

## CHAPTER

# 6 Review of the Communications Authority's Major Tasks



## BROADCASTING

### 6.1 Broadcasting Service Survey

With the support of OFCA, the Authority commissioned an independent survey firm to conduct a survey on broadcasting services in 2024. The purpose of the survey was to track changes in public viewing and listening habits and gather opinions on broadcasting services. It covered the services provided by free TV, pay TV and sound broadcasting licensees. The survey findings were released in February 2025.



The survey findings revealed that 89.5% of the respondents had watched free TV programmes and 38.8% had listened to radio programmes in the month prior to the survey. On average, they spent 2.6 hours per day watching free TV programmes and 2.2 hours per day listening to radio programmes. The findings also indicated that respondents were generally satisfied with the variety of programmes offered by licensed broadcasters.

The information and statistics obtained from the survey will serve as a valuable reference for the Authority in processing licence renewal applications from major TV and sound broadcasting licensees whose licences are due to expire in 2027 and 2028.

### 6.2 Preparation for Renewal of Domestic Free Television Programme Service Licences

The free TV licences of HKTVE, TVB and i-CABLE HOY are due to expire in March 2027, November 2027 and May 2028 respectively. Under the BO, free TV licensees are required to submit licence renewal applications at least 24 months before their licence expiry.

Upon receipt of the licence renewal applications, the Authority will initiate the review process. The Authority will also conduct a consolidated consultation for the three free TV licensees in the third quarter of 2025. The consultation will include public opinion survey, televised online public hearing, focus group discussions. The Authority will review the past performance and future commitments of the licensees, as well as the views of the industry and the public, with the aim of submitting recommendations to CE in C on the licence renewal applications by March 2026.

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## 6.3 Non-Domestic and Other Licensable TV Licences



During the period under review, the Authority processed two applications for renewal of non-domestic TV licences by One TV Media Global Limited and Sun Television Cybernetworks Enterprise Limited. The Authority also approved the application for renewal of one other licensable TV licence for the provision of television programme services provided in hotel rooms in Hong Kong by Greenroll Limited.

## 6.4 Processing Complaints Relating to Broadcasting Services

## Overview of the Complaints Processed

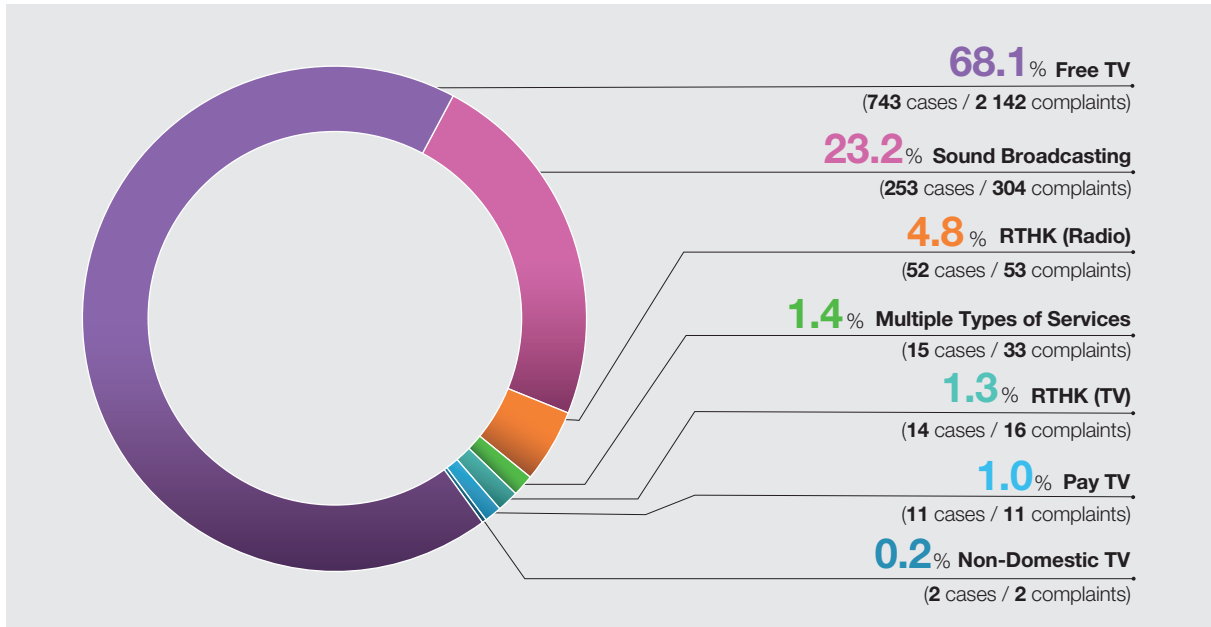
During the period from April 2024 to March 2025, the Authority handled 1 090 cases (involving 2 561 complaints)<sup>15</sup> relating to materials broadcast by broadcasters, which represented a significant decrease of 38.9% in the number of cases and 68.8% in the number of complaints processed<sup>16</sup>, as compared with the figures during the same period in the previous year (1 783 cases, involving 8 216 complaints). Breakdown of all the complaint cases by broadcasting service and broadcaster processed during the period is shown in **Figure 14** and **Figure 15** respectively.



<sup>15</sup> To ensure operational efficiency, complaints with similar allegations relating to the same issue or broadcast material are grouped together for handling and counted as a single case.

