

AIS, DTAC units cleared for spectrum auction

THE NATION

THE board of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) yesterday approved the bidding credentials for an upcoming spectrum auction of DTAC TriNet (DTN), a subsidiary of Total Access Communication (DTAC), and Advanced Wireless Network (AWN), a subsidiary of Advanced Info Service (AIS).

The two companies now move forward as the only two bidders for the 1800MHz licences to go on sale. The NBTC will auction nine licences of 1800MHz, each containing 5MHz bandwidth, on August 19.

The board also approved the draft of the NBTC regulations of the method and conditions of reclaiming idle spectra from state agencies, which will be put to a public hearing soon.

The regulations will empower the NBTC to reclaim idle bands for reallocation. The NBTC will reclaim three types of the spectra: idle spectra, spectra that are not maximally used, and spectra that would be better used if reclaimed for other purposes.

The regulations will not include the 700MHz, which is being used by the holders of digital TV licences.

Before reclaiming these spectra, the NBTC has to make analysis reports on the targeted spectra. The reports must include the objective of the reclamation, the amount of the bandwidth of the targeted spectra it will reclaim, the current usage status, the impact of the reclamation, the timeframe of the reclamation, and the expected social and economic benefits arising from the reclamation.

Once the NBTC board approves the reclamation of the targeted spectra, the NBTC will notify those state agencies that hold them of its intention to proceed with the reclamations. They will be informed within seven days of the board's approval.

The affected state agencies will have to give, in writing, either their consent for the handover of the spectra or their objections to the NBTC's plans. They must do so within 90 days of receiving the regulator's notification.

The NBTC will hire at least three state universities or state research institutes to assess the compensation it has to pay to these state agencies after the spectrum reclamation.

Representatives from seven agencies will jointly consider the value of the compensation. They are listed as the NBTC secretary general or deputy secretary general, representatives from the Finance Ministry, the Council of State, the Office of Attorney-General, the National Economic and Social Development Board, the Bureau Budget, and the office of Digital Economy and Society Committee.