

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	File No. EB-07-SE-260
AST Telecom, LLC d/b/a Blue Sky)	NAL/Acct. No. 200832100017
Communications)	FRN # 0007435902

NOTICE OF APPARENT LIABILITY FOR FORFEITURE

Adopted: February 26, 2008

Released: February 27, 2008

By the Chief, Spectrum Enforcement Division, Enforcement Bureau:

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In this Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture (“NAL”), we find that AST Telecom, LLC d/b/a Blue Sky Communications (“Blue Sky”) apparently willfully and repeatedly violated Section 20.19(d)(2)¹ of the Commission’s Rules (“Rules”) by failing to include in its digital wireless handset offerings at least two models that meet the inductive coupling standards for hearing aid compatibility by September 18, 2006. For Blue Sky’s apparent violations, and for the reasons discussed below, we propose a forfeiture in the amount of fifteen thousand hundred dollars (\$15,000).

II. BACKGROUND

2. In the 2003 *Hearing Aid Compatibility Order*, the Commission adopted several measures to enhance the ability of individuals with hearing disabilities to access digital wireless telecommunications.² The Commission established technical standards that digital wireless handsets must meet to be considered compatible with hearing aids operating in acoustic coupling and inductive coupling (telecoil) modes.³ Specifically, the Commission adopted a standard for radio frequency interference (the

¹ 47 C.F.R. § 20.19(d)(2).

² *Section 68.4(a) of the Commission’s Rules Governing Hearing Aid-Compatible Telephones*, Report and Order, 18 FCC Rcd 16753 (2003); Erratum, 18 FCC Rcd 18047 (2003) (“*Hearing Aid Compatibility Order*”); Order on Reconsideration and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 20 FCC Rcd 11221 (2005) (“*Hearing Aid Compatibility Reconsideration Order*”). The Commission adopted these requirements for digital wireless telephones under the authority of the Hearing Aid Compatibility Act of 1988, codified at Section 710(b)(2)(C) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. § 610(b)(2)(C).

³ See *Hearing Aid Compatibility Order*, 18 FCC Rcd at 16777 ¶ 56; 47 C.F.R. § 20.19(b)(1), (2). The *Hearing Aid Compatibility Order* described the acoustic coupling and the inductive (telecoil) coupling modes as follows:

In acoustic coupling mode, the microphone picks up surrounding sounds, desired and undesired, and converts them into electrical signals. The electrical signals are amplified as needed and then converted back into electrical signals. In telecoil mode, with the microphone turned off, the telecoil picks up the audio signal-based magnetic field generated by the voice coil of a dynamic speaker in hearing aid-compatible telephones, audio loop systems, or powered neck loops. The hearing aid converts the magnetic field into electrical signals, amplifies them as needed, and converts them back into sound via the speaker. Using a telecoil avoids the feedback that often results from putting a hearing aid up against a telephone earpiece, can help prevent exposure to over amplification, and eliminates background noise, providing improved access to the telephone.

“U3” or “M3” rating) to enable acoustic coupling between digital wireless phones and hearing aids operating in acoustic coupling mode, and a separate standard (the “U3T” or “T3” rating) to enable inductive coupling with hearing aids operating in telecoil mode.⁴ The Commission further established, for each standard, deadlines by which manufacturers and service providers were required to offer specified numbers or percentages of digital wireless handsets per air interface⁵ that are compliant with the relevant standard if they did not come under the *de minimis* exception.⁶ The Commission required that manufacturers and service providers begin making commercially available at least two handset models per air interface that meet the U3 or M3 rating for radio frequency interference by September 16, 2005.⁷ The Commission also required that manufacturers and service providers make commercially available at least two handset models per air interface that meet the U3T or T3 rating for inductive coupling by September 18, 2006.⁸ In connection with the offer of hearing aid-compatible handset models, the Commission further required entities to label the handsets with the appropriate technical rating, and to explain the technical rating system in the owner’s manual or as part of the packaging material for the handset.⁹

3. In order to monitor the availability of these handsets, the Commission required manufacturers and digital wireless service providers to report every six months on efforts toward

