



# PUBLIC NOTICE

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## WIRELINE COMPETITION BUREAU RELEASES THE 2015 TELECOMMUNICATIONS REPORTING WORKSHEETS AND ACCOMPANYING INSTRUCTIONS

### WC Docket No. 06-122

The Wireline Competition Bureau (Bureau) announces the release of the (1) annual Telecommunications Reporting Worksheet, FCC Form 499-A (FCC Form 499-A) and accompanying instructions (FCC Form 499-A Instructions) to be used in 2015 to report 2014 revenues,<sup>1</sup> and (2) quarterly Telecommunications Reporting Worksheet, FCC Form 499-Q (FCC Form 499-Q) and accompanying instructions (FCC Form 499-Q Instructions) to be used in 2015 to report projected collected revenues on a quarterly basis.<sup>2</sup> Due to the *de minimis* nature of the revisions to the FCC Form 499-A and FCC Form 499-Q (FCC Forms) and accompanying instructions (see below), the Bureau did not separately issue a Public Notice seeking specific comment on the revisions.

The Bureau has delegated authority to revise the FCC Forms and accompanying instructions to, among other things, ensure “sound and efficient administration of the universal service programs.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Communications Act of 1934 (Act), as amended, requires that the Commission establish mechanisms to fund universal service, interstate telecommunications relay services, the administration of the North American Numbering Plan, and the shared costs of local number portability administration. 47 U.S.C. §§ 151, 225, 251, 254. To accomplish these congressionally-directed objectives, the Commission requires telecommunications carriers and certain other providers of telecommunications (including Voice-over-Internet-Protocol (VoIP) service providers) to report each year on the FCC Form 499-A the revenues they receive from offering service. See 47 C.F.R. §§ 52.17(b), 52.32(b), 54.708, 54.711, 64.604(b)(5)(iii)(B). The FCC Form 499-A is due on April 1 of each year. See Universal Service Administrative Company Schedule of Filings, <http://www.usac.org/cont/499/filing-schedule.aspx> (last visited Dec. 19, 2014).

<sup>2</sup> Sections 54.706, 54.711, and 54.713 of the Commission’s rules require all telecommunications carriers providing interstate telecommunications services, interconnected VoIP providers that provide interstate telecommunications, providers of interstate telecommunications that offer interstate telecommunications for a fee on a non-common carrier basis, and payphone providers that are aggregators to contribute to the universal service fund and file a FCC Form 499-Q on February 1, May 1, August 1, and November 1 each year. 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.706, 54.711, 54.713.

<sup>3</sup> *Changes to the Board of Directors of the National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc.; Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service*, CC Docket Nos. 96-45, 97-21, Report and Order and Second Order on Reconsideration, 12 FCC Rcd 18400, 18442, para. 81 (1997) (“Because it is difficult to determine in advance precisely the information that will be needed to administer the new universal service programs, the [Common Carrier, now Wireline Competition] Bureau will have delegated authority to waive, reduce, or eliminate contributor reporting requirements that may prove unnecessary. The Bureau also will have delegated authority to require any additional contributor reporting requirements necessary to the sound and efficient administration of the universal service programs.”). Consistent with this authority, the Bureau annually revises the Telecommunications Reporting Worksheet Instructions to provide instructions and guidance for complying with existing rules and requirements. See 47 C.F.R.

(continued...)

Pursuant to this authority, the Bureau submitted a revision of the information collection for the FCC Forms and the accompanying instructions (collection 3060-0855) to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for approval pursuant to 44 U.S.C. § 3507 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.<sup>4</sup> This information collection was approved by OMB on December 5, 2014 and expires on December 31, 2017.<sup>5</sup>

The changes to the FCC Forms and accompanying instructions are summarized below. The revised FCC Forms and the accompanying instructions will be available soon on Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC) web site at <http://www.usac.org/cont/tools/forms/default.aspx>. Redlined versions of the FCC Forms and instructions are also attached to this Public Notice for informational purposes only.

### **Mandatory Electronic Filing**

Beginning with the April 2015 FCC Form 499-A and the May 2015 FCC Form 499-Q, contributors are required to file the FCC Forms electronically. If any filers lack sufficient Internet access to submit the forms through USAC's web site, they may contact USAC's help desk to obtain assistance with meeting the filing requirements.

USAC's E-File system (<http://www.usac.org/about/tools/e-file.aspx>) was developed in 2002 and today is used by over 80 percent of the FCC Form filers to submit, verify, and certify their FCC Form 499 filings online. E-File also supports Company Officers and General Contacts in performing administrative tasks, such as resetting passwords and managing user entitlements. The benefits of using E-File include:

- Friendly user interface that provides step by step instructions to guide users through the filing process;
- Pre-population of all non-financial information;
- Error notifications, validations, checks, and auto-correction to help increase accuracy; and
- Immediate, real-time confirmation of successful certification.

USAC's website currently hosts training videos that include an "Online Filing Demo" and "FCC Form 499-A Overview," and plans are in place to launch future videos that will instruct filers on setting up and managing multiple officers and preparers. All USAC contributor information can be assessed generally through the USAC contributor website at <http://www.usac.org/cont/>. In February 2015, USAC will hold a live demo of the E-File system and its new FCC Form 499-A user interface. USAC Customer Operations is also available at (888) 641-8722 to answer any questions.

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§ 54.711(c). The FCC Forms and accompanying instructions are modified based on experience in administering the universal service program and explicit rulings by the Commission. *See, e.g., Universal Service Contribution Methodology et al.*, WC Docket No. 06-122 et al., Report and Order and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 21 FCC Rcd 7518, 7533-50, paras. 24-62 (2006).

<sup>4</sup> *See* Notice of Public Information Collection(s) Being Reviewed by the Federal Communications Commission, Comments Requested for Collection 3060-0855, 79 FR 36803 (June 30, 2014); Notice of Public Information Collection(s) Being Submitted for Review and Approval to the Office of Management and Budget, Comments Requested for Collection 3060-0855, 79 FR 60157 (Oct. 6, 2014).

<sup>5</sup> *See* OMB Website, OMB Control Number History, <http://reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAOMBHistory?ombControlNumber=3060-0855> (last visited Dec. 19, 2014).

**Other Changes**

The other revisions to the 2015 FCC Forms 499-A and 499-Q and the accompanying instructions, as applicable, are summarized below:

- **Date Changes:** Dates were updated throughout. References to “2014” were changed to “2015” and references to “2013” were changed to “2014.”
- **Circularity Factor:** The circularity factor was adjusted based upon the quarterly contribution factors.
- **Stylistic Changes:** In several instances, minor wording in the FCC Forms 499-A and 499-Q and accompanying instructions was revised for clarification purposes, without changing the substance.

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For further information, please contact Regina Brown, Telecommunications Access Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau, at (202) 418-1898 or TTY (202) 418-0484.

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