

NCC publishes 5G spectrum auction rules

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In June 2019 the National Communications Commission (NCC) published the final draft of its 5G spectrum auction rules. As part of the upcoming 5G spectrum auction, the NCC aims to publish an amendment to the existing Regulations for Administration of Mobile Broadband Businesses by the end of August 2019 and accept bids in September 2019. The auction for mobile broadband business licences operating in the following bands will commence in December 2019:

- 3.5GHz band (270MHz);
- 28GHz band (2,500MHz); and
- 1,800MHz band (20MHz).

The auction will be processed in two stages. In the first stage, bidders will be awarded frequencies of up to 100MHz each for the 3.5GHz band and 800MHz each for the 28GHz band by simultaneous multiple-round ascending auction. Awarded bidders will then continue to bid for respective frequency band slots. The winner of each frequency slot in the 3.5GHz band will have to install a minimum of 1,000 5G base stations within five years, covering at least 50% of Taiwan's population. In other words, a wide penetration across all six metropolitan areas in Taiwan will be expected. The winner of each frequency slot in the 28GHz band will have to install a minimum of 375 and a maximum of 3,000 5G base stations in Taiwan.

The licence term for 5G service operations in the 3.5GHz and 28GHz bands is 20 years (ie, the end of 2040), while equivalent licences in the 20MHz and 1,800MHz bands will expire at the end of 2030.

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