⁴ Section 20.19(b)(1) provides that a wireless handset is deemed hearing aid-compatible for radio frequency interference if, at minimum, it receives a U3 rating as set forth in “American National Standard for Methods of Measurement of Compatibility between Wireless Communications Devices and Hearing Aids, ANSI C63.19-2001.” 47 C.F.R. § 20.19(b)(1). Section 20.19(b)(2) provides that a wireless handset is deemed hearing aid-compatible for inductive coupling if, at minimum, it receives a U3T rating as set forth in ANSI C63.19-2001. 47 C.F.R. § 20.19(b)(2). On April 25, 2005, the Commission’s Office of Engineering and Technology announced that it would also certify handsets as hearing aid-compatible based on the revised version of the standard, ANSI C63.19-2005. *See OET Clarifies Use of Revised Wireless Phone Hearing Aid Compatibility Standard Measurement Procedures and Rating Nomenclature*, Public Notice, 20 FCC Rcd 8188 (OET 2005). On June 6, 2006, the Commission’s Wireless Telecommunications Bureau and Office of Engineering and Technology announced that the Commission would also certify handsets as hearing aid-compatible based on the revised version of the standard, ANSI C63.19-2006. Thus, applicants for certification may rely on either the 2001 version, the 2005 version, or the 2006 version of the ANSI C63.19 standard. *See Wireless Telecommunications Bureau and Office of Engineering and Technology Clarify Use of Revised Wireless Phone Hearing Aid Compatibility Standard*, Public Notice, 21 FCC Rcd 6384 (WTB/OET 2006). In addition, since the 2005 version, the ANSI C63.19 technical standard has used an “M” nomenclature for the radio frequency interference rating rather than a “U,” and a “T” nomenclature for the handset’s inductive coupling rating, rather than a “UT.” The Commission has approved the use of the “M” and “T” nomenclature and considers the M/T and U/UT nomenclatures as synonymous. *See Hearing Aid Compatibility Reconsideration Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 11238 ¶ 33.

⁵ The term “air interface” refers to the technical protocol that ensures compatibility between mobile radio service equipment, such as handsets, and the service provider’s base stations. Currently, the leading air interfaces include Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA), Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM), Integrated Dispatch Enhanced Network (iDEN), Time Division Multiple Access (TDMA) and Wideband Code Division Multiple Access (WCDMA) a/k/a Universal Mobile Telecommunications System (UMTS).

⁶ *See Hearing Aid Compatibility Order*, 18 FCC Rcd at 16780 ¶ 65; 47 C.F.R. §§ 20.19(c), (d). The *de minimis* exception provides that manufacturers or mobile service providers that offer two or fewer digital wireless handset models per air interface are exempt from the hearing aid compatibility requirements and manufacturers or service providers that offer three digital wireless handset models per air interface must offer at least one compliant model. 47 C.F.R. § 20.19(e).

⁷ *See Hearing Aid Compatibility Order*, 18 FCC Rcd at 16780 ¶ 65; *see also* 47 C.F.R. § 20.19(c).

⁸ *See Hearing Aid Compatibility Order*, 18 FCC Rcd at 16780 ¶ 65; *see also* 47 C.F.R. § 20.19(d).

⁹ *See Hearing Aid Compatibility Order*, 18 FCC Rcd at 16785 ¶¶ 83, 85-86; *see also* 47 C.F.R. § 20.19(f).

compliance with the hearing aid compatibility requirements for the first three years of implementation, and then annually thereafter through the fifth year of implementation.¹⁰

4. In its November 17, 2006 report, Blue Sky indicated that it had available for sale two handset models that comply with the standard for radio frequency interference set forth in Section 20.19(b)(1) of the Rules.¹¹ Blue Sky did not address its compliance with the inductive coupling compatibility requirements in the report. Subsequently, the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau referred the matter to the Enforcement Bureau for investigation into whether Blue Sky was in compliance with the inductive coupling compatibility requirements.

