



PUBLIC NOTICE

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RESPONSE TO TECHNICAL QUESTIONS REGARDING THE INTERNATIONAL BUREAU FILING SYSTEM

The International Bureau has received numerous inquires requesting technical information concerning the Federal Communications Commission's information technology infrastructure, as it relates to IB Docket No. 02-34, Amendment of the Commission's Space Station Licensing Rules and Policies. For a copy of some of the specific questions received, please refer to the docketed proceeding identified above.

To the extent that the information requested does not negatively impact the Commission's computer security posture, the following response is provided.

Area 1 - Synchronization

The National Observatory (NO) uses Data Name Server (DNS), and as a result the FCC cannot determine which NO server is used to synchronize the FCC servers. The protocol used by the Commission to synchronize time between the NO server and the Commission's time server and between the time server and all other servers in the FCC network is Extended Network Time Protocol (XNTP), which is part of the native Sun utility suite. The NO Internet site used by the Commission to sync its time is tick.usno.navy.mil. The FCC's time server dials out to the NO every three (3) hours starting at 12:00 midnight. Additionally, each of the internal data servers contacts the time server hourly (five minutes past the hour) to update their time. The Commission's web servers used by IBFS contact the NO hourly (on the hour) over the Internet to update their time. The external servers use the average time latency between the FCC server and the NO server to adjust the time for accuracy. (Note: A spike might influence the latency.)

In order to assist filers in synchronizing filing times with IBFS, the FCC will adjust the time and web server synchronization scripts to run at 11:45 p.m. on the evening before the freeze is lifted. Additionally, the IBFS database server will be synchronized with the FCC time server at 11:50 p.m. on the evening before the freeze is lifted.

Area 2 - Processing

The date and time stamp (to the millisecond) is generated by the IBFS server as soon as an application is received by IBFS. The IBFS system will not “time out” an applicant if the “OK” button is not pressed within a certain period after pressing the “File a Form” button. The maximum concurrent connections, used by the IBFS web servers, are 512. The Commission has a T3 data circuit connecting the FCC to the Internet. The official IBFS filing date and time associated with an application establishes an application’s place in the queue. All potential filers can only gain access to IBFS via the established FCC Internet connection.

No information pertaining to FCC server names, flow diagrams, scripts, software or hardware devices will be provided, as this information is deemed highly sensitive and could potentially be used to launch a cyber-attack on the FCC.

If you have questions about this Public Notice, please call Mary Jane Solomon on 202-418-0593.