



**MARKET RELEASE – FRIDAY, 12 MAY 2023**

## **Spark confirms signing of C-band spectrum agreement**

Spark today announced it has signed an agreement with the Crown for a direct allocation of C-band mobile spectrum under a new model where the revenue is directly invested into accelerated mobile network upgrades that benefit provincial and rural New Zealand.

As [announced](#) in October last year, the terms of the agreement provide Spark with long-term spectrum management rights to 80 MHz of 3.5 GHz (or C-band) spectrum from 1 July 2023, which will be used in Spark's ongoing roll out of 5G services.

In return, Spark will invest in extending rural connectivity and 5G services to provincial New Zealand, both via the Rural Connectivity Group and through an acceleration of its own 5G roll out.

Spark will invest an additional \$24 million in funding to the Rural Connectivity Group (RCG) between 2023 and 2025, which will support the expansion of mobile coverage further into rural New Zealand and address mobile black spots on state highways.

Spark has also committed to accelerating deployment of its 5G network to 27 sites in 25 regional towns using the allocated C-band spectrum that it would not otherwise have built under its existing commercial deployment plans.

Spark CEO Jolie Hodson says, "When you consider the challenges we are facing as a country, there is an important role for technology to play in helping us do things differently. We want to support the creation of high-tech solutions that improve productivity, efficiency, and sustainability across our economy, and the rollout of 5G is a critical enabler of this. In addition to our investment in spectrum, we are committing \$40-\$60 million to the development of 5G Standalone over the next three years, which will unlock new services and support business innovation in New Zealand.

"We are also pleased to see spectrum allocation revenue directly invested into connectivity in provincial and rural New Zealand. When we combine the commitment we have made through this spectrum agreement with our broader 5G rollout plans, our ambition is to expand 5G connectivity to all towns with a population of more than 1,500 people by the end of June 2026. We are really pleased to finalise this agreement with Government, which provides us with the certainty we need to continue investing in 5G and delivering these connectivity benefits to Aotearoa New Zealand."

### **Authorised by:**

Alexa Preston  
Finance Lead Partner – Group Performance and Investor Relations

### **For more information contact**

#### **For media queries please contact:**

Althea Lovell  
Corporate Relations Partner  
(64) 21 222 2992  
[Althea.Lovell@spark.co.nz](mailto:Althea.Lovell@spark.co.nz)

#### **For investor queries please contact:**

Alexa Preston  
Finance Lead Partner – Group Performance and Investor Relations  
(64) 21 997 902  
[Alexa.Preston@spark.co.nz](mailto:Alexa.Preston@spark.co.nz)

### **About Spark**

Spark New Zealand Limited  
ARBN 050 611 277 Spark City, 167 Victoria Street West, Private Bag 92028, Auckland, New Zealand

Spark is New Zealand's largest telecommunications and digital services company, with a purpose to help all of New Zealand win big in a digital world. Spark provides mobile, broadband, and digital services to millions of New Zealanders and thousands of New Zealand businesses.

[www.sparknz.co.nz](http://www.sparknz.co.nz)