

NBTC board backs revisions to draft rules for 900MHz licence auction

THE NATION

THE National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission's (NBTC) board yesterday endorsed the latest revised version of the draft rules for the re-auction of a 900MHz licence.

The revision contains minor changes on wording and the auction timeframe, in line with views aired at a recent public hearing.

NBTC secretary-general Takorn Tantasith said that the starting bid price remains unchanged at Bt37.988 billion.

The NBTC will have the final rules published in the Royal Gazette tomorrow, brought forward from the original schedule for early next month. The date for the submission of bid applications has been put back by one day, to October 9.

These two changes in the time-

frame are to give more time to potential bidders to prepare the required documents.

Another change is that in the event of only one company submitting a bid or no bids being received, the submission date will be extended by seven days. In the previous draft, the auction was to be aborted if no bids came in.

The auction date remains unchanged at October 20. If there is only one participating bidder, the auction will be moved forward to October 28, from November 3 as previously set.

The latest draft also amended the wording in Clause 17 of the document from "the connected companies" to "the companies in the group and subsidiaries", as requested by Total Access Communication at the public hearing.

However, Takorn said that the NBTC declined to grant a request by

DTAC for the payment of the licence upfront instalment to be divided into 15 instalments, instead of the original four instalments.

The NBTC reclaimed 1800MHz and 850MHz from DTAC after its concession ended this month, rebanding the 850MHz as the 900MHz for auction in August. However, no firms submitted bid applications for the 900MHz, prompting the first auction to be aborted.