

Telecommunications - Taiwan

NCC allows WiMAX operators to upgrade to LTE technology

Contributed by [Shay & Partners](#)

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The National Communications Commission (NCC) has reacted positively to the news that Taiwan's incumbent Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access (WiMAX) operators intend to convert to Long Term Evolution (LTE) technology, which is considered to be a fourth-generation (4G) mobile technology. According to the NCC, fourth-generation licensing will take place in 2014 at the earliest, while 4G technology will not be prevalent in Taiwan until 2017. However, no decisions have yet been made with regard to spectrum planning or the number of 4G licences that will be awarded.

NCC spokesperson Ta-Sung Lee indicated that four broadband operators – Global Mobile, Tatung Telecom, FareasTone Telecom and VMAX – were awarded technology-neutral licences. The NCC has indicated that the four operators may apply to alter their operational plans in order to adopt different mobile technologies – including LTE – without infringing any requirement or consumer right. The other two wireless broadband operators – FITEL and Vee TIME – have promised to develop their WiMAX technology.

Thus, for the first time, the NCC has taken a clear position regarding the issue of conversion from WiMAX to LTE. The current WiMAX operators are retaining the option to upgrade to LTE, depending on the direction that the market takes. However, controversy remains around the world regarding the 4G technology specifications and spectrum planning, and many operators and vendors are struggling to take a position on the issue.

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