

TELECOMS

DTAC picks up 5G bid docs

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Total Access Communication Plc (DTAC), the country's third-largest mobile operator, yesterday picked up bid documents for the 5G spectrum licence auction scheduled for February.

DTAC was the second mobile operator to receive documents from the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) after True Move H Universal Communication (TUC), which picked up them last Friday.

Interested operators are allowed to pick up documents until Feb 3.

Narupon Rattanasamaharn and Lertratana Ratananukul, both DTAC senior vice-presidents, picked up the documents on behalf of DTAC Trinet Co.

The documents pertain to all the relevant information in relation to the upcoming multiband auction of the 700MHz, 1800MHz, 2600MHz and 26GHz ranges.

According to its press release, DTAC will carry out a feasibility study of criteria and procedure for the licences. The findings will be reported to a full board meeting before making a decision on the auction.

"The NBTC office believes there are several operators interested in taking part in the auction on Feb 16," said

Takorn Tantasith, secretary-general of the NBTC. "The 5G licence auctions would make the country's telecom infrastructure ready for technology change and support the Thailand 4.0 initiative."

The NBTC board last month passed a resolution to hold the four-spectrum auctions on Feb 16, spurning calls by major mobile operators that wanted only the 2600MHz range put up for bid.

The 2600MHz range is believed to be the most desirable to major mobile operators, as it's the standard spectrum being used for commercial 5G service — particularly in China, the world's biggest market for mobile subscriptions.

The Digital Economy and Society Ministry also backs state telecom enterprises TOT and CAT Telecom participating in the auctions, saying the two organisations would leverage spectrum ranges for public benefit.

Mr Takorn said CAT and TOT have informally told him they will come to pick up bid documents.

According to the NBTC, the bid documents and bank guarantees must be submitted on Feb 4. A mock auction for prospective bidders is scheduled for Feb 10-14.

Qualified bidders will be announced on Feb 12. The Feb 16 auction will begin with the 700MHz licence first, followed by 1800MHz, 2600MHz and 26GHz.