCC to appoint universal data service providers annually

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On February 11 2010 the National Communications Commission (NCC) announced an amendment to Article 13 of the Regulations on Telecommunications Universal Service, providing that the NCC may, by March 1 of the year before the year of implementation, appoint the incumbent operators or other Type I telecommunications operators to offer universal data services to specified remote villages. In response to such announcements, the appointees must adopt the universal plan and financial requests for the following year and submit this plan to the NCC for review.

In the previous three years (ie, before the regulations were amended), the NCC appointed several incumbent operators to provide universal data services or broadband services:

- In 2007 the commission completed its project to provide universal data service to 46 specific remote villages (for further details please see "[NCC completes broadband project in remote villages ahead of time](#)").
- In 2008 it completed its project to provide universal broadband services to 50 villages in remote areas and on islands (for further details please see "[Three companies appointed to provide universal data services](#)").
- In 2009 the commission completed a project to provide universal broadband services to 55 remote villages.

Pursuant to the new rule, on February 12 2010 the NCC announced its implementation plan for universal data services for 2011. The appointees – Chunghwa Telecom and Central Taiwan Cable Company – may offer broadband services by constructing 10 sites covering 24 remote villages. Given that the new rules do not cover implementation for 2010, the amendment creates the proviso that the NCC may directly appoint Type I telecommunications operators to implement the universal data services for specific villages in 2010. On February 23 2010 the NCC appointed Chunghwa Telecom and Taiwan Fixed Network Corp as the universal service providers to offer broadband services in 11 remote villages.

In July 2009 the NCC clarified the definition and scope of the term 'remote areas'. The term refers to any township or city with a population density below one-fifth of the national average and to outlying islands which are more than 7.5 kilometres from county or municipal government offices. According to Department of House Registration statistics, the overall population density of Taiwan is 637 persons per square kilometre. Thus, any areas with a population density below 127.4 persons per square kilometre are defined as 'remote'. As such, there are 81 remote areas in 64 townships.

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