5. On August 13, 2007, the Spectrum Enforcement Division (“Division”) of the Enforcement Bureau issued a Letter of Inquiry (“LOI”) to Blue Sky.¹² In its response, Blue Sky asserted that it began offering for sale one inductive coupling-compliant handset, the Motorola V3i, on September 1, 2006.¹³ Blue Sky further asserted that it began offering for sale one additional inductive coupling-compliant handset, the Sony Ericsson Z710, on March 1, 2007.¹⁴

III. DISCUSSION

A. Failure to Offer For Sale Two Hearing Aid Compatible Handsets

6. Section 20.19(d)(2) of the Rules requires digital wireless service providers to begin offering for sale at least two handsets models for each air interface that meet at least a T3 rating for inductive coupling by September 18, 2006. Blue Sky began offering for sale one inductive coupling-compliant handset prior to the September 18, 2006 deadline.¹⁵ Blue Sky admits that it did not offer for sale a second inductive coupling-compliant handset until March 1, 2007.¹⁶ Accordingly, we conclude that Blue Sky apparently willfully¹⁷ and repeatedly¹⁸ failed to comply with Section 20.19(d)(2) of the Rules.

¹⁰ *Hearing Aid Compatibility Order*, 18 FCC Rcd at 16787 ¶ 89; see also *Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Announces Hearing Aid Compatibility Reporting Dates for Wireless Carriers and Handset Manufacturers*, Public Notice, 19 FCC Rcd 4097 (Wireless Tel. Bur. 2004).

¹¹ AST Telecom, LLC d/b/a Blue Sky Communications Hearing Aid Compatibility Report, WT Docket No. 01-309, November 17, 2006 (“November 17, 2006 Report”), at 1. Specifically, Blue Sky indicated that it was offering the Motorola V3 and V220 handset models that were “certified by the FCC’s Office of Engineering and Technology as M-rated hearing aid compatible.” *Id.*

¹² Letter from Kathryn S. Berthot, Chief, Spectrum Enforcement Division, Enforcement Bureau, to Harley L. Rollins, Blue Sky Communications (August 13, 2007).

¹³ Letter from Michael Bennet, Esq., Bennet & Bennet, PLLC, counsel to Blue Sky to Kathryn Berthot, Chief, Spectrum Enforcement Division, Enforcement Bureau (August 28, 2007) (“LOI Response”), at 2. Blue Sky stated that in its November 17, 2006 Report, it erroneously identified the model number of one of the handsets as the Motorola V3 instead of the Motorola V3i. *Id.*

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ Blue Sky clarified in its LOI response that it began offering the Motorola V3i, and not the Motorola V3 as reported in its November 17, 2006 Report, on September 1, 2006. *Id.* Motorola obtained a grant of equipment certification for the Motorola V3i under FCC ID IHDT56GW1 on August 3, 2006.

¹⁶ Blue Sky stated that it began offering the Sony Ericsson Z710 on March 1, 2007. On November 21, 2006, Sony Ericsson was granted a Class II permissive change for the Z710 which updated the hearing aid compatibility rating for the Z710 from M3 to T3 under FCC ID PY7AF052041.

¹⁷ Section 312(f)(1) of the Act defines “willful” as “the conscious and deliberate commission or omission of [any] act, irrespective of any intent to violate” the law. 47 U.S.C. § 312(f)(1). The legislative history of Section 312(f)(1) (continued ...)

B. Proposed Forfeiture

7. Under Section 503(b)(1)(B) of the Act, any person who is determined by the Commission to have willfully or repeatedly failed to comply with any provision of the Act or any rule, regulation, or order issued by the Commission shall be liable to the United States for a forfeiture penalty.¹⁹ To impose such a forfeiture penalty, the Commission must issue a notice of apparent liability and the person against whom such notice has been issued must have an opportunity to show, in writing, why no such forfeiture penalty should be imposed.²⁰ The Commission will then issue a forfeiture if it finds by a preponderance of the evidence that the person has violated the Act or a Commission rule.²¹ We conclude under this standard that Blue Sky is apparently liable for forfeiture for its apparent willful and repeated violation of Section 20.19(d)(2) of the Rules.

8. Under Section 503(b)(2)(B) of the Act,²² we may assess a common carrier a forfeiture of up to \$130,000 for each violation, or for each day of a continuing violation up to a maximum of \$1,325,000 for a single act or failure to act. In exercising such authority, we are required to take into account “the nature, circumstances, extent, and gravity of the violation and, with respect to the violator, the degree of culpability, any history of prior offenses, ability to pay, and such other matters as justice may require.”²³