<sup>16</sup> The significant decrease in the number of complaints was mainly due to the fact that there was a case involving over 4 600 complaints in 2023/24.

**Figure 14:** Distribution of All Complaint Cases by Broadcasting Service Processed in 2024/25



**Figure 15:** Distribution of All Complaint Cases by Broadcaster Processed in 2024/25

Broadcasters Involved	No. of Complaint Cases	No. of Complaints Involved
TVB	627	1 777
HKTVE	52	284
i-CABLE HOY	53	57
Now TV	11	11
CRHK	189	231
Metro	63	72
RTHK (TV)	14	16
RTHK (Radio)	52	53
Phoenix Satellite Television Company Limited (Phoenix Satellite TV)	2	2
Multiple Broadcasters	27	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 090</b>	<b>2 561</b>

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Among all the complaint cases processed by the Authority, 1 085 cases (involving 1 809 complaints) were handled by DG Com under the Authority's delegated authority. These complaints relate to breaches of a minor nature, or allegations which did not constitute any breach or fell outside the remit of section 11(1) of the B(MP)O (i.e. the substance of the complaints did not involve contravention of relevant legislation, licence conditions or provisions in the CoPs). The Authority dealt with five cases (involving 752 complaints). Outcomes of all the complaints processed by the Authority during this period are listed in **Figure 16**.



**Figure 16:** Outcomes of All Complaint Cases Dealt with by the Authority and DG Com

	Within Section 11(1) of B(MP)O				Outside Section 11(1) of B(MP)O	Total
	Substantiated		Unsubstantiated			
	The Authority	DG Com	The Authority	DG Com		
No. of Cases	3	47	2	827	211	1 090
No. of Complaints	170	51	582	1 493	265	2 561

### Complaint Cases Dealt with by the Authority

Among the five complaint cases dealt with by the Authority, four concerned free TV services. A breakdown of these complaint cases by broadcasting service is shown in **Figure 17**.

**Figure 17:** Breakdown of Complaint Cases Dealt with by the Authority by Broadcasting Service

Types of Broadcasting Service	No. of Complaint Cases	No. of Complaints Involved
Free TV	4	751
Non-domestic TV	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>752</b>



Regarding the nature of broadcast materials involved in the five complaint cases dealt with by the Authority, three of them were related to programmes, one concerned programme promotions and the remaining one was related to an advertisement. Three of them were substantiated, among which one was related to fairness and right of reply in factual programme; one concerned sales promotion in advertisement for medical preparation; and the remaining one was related to unnerving and horrifying contents. The Authority issued one warning and two pieces of advice to the broadcasters concerned. A breakdown of the decisions of the Authority on the complaints dealt with in 2024/25 is shown in **Figure 18**.

**Figure 18: Decision of the Authority on Complaint Cases in 2024/25**

Decision of the Authority	Broadcasters Involved		Total
	TVB	Phoenix Satellite TV	
No Further Action	1	1	2
Advice	2	0	2
Strong Advice	0	0	0
Warning	1	0	1
Serious Warning	0	0	0
Financial Penalty	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>

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## TELECOMMUNICATIONS

**6.5 Making Spectrum Available in Multiple Frequency Bands for 5G and More Advanced Telecommunications Services**

As at March 2025, the Authority had assigned a total of 3 630 MHz of radio spectrum in various low, mid and high frequency bands, namely 700 MHz, 3.3 GHz, 3.5 GHz, 4.9 GHz, 6/7 GHz and 26/28 GHz for public mobile telecommunications use, including the provision of 5G services. Separately, 400 MHz of shared spectrum in the 26/28 GHz bands were also available for assignment to other parties for use on a sharing basis for the provision of local wireless broadband services in support of innovative 5G applications. MNOs launched their commercial 5G services in Hong Kong starting from April 2020. At present, 5G coverage in Hong Kong has exceeded 99%, covering all populated districts, major shopping malls and MTR stations. With the sustained enhancement of 5G services and the growing availability of 5G equipment and consumer products, 5G services are revolutionising mobile users' experience with excellent technical capabilities of high speed, high capacity, high reliability, massive connectivity and low latency communications. 5G technology is widely expected to continue to open up vast potential for various commercial and smart city applications.

**Making Available Additional Spectrum to Meet Market Demand**

Taking into account the outcomes of the World Radiocommunication Conference of the International Telecommunication Union held in end 2023 that the 6 425 – 7 125 MHz band has been identified for International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT) in Region 1 (Europe and Africa) and some countries in Region 2 (Americas) and Region 3 (Asia and Oceania) and the announcement of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology of Chinese Mainland that the whole or part of the 6 425 – 7 125 MHz band has been identified for IMT, the Authority had relocated all the relevant users of fixed links and outside broadcasting links operating in the 6 570 – 6 770 MHz and 6 925 – 7 125 MHz bands to other frequency bands in December 2024, made available 415 MHz of spectrum for public mobile services.

In addition, the Authority will closely monitor the development of new frequency bands for various radiocommunications services, including mobile services, arising from the deliberations of the international/regional standardisation bodies. Taking note of market developments, the Authority will continue to implement measures to support the development of 5G or more advanced mobile communications services such as Sixth Generation (6G), including liaison with the industry to understand their views and requirements, and the timely supply of suitable radio spectrum to the industry.



