



## **MARKET RELEASE**

**16 December 2019**

### **Spark's response to the Government's announcement on early access spectrum**

Spark welcomes the Government's announcement that it intends to run an auction process early next year\* for the short-term allocation of some spectrum within the 3.5 GHz band (also known as the C Band) for 5G wireless services.

The auction will allocate management rights for 160 MHz of spectrum within this band, with rights running from mid-2020 until 31 October 2022.

This is a positive development and we intend to participate in the auction. Access to sufficient spectrum in the 3.5 GHz band will enable Spark to bring true mass-market 5G services to more New Zealanders as soon as possible. The Government foreshadowed this short-term allocation process earlier this year and we are pleased this will shortly occur, as it should allow Spark to launch mass deployment of 5G services as planned from mid-2020.

The Government is expected to hold a further auction process at a later date for longer-term rights from November 2022 of all available spectrum within the C Band.

Spark recently launched New Zealand's first 5G commercial wireless broadband service into selected South Island towns and communities, with further locations coming next year. Spark's 5G wireless broadband rollout to date has used spectrum that was repurposed from previous 4G use.

A copy of the Government's announcement can be found at the following link:  
<https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/government-enables-early-access-5g-spectrum>

[\*Amended version – previous version stated "in March 2019" but this was an error. Now reads "early next year"].

**Ends**

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