

# NBTC gears up for 5G testing next year

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THE NATION

THE NATIONAL Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) plans to test 5G wireless broadband technology next year.

The NBTC's executive director of its spectrum management bureau, Saneh Saiwong, said yesterday that among the spectra the NBTC will deploy to test the 5G technology are those in the range of 3.5GHz and 24GHz.

They are the spectra for which there is compatible equipment. The trials will focus on whether their use will interfere with the signals for other spectra as well as help to determine the potential applications of 5G services in Thailand.

The NBTC has set up a working panel on 5G development. The regulator has yet to finalise which spectrum bands it will assign for the future offerings of 5G services, as this calculation is subject to many factors.

The services under the incoming 5G network are envisaged as capable of being put to many to many uses, especially in the industrial sector.

NBTC secretary general Takorn Tantasith said yesterday that while 5G would definitely get off the ground in Thailand in the next few years, the government should also be prepared to step in with measures to help those employees who could lose jobs owing to the resulting technological disruption.

Takorn cited the potential impact on those in the manufacturing and financial and banking sectors. The government should seek ways to help retrain such workers for other jobs during the takeoff stage of 5G in Thailand.

He said that it is the government, and not the private telecommunications operators, that would take the lead role in making 5G happen in Thailand.

NBTC deputy secretary general Korkij Danchaiwijit said the price of the 5G spectra to go up for auction should not be unrealistically high, adding that the NBTC aims to conduct a multiple-band auction for the 5G spectra, or the auction of the combined lower- and high-spectrum bands in the same packages.