### **Completion of Re-assignment of Frequency Spectrum in the 850/900 MHz and 2.3 GHz Bands**

The current assignments of 20 MHz of spectrum in the 850/900 MHz band and 90 MHz of spectrum in the 2.3 GHz band are set to expire in May 2026 and March 2027 respectively. The relevant spectrum will be used for public mobile services. Pursuant to the spectrum auction conducted in November 2024, the re-assignment of spectrum in the 850/900 MHz and 2.3 GHz bands will take effect in June 2026 and March 2027 respectively.

### **Completion for Assignment of Frequency Spectrum in the 6/7 GHz Band**

The spectrum in the 6/7 GHz band is the largest remaining single block of mid-band spectrum for the provision of public mobile services. The Authority conducted an auction in November 2024 and assigned 300 MHz of spectrum in the band to three MNOs on 31 March 2025, making Hong Kong being the first in the world to assign spectrum in the 6/7 GHz band. The move enables Hong Kong to get ahead of 6G preparation and encourages innovation and technological advancement, laying a solid foundation for future 6G development in Hong Kong.

### **Preparing for Re-assignment of Frequency Spectrum in the 2.5/2.6 GHz Band**

As announced in the 2024 Policy Address, the Government will continue to make available more suitable radio spectrum to the market in a timely manner to support a wider and more advanced applications of communications technology (including 6G). The current assignments



of the remaining 50 MHz of spectrum in the 2.5/2.6 GHz band will expire in May 2028. The Authority and SCED conducted a joint public consultation in September 2024 on the re-assignment arrangements as well as the related spectrum utilization fees. The Authority will conduct an auction in the fourth quarter of 2025 and re-assign the spectrum in May 2028.



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**6.6 Ensuring Availability of Space in and Access to New Buildings for Installation of Mobile Communications Facilities**

Under the amended section 14 of the TO, which took effect on 1 October 2024 pursuant to the enactment of the Telecommunications (Amendment) Ordinance 2024, MNOs authorised by the Authority can access reserved space in specified buildings (including new and redeveloped commercial, industrial, residential and hotel buildings) with building plans approved on or after 1 April 2025, to install and maintain mobile communications facilities without paying a fee to the land owners concerned. In addition, new government buildings and public housing will also follow suit. The arrangement will help further expand the mobile network coverage and capacity in Hong Kong.

To implement the above legislative amendments, the Authority with OFCA's assistance promulgated the "Code of Practice for the Provision of Mobile Access Facilities in Specified Buildings for the Provision of Public Mobile Radiocommunications Services" in September 2024, which sets out the specific requirements for developers and MNOs regarding the installation of mobile communications facilities in specified buildings.

OFCA will continue to support the Authority in administering the authorisation to MNOs under the amended section 14 of the TO. OFCA will also work closely with the Buildings Department and other relevant government departments to ensure unified implementation of the new arrangement.



## 6.7 Facilitating the Rollout of 5G Networks

Owing to the characteristics of 5G, more radio base stations (RBSs) are required to be installed to provide comprehensive coverage. To facilitate the expedient and effective rollout of the 5G network, the Authority supported the Government in introducing a set of streamlined application procedure that open up more than 1 500 suitable government premises for MNOs to install RBSs at a nominal rental of HK\$1 per year.

OFCA has also been working closely with the industry to facilitate MNOs' installation of RBSs at sheltered bus stops and public payphone kiosks. To facilitate MNOs' access to these facilities, the Authority issued the "Guidelines on the Use of Public Payphone Kiosks for the Installation of Radio Base Stations for Provision of Public Mobile Services" and the "Guidelines on the Use of Sheltered Bus Stops for the Installation of Radio Base Stations for Provision of Public Mobile Services" in April and November 2020, respectively. As at March 2025, 15 applications for installation of RBS at sheltered bus stops and one application for installation at public payphone kiosks were approved. Moreover, the Government will reserve available space and loading capacity at multi-functional smart lampposts in various districts for RBS installation to further expand the 5G network coverage. OFCA will continue to work with the industry and relevant government departments in identifying suitable public facilities for RBS installation and facilitating technical trials.



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**Review of the Communications Authority's Major Tasks****6.8 Coordination with Relevant Organisations to Enhance 5G Network Capacity at Major Public Event Venues**

The 2023 Policy Address announced that the Government would proactively coordinate with relevant organisations to enhance 5G network capacity at major public event venues. To implement this initiative, Commerce and Economic Development Bureau and OFCA have been actively coordinating with MNOs, relevant venue managers and government departments to streamline the approval and installation procedures to facilitate prompt installation of 5G RBSs by MNOs at these venues, enhancing their 5G network capacity and ensuring smoother connectivity for users participating in large-scale events venues.

As at March 2025, additional RBSs were installed to enhance 5G coverage and network capacity in major public event venues, including the Central Harbourfront Event Space, Hong Kong Coliseum, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, AsiaWorld-Expo, Victoria Park and Kai Tak Sports Park. OFCA will continue to coordinate with relevant organisations to enhance mobile communications facilities at major event venues to ensure that the public and event participants can enjoy quality communications services and to provide high-level telecommunications infrastructure that reinforces Hong Kong's position as an international hub for mega events.

**6.9 Facilitating the Landing of New Submarine Cable Systems in Hong Kong**

Since the liberalisation of external facilities-based telecommunications market on 1 January 2000, Hong Kong has been adopting an open licensing regime i.e. there is no limit on the number of external fixed licences that the Authority will issue. Moreover, Hong Kong does not impose any foreign ownership restriction on the licensees.