9. The Commission’s *Forfeiture Policy Statement*²⁴ and Section 1.80 of the Rules do not establish a base forfeiture amount for violations of the hearing aid-compatible handset requirements set forth in Section 20.19 of the Rules. The fact that the *Forfeiture Policy Statement* does not specify a base amount does not indicate that no forfeiture should be imposed. The *Forfeiture Policy Statement* states that “... any omission of a specific rule violation from the ... [forfeiture guidelines] ... should not signal

(Continued from previous page ...)

of the Act clarifies that this definition of willful applies to both Sections 312 and 503(b) of the Act, H.R. Rep. No. 97-765, 97th Cong. 2d Sess. 51 (1982), and the Commission has so interpreted the term in the Section 503(b) context. See *Southern California Broadcasting Co.*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 6 FCC Rcd 4387, 4388 ¶ 5 (1991), *recon. denied*, 7 FCC Rcd 3454 (1992) (“*Southern California*”).

¹⁸ Section 312(f)(2) of the Act, which also applies to forfeitures assessed pursuant to Section 503(b) of the Act, provides that “[t]he term ‘repeated,’ ... means the commission or omission of such act more than once or, if such commission or omission is continuous, for more than one day.” 47 U.S.C. § 312(f)(2). See *Callais Cablevision, Inc.*, Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture, 16 FCC Rcd 1359, 1362 ¶ 9 (2001); *Southern California*, 6 FCC Rcd at 4388 ¶ 5.

¹⁹ 47 U.S.C. § 503(b)(1)(B); 47 C.F.R. § 1.80(a)(1).

²⁰ 47 U.S.C. § 503(b); 47 C.F.R. § 1.80(f).

²¹ See, e.g., *SBC Communications, Inc.*, Forfeiture Order, 17 FCC Rcd 7589, 7591 ¶ 4 (2002).

²² 47 U.S.C. § 503(b)(2)(B). The Commission twice amended Section 1.80(b)(3) of the Rules, 47 C.F.R. § 1.80(b)(3), to increase the maxima forfeiture amounts, in accordance with the inflation adjustment requirements contained in the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996, 28 U.S.C. § 2461. See *Amendment of Section 1.80 of the Commission’s Rules and Adjustment of Forfeiture Maxima to Reflect Inflation*, Order, 15 FCC Rcd 18221 (2000) (adjusting the maximum statutory amounts from \$100,000/\$1,000,000 to \$120,000/\$1,200,000); *Amendment of Section 1.80 of the Commission’s Rules and Adjustment of Forfeiture Maxima to Reflect Inflation*, Order, 19 FCC Rcd 10945 (2004) (adjusting the maximum statutory amounts from \$120,000/\$1,200,000 to \$130,000/\$1,325,000); see also 47 C.F.R. § 1.80(c).

²³ 47 U.S.C. § 503(b)(2)(E). See also 47 C.F.R. § 1.80(b)(4), Note to paragraph (b)(4): Section II. Adjustment Criteria for Section 503 Forfeitures.

²⁴ See *The Commission’s Forfeiture Policy Statement and Amendment of Section 1.80 of the Rules to Incorporate the Forfeiture Guidelines*, 12 FCC Rcd 17087 (1997), *recon. denied*, 15 FCC Rcd 303 (1999) (“*Forfeiture Policy Statement*”).

that the Commission considers any unlisted violation as nonexistent or unimportant.²⁵ The Commission retains the discretion, moreover, to depart from the *Forfeiture Policy Statement* and issue forfeitures on a case-by-case basis, under its general forfeiture authority contained in Section 503 of the Act.²⁶

10. In determining the appropriate forfeiture amount for violation of the hearing aid compatibility handset requirements, we take into account that these requirements serve to ensure that individuals with hearing disabilities have access to digital wireless telecommunications services. In adopting the hearing aid compatibility rules, the Commission underscored the strong and immediate need for such access, stressing that individuals with hearing impairments should not be denied the public safety and convenience benefits of digital wireless telephony.²⁷ Moreover, as the Commission has noted, the demand for hearing aid-compatible handsets is likely to increase with the growing reliance on wireless technology and with the increasing median age of our population.²⁸

11. We note that in a recent decision, a base forfeiture amount of \$15,000 per handset was established for violations of the hearing aid compatibility handset requirements.²⁹ This base forfeiture amount was based on a determination that a significantly higher base forfeiture amount is warranted for violations of the hearing aid compatibility handset requirements than for violations of the labeling requirements for wireless hearing aid-compatible handsets.³⁰ In reaching this determination, we found that a violation of the labeling requirements, while serious because it deprives hearing aid users from making informed choices, is less egregious than a violation of the handset requirements because failure to make compliant handsets available actually deprives hearing aid users from accessing digital wireless communications.³¹ Further, because providers were required to offer at least two handset models that meet at least a T3 rating for inductive coupling, we determined that a proposed forfeiture for violation of these requirements should be applied on a per handset basis. Accordingly, we impose a base forfeiture amount of \$15,000 per handset for violation of the hearing aid compatibility handset requirements.

