



PUBLIC NOTICE

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Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Announces Conclusion of 220 MHz Spectrum Audit

Bureau recovers 32% of the 956 audited licenses

The Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (Bureau) has successfully concluded its audit of the operational status of certain site-specific licenses authorized to operate in the 220-222 MHz (220 MHz) band.¹ The audit had two-key goals. First, the audit was designed to update and increase the accuracy of the Commission's licensing database. Second, and perhaps more importantly, the audit was intended to promote the efficient use of the radio spectrum subject to the audit. Both of these goals were accomplished. In addition to furthering a more accurate and reliable licensing database, the audit facilitated the Bureau's recovery of nearly a third of the audited licenses from licensees who were no longer operating in their licensed spectrum.

The 220 MHz audit included Phase I licenses in the 'QT', 'QD' and 'QO' radio services. These Phase I licenses were issued via lottery prior to May 25, 2001, and may be used for two-way voice and data communications. On May 14, 2003, the Bureau mailed audit letters to 452 licensees holding a combined total of 956 licenses. Each licensee was required to inform the Bureau by electronic response whether its authorized station(s) had discontinued service for one year or more, which would trigger cancellation of license under the Commission's 220 MHz rules. To facilitate timely responses, the Bureau made free audit software available on the Bureau's internet site to provide a convenient means for licensees to file an electronic response. While many licensees responded to the audit letter, many others did not submit a response to the Bureau. On July, 8, 2003, as a courtesy to the licensees, the Bureau sent a follow up letter to each licensee that did not respond to the first inquiry. Again, the licensees were advised that a response was mandatory and a failure to respond could lead to license cancellation.

¹ See "Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Announces An Audit of the Operational Status of Certain 220-222 MHz Licenses," *Public Notice*, DA 03-1089 (rel. April 9, 2003); "Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Begins an Audit of Licenses in Certain 220 – 222 MHz Band Services," *Public Notice*, DA 03-1735 (rel. May 20, 2003); "WTB To Mail its Second License Audit Letter and Notice of Cancellation to Certain Licensees in the 220 – 222 MHz Band," *Public Notice*, DA 03-2100 (rel. June 30, 2003); "Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Confirms Certain 220 MHz Phase I Licenses Cancelled as a Result of Spectrum Audit," *Public Notice*, DA 03-3310 (rel. October 22, 2003).

The 220 MHz Spectrum Audit concluded in October 2003 with a 78% response rate. A breakdown of the audit follows:

- 68% of licensees responded to the audit and certified that they had not discontinued operations for a period of one year or more.
- 10% of licensees certified that their licenses had canceled automatically for discontinuance of operations.
- 16% of licenses did not respond and, at the same time, their licenses expired during the audit and were not renewed.
- 6% of licensees were deemed to have canceled automatically for discontinuance of operations because they failed to respond to the audit.
- In sum, a total 32% of the audited licenses were reclaimed by the Bureau.

Attachment A shows the locations of the licenses that were recovered via the audit. Under the Commission's rules, the spectrum recovered from canceled site-based licenses, as well as the spectrum from expired licenses, automatically reverts to the geographic licensees who won their licenses through the Commission's auction process.

The Bureau intends to conduct future audits in other wireless services. The timing and details of any such audit will be announced by future Public Notice.

For additional information on the 220 MHz Spectrum Audit, visit the 220 MHz audit web site at <http://wireless.fcc.gov/licensing/audits/220> or contact Denise Walter of the Bureau's Commercial Wireless Division at 202-418-0620 or denise.walter@fcc.gov.



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220 MHz License Spectrum Audit 220-222 MHz Commercial, Site-specific Licenses Recovered Spectrum

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