As at March 2025, Hong Kong has 11 submarine cable systems, namely, AAE-1, AAG, ADC, APCN-2, APG, ASE, EAC – C2C, FNAL/RNAL, H2HE, SJC and TGN-IA.

OFCA has been facilitating operators in obtaining statutory approvals for the laying and landing of new submarine cable systems in Hong Kong from relevant government departments. With the support of OFCA's single-point-of-contact service, several new regional and transcontinental submarine cable systems are under construction and are scheduled to be put into service gradually between 2025 and 2029.

## **6.10 Implementation and Review of Real-name Registration Programme for SIM Cards**

Pursuant to the Telecommunications (Registration of SIM Cards) Regulation (Cap. 106AI) (Registration Regulation), the Real-name Registration Programme for SIM Cards (RNR Programme) has been fully implemented since 24 February 2023, requiring that all SIM cards issued and used locally (including SIM service plans and pre-paid SIM (PPS) cards) must complete real-name registration before service activation. The Authority has issued the “Guidelines on Implementation of Real-name Registration for SIM Cards” (RNR Guidelines) to provide guidance and detailed requirements of the RNR Programme to telecommunications service providers (TSPs).

Since the full implementation of the RNR Programme, OFCA has carried out ongoing monitoring and enforcement actions to ensure that TSPs and other relevant parties comply with the requirements of the Registration Regulation and the RNR Guidelines. OFCA has worked with TSPs, reminding them to enhance their registration platforms and strengthen the inspection of registration records. Among others, they have adopted “iAM Smart” as the default registration method for Hong Kong identity card (HKID) holders in completing real-name registration of PPS cards starting from 1 October 2024. For PPS cards with registration made by non-HKID holders via the online registration platform, TSPs will first verify the identity document with their systems before activating relevant PPS cards, followed by manual checking to verify the authenticity of the identification documents of the registered users. If any PPS cards are found to be non-compliant with the regulatory requirements (e.g. suspected use of forged documents for registration), such registration will be cancelled.

To ensure the proper implementation of the RNR Programme, the Authority will, with the support from OFCA, continue to work with TSPs to conduct sample checks on registration information to safeguard the integrity of the registration records. OFCA will continue enforcement and monitoring actions, including verification of TSPs’ registration platforms, ad hoc market surveillances, and inspection of registration records. Ongoing publicity efforts will also be arranged to raise public awareness of the requirements of the RNR Programme.

The Government is reviewing the effectiveness of the RNR Programme and will consider enhancement initiatives taking into account operational experience and latest deception trends.



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## 6.11 Tackling Fraudulent Calls and Messages

The Authority, with the support of OFCA, has been working closely with the telecommunications industry and the Hong Kong Police Force (Police) to devise and implement various technical measures against fraudulent calls and messages delivered through telecommunications networks. In September 2022, OFCA, the Police and the telecommunications industry jointly established a Working Group on Tackling Fraudulent Calls and Messages by the Telecommunications Industry (Working Group) to take forward concerted efforts in combating fraudulent calls and messages from the telecommunications perspective.

The Working Group has introduced a number of measures since the fourth quarter of 2022, including (a) sending voice or text alert for calls with caller number prefixed with “+852” to alert mobile service users that the calls are originated from outside Hong Kong; (b) blocking transmission or delivery of calls bearing suspicious or spoofed caller identity; (c) blocking access to suspicious websites and suspending telecommunications services of local phone numbers involved in scam cases based on information provided by the Police; (d) establishing the “SMS Sender Registration Scheme” to help members of the public identify the registered senders and their registered SMS sender IDs with the prefix “#”; (e) promulgating a code of practice to provide practical guidance to telecommunications operators in managing suspected scam calls made and scam SMS sent from local telecommunications networks and systems; and (f) the implementation of voice alert to called parties of calls made from newly activated PPS cards. As at March 2025, over 30.0 million “+852” voice or text alerts were issued by mobile service providers; over 5.2 million suspicious calls prefixed with “+852” were blocked by TSPs; access to over 46 000 websites were blocked and service of more than 6 000 local phone numbers were suspended by the telecommunications operators according to the information from the Police; and about 14.8 million voice alerts to called parties of new PPS cards were played by mobile service providers.

Besides, the Authority formulated a “Code of Practice on Management of Scam Calls and Scam SMS by TSPs”, requiring TSPs to monitor calls and SMS originating from their networks since end June 2023 and August 2024, respectively. Should call or SMS patterns indicate suspected phone deception, the services of the relevant telephone numbers will be suspended. As at March 2025, about 1.4 million local telephone numbers had been suspended in accordance with the code of practice. OFCA also issued a code of practice in October 2024 to provide practical guidance to TSPs for promulgating anti-scam messages to subscribers of public telecommunications services in Hong Kong through their publicity channels and means. OFCA will continue to work with the telecommunications industry and the Police to monitor and enhance the effectiveness of the measures.



