

## Satellite Internet Access Guide: Hong Kong

*October 2023*

### Using this Guide

**Question:** This column contains the relevant question to be addressed under (Response).

**Response:** Information addressing the question identified under (Question) is contained in this column.

**Additional Information:** This column contains any clarification or added information necessary to better understand the information under (Response).

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### Abbreviations for Legislation

- Communications Authority Ordinance Cap. 616 (**Communications Authority Ordinance**)
- Telecommunications Ordinance Cap. 106 (**Telecommunications Ordinance**)
- Outer Space Ordinance Cap. 523 (**Outer Space Ordinance**)
- Promulgation of National Law 2020 L.N. 136 of 2020 (**National Security Law**)

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S/N	Question	Response	Additional Information
1	Does the member state have law(s) relating to internet service provisioning and access?	1. <a href="#">Communications Authority Ordinance</a> 2. <a href="#">Telecommunications Ordinance</a>	
2	Are there restrictions on use or access to internet?	To a large extent, use and access to internet in Hong Kong is not restricted. However, with the promulgation of the National Security Law, the government is empowered to intercept, block or delete contents classified under four broad <a href="#">offenses</a> of separatism, subversion, terrorism, and colluding with foreign forces.	
3	Is satellite a medium used to provide internet access in the member state?	Provision of internet access is carried out using different transmission links including wired, wireless, and <a href="#">satellite</a> connections.	
4	Are there existing legislations for satellite internet access?	<a href="#">Outer Space Ordinance</a>	In addition to the legislations enumerated under <i>No. 1</i> above, the Outer Space Ordinance also applies to any entity intending to engage in space activities which includes the launch, use and operation of a space object (which

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			includes satellites).
5	Which agency is responsible for regulating internet service provisioning including satellite internet provisioning?	Office of the Communication Authority ( <a href="#">OFCA</a> ) is the independent regulator of broadcasting and telecommunications services in Hong Kong.	
6	Who can provide internet service using satellites?	Any person that meets the licensing criteria for the particular service intended to be offered. <i>See No. 7 below.</i>	
7	Is a license or permission required to use, operate, or control satellite for internet access?	<p>A <a href="#">services-based operator (SBO) licence</a> is required to provide internet access services.</p> <p>A unified carrier licence (UCL) is required where an entity intends to own and operate its transmission facility (i.e., satellite systems) for provision of internet access.</p>	<p>A holder of an SBO licence is not permitted to operate any external transmission facility but can lease these facilities from a holder of a unified carrier license.</p> <p>Alternatively, a <a href="#">space station carrier licence</a> (SSCL) may be required to operate a radiocommunication equipment stationed on a satellite and associated earth stations.</p>

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		<p>Also, an outer space licence (OSL) is required to engage in space activities, including launching, procuring the launch and operation of a space object (which includes satellites).</p> <p>In addition, a spectrum assignment is required to operate a satellite communications system and this is issued pursuant to Section 32H of the Telecommunications Ordinance.</p>	<p>Where the spectrum required is in competitive demand, it can be assigned by way of tender or auction. However, where the required spectrum is not in competitive demand, it may be allocated on a <a href="#">no-cost basis</a>.</p>
8	<p>What is the procedure for obtaining these licenses/permits?</p>	<p>Application for an <b>SBO licence</b> is submitted together with the required documents.</p> <p><a href="#">Application</a> for a <b>UCL</b> can be submitted either physically or through an online portal, in line with the <a href="#">guidelines</a> issued pursuant to Section 6D(2)(a) of the Telecommunications Ordinance.</p> <p>Application for an <b>OSL</b> must be submitted in line with the provisions of the <a href="#">guidelines</a> issued pursuant to Section 3 of the Outer Space Ordinance.</p>	

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		<i>*It should be noted that all the licences listed above are issued by the OFCA.</i>	
9	What is the validity period for these licenses/permits?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An SBO licence is valid for two years and renewable for a period of two years at a time.</li> <li>2. A UCL is valid for 15 years. There is no automatic renewal of this licence as the licensee is required to apply for a new licence before the expiration of the existing one.</li> <li>3. A SSCL is valid for 20 years but there is no provision for renewal.</li> <li>4. The validity of a spectrum assignment forms part of the assignment condition.</li> <li>5. There is no limit to the period of validity for an OSL, unless terminated in line with the provisions of the Outer space ordinance.</li> </ol>	
10	What are the technical requirements for use of satellites for internet access?	Satellite communications use different bands in Hong Kong including C, Ku and Ka bands, in line with the <a href="#">frequency allocation chart</a> .	

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11	Are there existing (or planned) satellite internet providers operating in this Economy?	<p>The OFCA provides a list of <a href="#">ISPs</a> and <a href="#">Outer Space Licensees</a> but no database specific to satellite internet providers exists on the website.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, the following (non-exhaustive list) have been identified as satellite internet providers offering services in Hong Kong: <a href="#">ASIX</a>, <a href="#">Syntelix</a>, <a href="#">Telstra</a>, <a href="#">Pacific One</a>, etc.</p>	
12	Does an end user require a license to access satellite for Internet connectivity?	No. An end user can approach any service provider that offers satellite internet access and subscribe to the service.	