

NOTIFICATION OF SUSPENSION OF 50222 SMS

HIKER TRACKING SERVICE 50222 遠足短訊留蹤服務停止通知

Effective Date: 1 September 2026 09:00

To:

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) – 漁農自然護理署

Fire Services Department (FSD) – 消防處

Office of the Communications Authority (OFCA) – 通訊事務管理局辦公室

Date: April 9, 2026

Dear Sirs,

1. Introduction

The Communications Association of Hong Kong (CAHK) hereby notifies the above-mentioned departments of the planned suspension of the **50222 SMS Hiker Tracking Service** (“the Service”), tentatively effective from **1 September 2026 09:00**.

The 50222 Service was launched by CAHK on a voluntary basis in collaboration with Hong Kong’s major mobile network operators, with CITIC Telecom International providing the service platform and system development. It was designed to assist search and rescue teams in locating missing hikers by allowing users to send SMS messages containing the unique numbers of Distance Posts along country park trails to the designated number 50222. The location data would be encrypted and stored for three days, accessible only to authorised rescue units upon request.

2. Reasons for Suspension

The decision to suspend the Service has been made following the successful launch and widespread adoption of the **HKSOS App** by the Hong Kong Police Force and suspension of GPS Hiker Tracking Service in AFCD and Security Bureau App since Feb 2026. Since its launch in January 2024, HKSOS has achieved significant downloads.

HKSOS offers significant functional advantages over the legacy SMS-based 50222 Service: One-tap direct access to 999 Call Centre; Offline SOS signal without mobile network; Automatic incident detection (AI-based); Real-time location sharing with emergency contacts; Image-based assistance for hearing/speech-impaired users; Works beyond country parks (sea, air, remote areas). These enhanced capabilities make HKSOS a more effective and comprehensive solution for outdoor safety across Hong Kong’s country parks, coastal areas and remote regions.

3. Communication Plan for Service Users

(a) Advance Notification (from 15 April 2026 09:00 until 1 September 2026 09:00)

短訊收妥, 祝安全 Received, safe hike! 50222 服務將停 Service suspend 1/9/2026. 請改用 Start use: HKSOS App (Apple, Google, Huawei)

CITIC will test and then sent 2 concatenated segments for above message for current 50222 service user via service system.

(b) Post-Suspension Message (from 1 September 2026 onwards and till further notice)

After the suspension date, users sending an SMS to 50222 will receive the following suggested reply:

發送失敗! 服務已終止 Cannot be sent! Service terminated. 遠足安全即用 For hiking safe, use HKSOS App now (Apple, Google, Huawei)

CITIC will test and then sent 2 concatenated segments for above message for current 50222 service users who attempt to send 50222 messages.

4. Monitoring After Service Is Stopped

Following the suspension, CAHK will continue to monitor the volume of SMS traffic to 50222 to assess whether there is a significant drop in service usage. Monitoring metrics will include:

- Weekly volume of 50222 SMS received
- Percentage change compared to pre-notification baseline (January–June 2026)

Based on the monitoring results, CAHK will evaluate when Post-Suspension Message will be stopped or continued on a needed basis.

5. Coordination with Stakeholders

CAHK respectfully requests the following from the recipient departments:

- **AFCD:** Please consider updating hiking safety materials and country park signage, where appropriate, to reflect the transition from 50222 SMS Service to HKSOS App.
- **FSD:** Please ensure frontline search and rescue personnel are aware of the service suspension and the continued availability of HKSOS for location tracking.

- **OFCA:** Please consider updating hiking safety materials in OFCA's webpage, if any, associated with the suspension of this 50222 SMS-based service.
- **CAHK:** Updating mobile service operators on this SMS service suspension timeline with CITIC Telecom International Ltd.

6. Contact Point

- For this service suspension: CAHK Secretariat Office: Ms. Peggy Jor/
peggyjor@cahk.hk / (852) 2504 2732
- For technical contact: CITIC Telecom International Ltd: Ms. Megaus Chan/
megauschan@citictel.com / (852) 3423 4071 - Ext. 2071

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of Chairman Kenneth Lau
Communications Association of Hong Kong (CAHK)

Secretariat Office