## 6.12 Implementation of the SMS Sender Registration Scheme

To help the public verify the authenticity of SMS senders, OFCA collaborated with the telecommunications industry, the banking industry and the Police to establish the SMS Sender Registration Scheme (Scheme). Under the Scheme, registered senders must use Registered SMS Sender IDs with the prefix “#” to send SMS messages to local mobile service subscribers. All other SMS messages sent via mobile service providers in Hong Kong with sender IDs containing “#” but not sent by registered senders will be blocked by the telecommunications networks. Members of the public receiving SMS via mobile service providers in Hong Kong can easily identify whether an SMS message is from a registered sender by looking for the prefix “#” in the SMS Sender ID, thereby reducing the risk of SMS fraud. The Scheme has been implemented since 28 December 2023, and was open for application by all sectors starting from February 2024. Major TSPs, banks, government departments, statutory bodies, companies and organisations from various sectors (e.g. public utilities, retail, education, insurance and credit finance, etc.) have joined the Scheme progressively. As at March 2025, more than 490 companies and organisations had participated in the Scheme. OFCA will continue to publicise the Scheme and encourage more industries and organisations to join.



## 6.13 Implementation of Protection of Critical Infrastructures (Computer Systems) Ordinance

Passed by LegCo on 19 March 2025, the CIO aims to strengthen cybersecurity for critical infrastructure, among which, telecommunications and broadcasting sectors have been covered under the CIO with the Authority being specified as a designated authority to oversee the relevant obligations of the critical infrastructure operators under the CIO. The Authority will implement the Ordinance which will take effect on 1 January 2026.

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Under current statutory requirements in Hong Kong, satellite operators are required to obtain the Outer Space Licence issued by the Chief Executive under the Outer Space Ordinance (Cap. 523) and the Space Station Carrier Licence issued by the Authority under the TO for each satellite operated in Hong Kong. Since Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites are operated in constellation that comprises tens or hundreds of LEO satellites, there is a need to consider how the licensing arrangements will suit the actual circumstances of LEO satellites. To seize the opportunities brought by space economy, the Government is conducting a study on streamlining the vetting procedures of licence applications for operating LEO satellites, with the target of completing the relevant study by 2025 and announcing the findings of the study within 2026.

**6.15 Support on Development of Low-altitude Economy**

LAE, which refers to economic activities taking place in airspace below 1 000 metres, is creating new possibilities in areas such as aerial surveillance, drone delivery, terrain mapping and building inspection. Under the 2024 Policy Address, the Government has established a Working Group on Developing LAE (LAE Working Group) to formulate development strategies and inter-departmental action plans, starting with projects on low-altitude applications. OFCA actively participated in the LAE Working Group and contributed from the telecommunications perspective to support the development of LAE.

Among the various infrastructure facilities, public mobile network is an indispensable part for promoting low-altitude flying activities. At present, unmanned aircrafts for aerial photography or performances can generally use the shared 2.4 GHz and 5 GHz bands assigned for wireless local area networks, or 4G or 5G mobile networks for remote control, data transmission, and positioning purposes. The Authority will continue to closely monitor telecommunications market developments in Chinese Mainland and worldwide, including the designation of dedicated spectrum bands for the exclusive use by UASs, so as to ensure that the spectrum planning in Hong Kong aligns with Chinese Mainland and other advanced economies, thereby promoting the development of LAE activities in Hong Kong.

On conducting tests, the Authority will issue permits pursuant to section 7E of the TO for short-term assignment of frequencies in different frequency bands to interested parties free of charge, so that they can use their radio equipment for various radio transmission tests and applications, including UASs.



#### **6.16 Implementation of the Protection of Underground Telecommunications Infrastructure**

Under section 18A of the TO, it is a criminal offence for any person who failed to take reasonable steps to protect or prevent damage to an underground telecommunications line when carrying out any work below ground level near the line. In this regard, the Authority issued the “Guidelines on Work near Underground Telecommunications Lines” (UTL Guidelines) to provide relevant stakeholders with practical guidance for compliance with the requirements. According to the UTL Guidelines, the working party shall appoint a competent person to carry out the detection work for the underground telecommunications lines. As at March 2025, more than 800 persons attended the relevant training courses provided by the two training institutions, namely the Hong Kong Institute of Construction and the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education, on the detection work and over 360 of them were registered as competent persons. The list of competent persons is published on OFCA’s website. As at March 2025, seven successful prosecution cases in total were brought to with fines ordered by the Magistrates. It is anticipated that the enforcement work will continue to raise the industry awareness of the protection of underground telecommunications infrastructure.

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**Review of the Communications Authority's Major Tasks****6.17 Enhancement of Licensing Regime for Various Types of Licences**

To align with the Government's policy to improve regulatory measures with a view to enhancing Hong Kong's competitiveness, OFCA supported the Authority in enhancing the licensing regime for four types of licences, namely Ship Station Licence, Broadcast Radio Relay Station Licence, Hotel Television (Transmission) Licence and Satellite Master Antenna Television Licence, by extending the validity period of these licences from one year to two years. This change aims to enhance regulatory certainty for the licensees. This two-year licensing arrangement took effect from March 2024. OFCA will extend this arrangement to other types of licences issued under the TO in 2025 to 2026.

**6.18 Implementation of the Universal Service Obligation**

PCCW-HKT Telephone Limited and Hong Kong Telecommunications (HKT) Limited has a universal service obligation (USO) under its licence conditions to serve as the universal service provider (USP) of basic telecommunications service in Hong Kong. The USO specifies that basic telecommunications service should be made reasonably available to all persons in Hong Kong, at service charges capped by the published tariffs. The USO mainly covers basic fixed voice telephony services and public payphones.

