

## New commissioners appointed to NCC

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On August 1 2016 six new commissioners were inaugurated into the National Communications Commission (NCC). Pursuant to the NCC's Organic Law, the commissioners are nominated by the premier and approved by the Legislative Yuan. The new commissioners' tenure is expected to run from August 1 2016 to July 31 2020.

It is a dramatic change to NCC management. In the past, almost all new commissioners were selected from academia. When the new government emerged from a landslide victory in the January 2016 national election it appointed a balanced team to the NCC. Three members of the team are academics in law, mass communication and economics respectively, and the remaining members are senior public servants. Among the public servant members, Nicole Chan – who was a senior corporate lawyer in e-commerce and the director general of the Science and Technology Law Institute – has been appointed as the new NCC chairperson, and Po-Tsong Wong – an experienced telecoms engineer and management officer serving the Directorate General of Telecommunications and the NCC – has been appointed vice chairperson and spokesman. Jason Ho, a previous secretary general for the NCC, has also been promoted as one of the commissioners.

The newly formed NCC has not been slow in responding to queries regarding the proposed regulatory reform on existing functional regulations. The NCC does not uphold previous draft convergence laws which restructured existing telecommunications and broadcasting regulations and which became so complicated that most licence holders admitted that it would be difficult to complete compliance once it had been accepted by the Legislative Yuan and became effective. On August 3 2016 the NCC commissioners, led by Chan, held a press conference and issued a press release stating that they will rewrite the draft amendments to the existing Telecommunications Act and other broadcasting regulations. For those operators which read between the lines, it appears that the NCC is taking an evolving approach to regulatory reform, rather than a revolutionary one.

The new NCC commissioners have also confirmed that they will identify and release more spectrum for mobile broadband services (4G long-term evolution services) at the end of 2018, as well as unlicensed bands for the Internet of Things in the immediate future.

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