12. Blue Sky offered only one handset that met a T3 rating for inductive coupling by September 18, 2006. Blue Sky did not come into compliance with the inductive coupling compatibility requirements by offering a second compliant handset until March 1, 2007. Moreover, Blue Sky did not

²⁵ *Forfeiture Policy Statement*, 12 FCC Rcd at 17099 ¶ 22.

²⁶ *See id.*

²⁷ *Id.* at 16755 ¶ 4.

²⁸ *Id.* at 16786 ¶ 5 (noting that approximately one in ten Americans, 28 million, have some level of hearing loss, that the proportion increases with age, and that the number of those affected will likely grow as the median age increases). *See also Report on the Status of Implementation of the Commission's Hearing Aid Compatibility Requirements*, Report, 22 FCC Rcd 17709, 17719 ¶ 20 (2007) (noting, just four years later, that the number of individuals with hearing loss in the United States was "at an all time high of 31 million – with that number expected to reach approximately 40 million at the end of this decade").

²⁹ *See South Canaan Cellular Communications Company, L.P.*, Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture, 23 FCC Rcd 20, 24-25 (Enf. Bur., Spectrum Enf. Div. 2008) ("*South Canaan*").

³⁰ The Enforcement Bureau has established a base forfeiture amount of \$8,000 for violation of the labeling requirements for wireless hearing aid-compatible handsets. *See e.g., South Central Utah Telephone Association, Inc.*, Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture, 22 FCC Rcd 19251 ¶ 10 (Enf. Bur., Spectrum Enf. Div. 2007), *response pending*; *Pine Telephone Company, Inc.*, Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture, 22 FCC Rcd 9205, 9210 ¶ 11 (Enf. Bur., Spectrum Enf. Div. 2007), *response pending*; *IT&E Overseas, Inc.*, Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture, 22 FCC Rcd 7660, 7665 ¶ 10 (Enf. Bur., Spectrum Enf. Div. 2007), *response pending*.

³¹ *South Canaan*, 23 FCC Rcd at 24.

seek a waiver of the September 18, 2006 deadline,³² nor did it make a showing of good faith, diligent efforts to come into compliance. Although Blue Sky's failure to offer two handsets that meet the FCC's inductive coupling compatibility requirements is a continuing violation for purposes of determining an appropriate forfeiture, we exercise our prosecutorial discretion in light of the limited period of time of the violation and decline to assess a forfeiture on a continuing violation basis in this case.³³ We also note that Blue Sky is a Tier III carrier, *i.e.*, a wireless radio service provider with 500,000 or fewer subscribers.³⁴ Accordingly, Blue Sky is apparently liable for a \$15,000 forfeiture for failing to comply with the inductive coupling compatibility requirements in willful and repeated violation of Section 20.19(d)(2).³⁵

IV. ORDERING CLAUSES

13. Accordingly, **IT IS ORDERED** that, pursuant to Section 503(b) of the Act, and Section 1.80 of the Rules, AST Telecom, LLC d/b/a Blue Sky Communications **IS NOTIFIED** of its **APPARENT LIABILITY FOR A FORFEITURE** in the amount of fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) for willful and repeated violation of Section 20.19(d)(2) of the Rules.

14. **IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that, pursuant to Section 1.80 of the Rules, within thirty days of the release date of this Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture, AST Telecom, LLC d/b/a Blue Sky Communications **SHALL PAY** the full amount of the proposed forfeiture or **SHALL FILE** a written statement seeking reduction or cancellation of the proposed forfeiture.