The USP is entitled to receive universal service contribution (USC) from the relevant contributing parties<sup>17</sup> to recover the net cost for meeting its USO. The sharing basis of USC is based on the number of all subscriber numbers allocated to the USC contributing parties. The Authority had completed the review of USC for 2023 and the total amount of it was confirmed at \$13.1 million. After deducting the special revenue of \$1.1 million<sup>18</sup>, the USC contributing parties were required to pay the remaining USC for 2023 in the amount of \$12.0 million (or 2.5 cents per telephone number allocated per month). The Authority has advised the USP the amount of USC for 2023 that each individual USC contributing party should pay and the USP will collect the USC for 2023 directly from the USC contributing parties in 2025.

17 USC contributing parties include unified carrier licensees authorised to provide local fixed or mobile services and SBO licensees authorised to provide Class 1 service, Class 2 service, or Class 3 service (MVNO services only).

18 A special revenue pool has been set up whereby all unclaimed USC rebate and revenue/income/fee generated (or deemed to be generated) from using the payphone kiosks of the USP for non-public payphone purpose would be used for funding USC related activities. There was no unclaimed USC rebate in the review for 2023.



## 6.19 Processing Complaints Relating to Telecommunications Services

As the telecommunications market is fully liberalised and highly competitive, the Authority has adopted a light-handed regulatory approach. The Authority investigates consumer complaints against telecommunications operators if there is sufficient evidence to establish a prima facie case on possible breaches of any provisions under the TO, licence conditions or other relevant legislation which the Authority has jurisdiction to enforce, namely, the TDO and CO. For other consumer complaints not involving any breach of the TO, licence conditions or other relevant legislation, it is the responsibility of the telecommunications operators to resolve the matters under complaint with their customers. The Authority will take note of their handling of the consumer complaints received and take necessary actions if any systemic issue is identified.

During the year under review, the Authority received a total of 1 694 consumer complaints relating to telecommunications services, representing an increase of 3.9% compared to 1 630 complaints in the previous year. Among them, 1 064 cases (62.8%) were related to mobile services, 468 cases (27.6%) were related to Internet services, 142 cases (8.4%) were related to fixed-line services and four cases (0.2%) were related to external telecommunications. On the nature of complaints, the Authority received the largest number of complaints relating to customer service quality (400 cases or 23.6%), while complaints about service quality (293 cases or 17.3%) and disputes on bills (273 cases or 16.1%) ranked second and third respectively.

Breakdown of complaint cases by types of telecommunications services and nature of complaints received by the Authority during the period are shown in **Figure 19** and **Figure 20** respectively.



