

# NBTC seeks nod for free 10GB perk

## Move to help people working from home

**KOMSAN TORTERMVASANA**

The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) will seek cabinet approval today for providing mobile users with 10 free gigabytes of data usage per subscriber per month until June 30 as work from home measures are being adopted broadly in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak.

For fixed broadband service, existing household broadband subscribers would be supported in using the better capacity package without additional charges, though details of it have yet to be divulged.

Regarding fibre-to-the-home (FTTX)

service, at least 100 megabits per second for download speeds must be ensured for household subscribers.

Takorn Tantasith, secretary-general of the NBTC, said the resolution, which was approved by the NBTC board yesterday, will be tabled before the cabinet meeting today.

The move came after Sunday's special meeting between the NBTC and mobile and telecom operators to seek ways to assist the public during this difficult time. The meeting was urged by Digital Economy and Society (DES) Minister Buddhpongse Punnakanta.

The proposed assistance is expected to cost 10 billion baht, or around 3.5 billion per month.

The 10GB of data usage per mobile subscriber a month will be funded by the first instalment payments from the 5G spectrum licence auction held last month.

Mr Takorn said the NBTC expects

more than 50 million mobile subscribers would benefit from the assistance.

For fixed broadband, including ADSL, VDSL, copper as well as FTTX, telecom operators can deduct from the Universal Service Obligation (USO) fee they are normally required to pay to the regulator annually.

Operators now pay 2.5% of their yearly revenue to the NBTC.

He said 2 million household subscribers for fixed-broadband services would be entitled to the assistance.

"If the proposal is approved by the cabinet, the NBTC will hold a meeting with telecom operators to discuss the assistance," said Mr Takorn.

NBTC chairman Sukit Khamasunthorn said supporting people staying at home and working helps combat the spread of Covid-19. This resolution would facilitate work from home measures urged by the government, Gen Sukit said.