15. Payment of the forfeiture must be made by check or similar instrument, payable to the order of the Federal Communications Commission. The payment must include the NAL/Account Number and FRN Number referenced above. Payment by check or money order may be mailed to Federal Communications Commission, P.O. Box 979088, St. Louis, MO 63197-9000. Payment by overnight mail may be sent to U.S. Bank – Government Lockbox #979088, SL-MO-C2-GL, 1005 Convention Plaza, St. Louis, MO 63101. Payment by wire transfer may be made to ABA Number 021030004, receiving bank TREAS/NYC, and account number 27000001. For payment by credit card,

³² In its LOI Response, Blue Sky asserted that it planned to file "in the near future" a petition for temporary and limited waiver of the September 18, 2006 deadline; however, to date no such filing has been received by the Commission.

³³ We caution Blue Sky and other carriers that future enforcement actions may consider all failures to comply with our hearing aid compatibility rules, including the inductive coupling requirements, as continuing violations for purposes of calculating appropriate forfeiture amounts.

³⁴ See Revision of the Commission's Rules to Ensure Compatibility with Enhanced 911 Emergency Calling Systems, Phase II Compliance Deadlines for Non-Nationwide CMRS Carriers, *Order to Stay*, 17 FCC Rcd 14841, 14847 ¶¶ 22-24 (2002).

³⁵ Under Section 503(b)(6) of the Act, 47 U.S.C. § 503(b)(6), we are prohibited from assessing a forfeiture for a violation that occurred more than a year before the issuance of a notice of apparent liability for forfeiture. Section 503(b)(6) does not, however, bar us from considering Blue Sky's prior conduct in determining the appropriate forfeiture amount for violations that occurred within the one-year statutory period. See *Behringer USA, Inc.*, Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture and Order, 21 FCC Rcd 1820, 1827 ¶ 20 (2006), *forfeiture ordered*, 22 FCC Rcd 10451 (2007) (forfeiture paid); *Globcom, Inc. d/b/a Globcom Global Communications*, Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture, 18 FCC Rcd 19893, 19903 ¶ 23(2003), *forfeiture ordered*, Forfeiture Order, 21 FCC Rcd 4710 (2006); *Roadrunner Transportation, Inc.*, Forfeiture Order, 15 FCC Rcd 9669, 9671-71 ¶ 8 (2000); *Cate Communications Corp.*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 60 RR 2d 1386, 1388 ¶ 7 (1986); *Eastern Broadcasting Corp.*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 10 FCC 2d 37, 37-38 ¶ 3 (1967) *recon. denied*, 11 FCC 2d 193, 195 ¶ 6 (1967). Accordingly, while we take into account the continuous nature of the violations in determining the appropriate forfeiture amount, our proposed forfeiture relates only to Blue Sky's apparent violations that have occurred within the past year.

an FCC Form 159 (Remittance Advice) must be submitted. When completing the FCC Form 159, enter the NAL/Account number in block number 23A (call sign/other ID), and enter the letters "FORF" in block number 24A (payment type code). Requests for full payment under an installment plan should be sent to: Chief Financial Officer -- Financial Operations, 445 12th Street, S.W., Room 1-A625, Washington, D.C. 20554. Please contact the Financial Operations Group Help Desk at 1-877-480-3201 or Email: ARINQUIRIES@fcc.gov with any questions regarding payment procedures.

16. The response, if any, must be mailed to the Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, 445 12th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20554, ATTN: Enforcement Bureau – Spectrum Enforcement Division, and must include the NAL/Acct. No. referenced in the caption.

17. The Commission will not consider reducing or canceling a forfeiture in response to a claim of inability to pay unless the petitioner submits: (1) federal tax returns for the most recent three-year period; (2) financial statements prepared according to generally accepted accounting practices; or (3) some other reliable and objective documentation that accurately reflects the petitioner's current financial status. Any claim of inability to pay must specifically identify the basis for the claim by reference to the financial documentation submitted.

18. **IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that a copy of this Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture shall be sent by first class mail and certified mail return receipt requested to Jeff Harlow, AST Telecom, LLC d/b/a Blue Sky Communications, 1500 Cordova Road, Suite 312, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33322, and to its counsel, Michael Bennet, Esq. and Kenneth Johnson, Esq., Bennet & Bennet PLLC, 4350 East West Highway, Suite 201, Bethesda, MD 20814.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Kathryn S. Berthot
Chief, Spectrum Enforcement Division
Enforcement Bureau