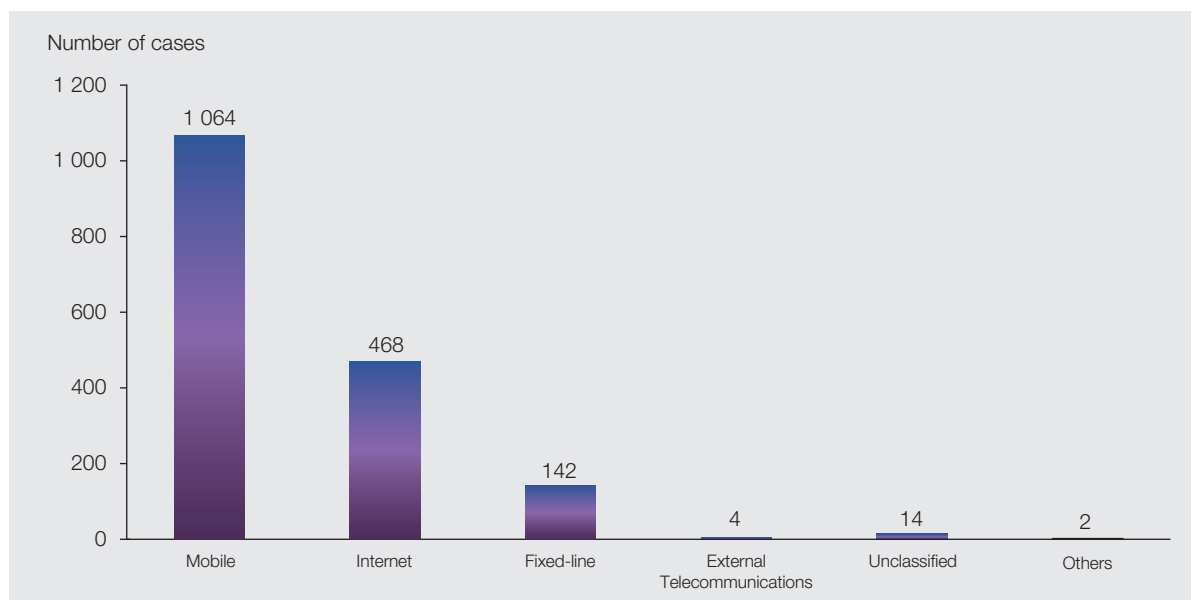


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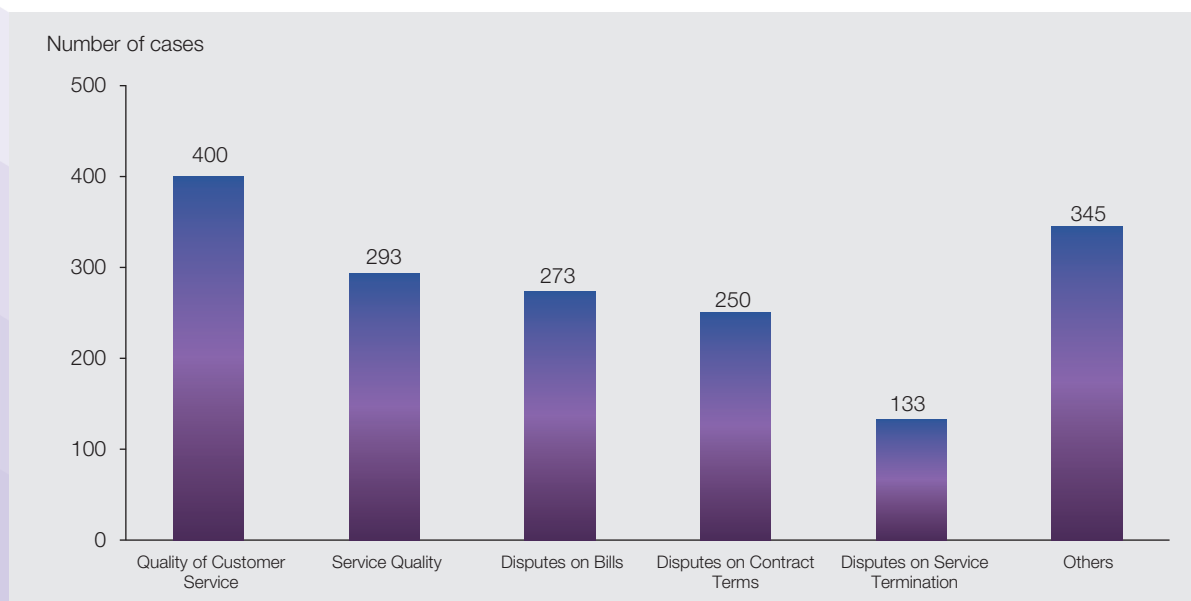
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**Figure 19:** Distribution of Complaint Cases by Types of Telecommunications Services Received by the Authority in 2024/25



Note: Types of complaint cases grouped under “others” include cases involving non-telecommunications services bundled with Internet services.

**Figure 20:** Distribution of Complaint Cases by Nature of Complaints Received by the Authority in 2024/25



Note: Types of complaint cases grouped under “others” include cases involving collection of overdue payment, porting of telecommunications numbers, refund matters, application/reactivation/suspension of telecommunications services, etc.

Among the 1 694 complaint cases received, 1 693 (99.9%) were outside the Authority's jurisdiction. For the remaining one case (0.1%), it involved allegation regarding failure to operate an accurate and reliable billing system by a mobile service provider. No case was found to be in breach of TO or licence conditions after investigation.

## **6.20 Strengthening Consumer Protection in the Use of Telecommunications Services**

### **Consumer Protection Measures Adopted in the Telecommunications Industry**

To safeguard consumer interests in the use of telecommunications services, OFCA takes proactive actions to implement various consumer protection measures and works with the industry to draw up and implement self-regulatory measures for addressing emerging consumer issues from time to time.

These measures include the voluntary Customer Complaint Settlement Scheme (CCSS) administered by the Communications Association of Hong Kong representing the industry. CCSS aims to help resolve billing disputes in deadlock between TSPs and their customers through mediation.

Other self-regulatory measures voluntarily implemented by the industry include the promulgation of the "Code of Practice for Telecommunications Service Contracts", which improves the clarity of provisions in the telecommunications service contracts as well as the "Code for the Provision of Chargeable Mobile Content Services", which governs the practices of third-party content service providers.

Other examples include the implementation of mobile bill shock preventive measures and the publication on OFCA's website of the arrangements adopted by major residential broadband service providers for handling service termination requests from consumers.

OFCA will continue to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the various consumer protection measures adopted and, where necessary, engage the industry to seek further improvement of the existing measures or introduce new ones.

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**Broadband Performance Test System**

Since December 2010, OFCA has been providing a broadband performance test system which enables broadband service users to measure the performance of their broadband connections, including download and upload speeds, network latency, packet loss and jitter. Apart from users of desktop and notebook computers, users of smart phones and tablets running iOS and Android operating systems may also make use of the test system. From the launch of the service to March 2025, about 129 million broadband performance tests were conducted with the use of the system.

**Consumer Education Programmes**

The Authority continued its multi-faceted publicity efforts during the year through the launch of the annual Consumer Education Campaign (Campaign). Under the theme “Say NO to Phone Scams”, an array of publicity activities including the Fun Day cum Exhibition, Poster and Slogan Design Competition for primary students, a series of mini exhibitions, community and school talks, as well as roving drama performances for schools, were held to remind the public to stay vigilant against telephone and SMS scams.

To tie in with the theme of the Campaign, two new one-minute animated short videos, namely “Say No to Phone Scams” and “Say No to SMS Scams” were produced to promote OFCA’s anti-phone scam measures and encourage the public to use call-filtering apps. In addition, two new sets of television and radio APIs under the themes “Use Your Original Identity Document for SIM Card Registration” and “Pay Attention to Alerts. Be Cautious with Suspicious Calls.” were produced in July 2024 and January 2025 respectively. The first API reminds the public to complete SIM card registration with their own original identity documents, while the second one aims to promote to the public the implementation of voice alerts for newly activated PPS cards.

