

Broadband Access Coalition Petition for Rulemaking

Summary

The Petition for Rulemaking seeks to add a new, licensed, point-to-multipoint (P2MP) fixed wireless service in the underutilized 3700 - 4200 MHz band used primarily by fixed satellite services (FSS). The proposed licensing scheme and operating rules will enable gigabit and near-gigabit broadband service in rural and underserved areas, and promotes competition for broadband delivery among various technologies and licensees.

The Petition is submitted by a broad-based coalition of broadband providers, technology companies, trade associations, and non-profit public policy advocacy groups. The Petition seeks expedited adoption under Section 7 of the Communications Act, which requires a public interest determination within one year.

Summary of Petition

- Would authorize 500 megahertz of contiguous mid-band spectrum for licensed P2MP broadband services
- The shared use of the band for P2MP broadband services can be implemented *rapidly* and *simply* by the FCC and service providers because:
 - Incumbent FSS and Fixed Service (point-to-point) will be protected from harmful interference.
 - Existing Part 101 frequency coordination procedures will be used, pending transition to an automated frequency coordination system to be developed by a multi-stakeholder group.
 - No new allocations are needed
 - There are no Federal government allocations in the band
 - No sophisticated spectrum management techniques, like SAS, are required.

Policy Benefits

- Rapidly makes available 500 MHz of mid-band spectrum for licensed P2MP broadband service.
- Supports Chairman Pai's "Digital Empowerment Agenda" by establishing a new service as "spectrum infrastructure."
- Enables gigabit and near-gigabit fixed wireless service in Tribal, rural and suburban areas where consumer choice is lacking and where FTTH deployment costs are prohibitive.
- Accelerates the policies behind MOBILE NOW by inviting immediate FCC action regarding the 3700 - 4200 MHz.
- Promotes efficient use of a greatly underutilized spectrum resource by maximizing sharing.

Technical Proposals

Modernizing Part 25

- Require FSS licensees in the C-band to refresh the IBFS database to remove “ghost” earth stations and provide the specific frequencies and locations currently used and the orbital slot being accessed.
- Coordination would be undertaken using modern “real world” protection standards, not the antiquated “full-band, full-arc” policy that has contributed to underutilization of the spectrum band.
- Coalition will work with the FSS C-band industry to define the circumstances when changes in frequency and/or orbital slot communications will be necessary, and to refine the procedures that will implement the changes so that FSS operations can be preserved.

Modernizing Part 101

- Expand Part 101 to include P2MP fixed wireless broadband service
- Licenses would be issued for self-defined areas coordinated under Part 101, with a 30-day reservation period and a one-year build-out requirement to incentivize expeditious deployment.
- Licenses would be awarded in 20-megahertz channels. No licensee could obtain access to more than 40 megahertz in a given area unless it first meets its build-out requirements for the initial 40 megahertz.
- Licensees could obtain licenses for up to 160 megahertz in an area, meaning that there would be a minimum of three separate competitors licensed in an area.
- Frequency agile radios capable of operating across the entire 3700 – 4200 MHz band, and able to accommodate any 20 MHz channel, would be required.