

## TELECOMMUNICATION

# NBTC board application process attracts several old faces

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Former and incumbent executives of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) are expected to join the race for the regulator's new board members, as the two-week application period is scheduled to kick off today.

They include former secretary-general Takorn Tantasith, former deputy secretary-general Korkij Danchaivichit, as well as two deputy secretaries-general: Air Marshal Thanapant Raicharoen and Pakdee Manaves.

Mr Takorn, Mr Korkij and AM Thanapant confirmed to the *Bangkok Post* they intended to apply for the positions as they have qualifications and experience that could be beneficial to the telecom and broadcasting industries.

A high-ranking source at the NBTC who requested anonymity told the *Bangkok Post* several executives at the regulator, including former ones, are interested in applying for the jobs.

The recruitment will be done under the existing NBTC Act, which came into effect in 2017.

Based on the legislation, the seven seats on the NBTC board must come from seven different fields: telecom, broadcasting, TV business, law, engineering, economics and consumer protection.

Mr Takorn will apply for the telecom post, Mr Korkij the legal seat, Mr Pakdee will opt for economics and AM Thanapant the engineering post.

More than 400 candidates are expected to vie for the posts, which play an immense role in economic and social movement, particularly in a digitally-driven era, the source said. They are also compensated well.

The telecom field could be the most sought-after by the candidates, followed by broadcasting and consumer protection, said the source.

On Sept 9, the Upper House's secretariat office issued a formal announcement on the selection process of new NBTC board members. It followed cabinet approval of the selection process as a way to address a decision-making vacuum on the existing NBTC board.

The existing NBTC board has six members. Their working term ended in October 2017, but the previous military regime invoked Section 44 to let them work until their replacement.

Applicants must be 40-70 and need to specify their field of expertise.

After receiving the applications, 14



**Takorn: Applying for the telecom post**



**Korkij: Confirmed he is applying for the legal post**



**Thanapant: Applying for the engineering post**



**Pakdee: Applying for the economics post**

shortlisted names from seven fields of expertise must be sought, two from each field. The Senate will then vote to select seven of them — one from each field.

A shortlist of qualified candidates is expected by the end of this year. The Senate is projected to vote in new board NBTC members early next year.

Mr Takorn stepped down from his position as secretary-general on July 1. The source said he could be chosen as the new chairman of the NBTC board.

Mr Korkij resigned as deputy secretary-general of the NBTC in February and has been president of Thailand Post since March.

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The source said several potential candidates, especially from judicial fields, are reluctant to join the race as amendment of the NBTC Act is still pending. The amendment involves the recruitment of NBTC board members.

The amendment has been pushed through by the Lower House's working committee, but has yet to be deliberated on by the Senate.

To boost candidate confidence, the government has assured applicants they can still re-apply for NBTC board membership after any amendment comes into force, which could result in renewed round of applications using new methods and rules.