To further strengthen publicity efforts on the promotion of anti-phone scam messages, the “District Anti-Phone Deception Ambassador Scheme” (Ambassador Scheme) was launched in mid-January 2025 by inviting District Council (DC) Members and staff members of their ward offices from all 18 districts in Hong Kong to participate and help promote the messages to the public at the community level. Over 150 DC Members’ ward offices supported the initiative, with more than 300 DC Members and their staff members joining the Ambassador Scheme as District Anti-Phone Deception Ambassadors (Ambassadors). The Ambassadors would help promote anti-phone scam messages through their community activities and daily contacts with residents in their districts, and participate in anti-phone scam publicity and consumer education campaigns organised by OFCA.

## **6.21 Enforcement of the Fair Trading Sections of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance**

The fair trading sections of the TDO prohibit certain specified unfair trade practices by traders in the provision of goods and services to consumers.

The Authority is conferred concurrent jurisdiction with the C&ED to enforce the fair trading sections of the TDO regarding the commercial practices of licensees under the TO and the BO that are directly connected with the provision of telecommunications and broadcasting services. The two enforcement agencies have entered into a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to coordinate the performance of their functions under the fair trading sections of the TDO and have issued a set of enforcement guidelines to provide guidance for traders and consumers on the operation of the fair trading sections.

From 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, the Authority handled a total of 297 complaint cases under the TDO. Among these, 233 cases were closed due to insufficient evidence to establish a contravention or because they fell outside the scope of the TDO. Four cases were closed after the Authority issued advisory letters to the licensees concerned, drawing their attention to the subject matter and providing advice on improving their relevant commercial practices in relation to the sale, supply or promotion of telecommunications or broadcasting services to consumers. The remaining 60 cases were under processing.

## **6.22 Enforcement of the Competition Ordinance**

The CO provides a cross-sectoral competition law prohibiting anti-competitive conduct in all sectors. Under the CO, the Authority is conferred concurrent jurisdiction with the Commission to enforce the CO in respect of the conduct of undertakings operating in the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors, including merger and acquisition activities involving carrier licensees in the telecommunications sector.

Pursuant to the MoU signed by the Authority and the Commission, the Authority will ordinarily assume the role of lead authority for matters falling within the concurrent jurisdiction. For matters involving issues that are partly within and partly outside the concurrent jurisdiction, the Authority and the Commission will discuss and agree on the best arrangement for handling the matter on a case-by-case basis.

From 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, a total of 18 complaints and enquiries were received under the CO, and all these 18 cases were closed without the need for further action. During the year, two transactions were reviewed under the merger rule of the CO. The reviews are currently in progress.

## CHAPTER

## 6

**Review of the Communications Authority's Major Tasks****6.23 Enforcement of the Unsolicited Electronic Messages Ordinance**

The Authority has established three Do-Not-Call (DNC) Registers – for facsimile messages, short messages and pre-recorded telephone messages – under the UEMO. No CEMs shall be sent to registered telephone numbers unless the senders have obtained consent from the registered users. As at March 2025, these DNC Registers contained more than 2.8 million telephone numbers.

The Authority will continue to monitor compliance with the UEMO by CEM senders and streamline the procedures for more effective enforcement.

**6.24 Facilitating the Implementation of the Enhanced Industry Regulatory Scheme for Marketing Calls**

To strike a balance between the need for business operation and minimising nuisance that may be caused by marketing calls, the Government has adopted a pragmatic and effective approach by actively collaborating with trade associations across different industries to manage such calls since 2010 and further launched the Enhanced Industry Regulatory Scheme for Marketing Calls (Enhanced Industry Scheme) in June 2024.

12 trade associations from seven sectors (including finance, insurance, telecommunications, call centres, beauty, estate agencies and money lenders) have participated in the Enhanced Industry Scheme and issued their respective codes of practice with reference to the revised “Benchmark Code of Practice on Person-to-Person Marketing Calls” issued by OFCA in the same year for self-regulation of marketing calls. Telemarketers are required to, among others, provide their names and contact numbers upon recipients’ requests and limit the number of calls made to the same telephone number within a specific time frame.

OFCA will continue to timely review the effectiveness of the Enhanced Industry Scheme, and liaise with relevant stakeholders and industries to provide necessary assistance.



## MAJOR REGULATORY ACTIONS

### 6.25 Sanctions against Broadcasting Licensees

There was no major sanction against broadcasting licensees during the reporting period.

### 6.26 Sanctions against Telecommunications Licensees

There was no major sanction against telecommunications licensees during the reporting period.

### 6.27 Sanctions against Senders of Commercial Electronic Messages

From April 2024 to March 2025, the Authority received 553 reports regarding suspected contraventions of the UEMO, a decrease of about 20% from the previous year. A majority of these reports were related to pre-recorded telephone messages and short messages. In dealing with these reports, the Authority would, depending on the circumstances, issue advisory letters reminding the senders of CEMs to observe the requirements under the UEMO or issue warning letters to those involved in more serious cases. During the period under review, a total of 51 advisory letters and 11 warning letters were issued. In the event of repeated contraventions by a sender of CEMs, the Authority may issue an enforcement notice in accordance with section 38 of the UEMO, directing the sender to take steps to remedy the contravention. In 2024/25, a total of two enforcement notices were issued. Anyone who fails to comply with an enforcement notice may be liable to a fine of up to HK\$100,000 on first conviction.