

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

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Expanding Flexible Use of the 3.7 to 4.2 GHz Band	)	GN Docket No. 18-122; GN Docket No. 21-
	)	320
Phase I Certification of Accelerated Relocation	)	
Satélites Mexicanos S.A. de C.V. d/b/a Eutelsat	)	
Americas	)	

**ORDER**

**Adopted: October 27, 2021**

**Released: October 27, 2021**

By the Acting Chief, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau:

1. With this Order, and subject to the conditions described below, the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (WTB or Bureau) validates the Phase I Certification of Accelerated Relocation (Certification) filed by Satélites Mexicanos S.A. de C.V. d/b/a Eutelsat Americas (Eutelsat Americas), an affiliate of Eutelsat S.A.,<sup>1</sup> relating to the ongoing transition of the 3.7 GHz band.<sup>2</sup>

2. In the *3.7 GHz Report and Order*, the Commission adopted rules to make 280 megahertz of mid-band spectrum available for flexible use (plus a 20 megahertz guard band) throughout the contiguous United States by transitioning existing services out of the lower portion of the 3.7-4.2 GHz band (C-band) and into the upper 200 megahertz of the band (*i.e.*, 4.0-4.2 GHz).<sup>3</sup> Specifically, the *3.7 GHz Report and Order* established a deadline of December 5, 2025, by which incumbent space station operators were to complete the transition of their operations to the upper 200 megahertz of the band, but it also provided an opportunity for accelerated clearing of the band by allowing eligible space station operators to voluntarily commit to relocate on a two-phased accelerated schedule, with a Phase I deadline of December 5, 2021,

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<sup>1</sup> “Eutelsat Americas, Phase I certification of Accelerated Relocation,” GN Docket Nos. 18-122 and 21-320 (filed Sept. 27, 2021) (Eutelsat Certification). In the instant Order, the Bureau is only considering the showing made in, and validating, the Phase I Certification of Accelerated Relocation filed by Eutelsat Americas. This is without prejudice to any procedures and processes the Bureau may adopt for Phase II Certifications, or any future showing made by Eutelsat Americas in conjunction with Phase II of the ongoing transition of the 3.7 GHz band. Eutelsat Americas is the current market authorization holder for the 3.7 GHz band authorizations at issue and has affirmed its responsibility for the original accelerated relocation election filed by Eutelsat S.A. See Letter from Hector M. Fortis Sanchez, Director of Regulatory and International Affairs, Satélites Mexicanos S.A. de C.V. d/b/a Eutelsat Americas, to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, GN Docket No. 18-122 (filed October 7, 2021); see also Letter from Carlos M. Nalda, LMI Advisors, to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, GN Docket No. 18-122 (filed May 27, 2020), with Attachment, “Accelerated Relocation Election of Eutelsat S.A.”.

<sup>2</sup> See *Expanding Flexible Use of the 3.7 to 4.2 GHz Band*, GN Docket No. 18-122, *Report and Order and Order of Proposed Modification*, 35 FCC Rcd 2343, 2456-57, at paras. 297-300 (2020) (*3.7 GHz Report and Order*).

<sup>3</sup> *3.7 GHz Report and Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 2345, para. 4.

and a Phase II deadline of December 5, 2023.<sup>4</sup> All five eligible space station operators elected accelerated relocation.<sup>5</sup>

3. By electing accelerated relocation, the eligible space station operators, among other things, voluntarily committed to perform all the tasks necessary to enable any incumbent earth station<sup>6</sup> that receives or sends C-band signals from or to a space station owned by that operator to maintain that functionality in the upper 200 megahertz of the band.<sup>7</sup> The *3.7 GHz Report and Order* stated that “[t]o the extent eligible space station operators can meet the Phase I and Phase II Accelerated Relocation Deadlines, they will be eligible to receive the accelerated relocation payments associated with those deadlines.”<sup>8</sup> Once the Bureau validates an eligible space station operator’s Certification, the relevant Accelerated Relocation Payment (ARP) is to be disbursed by the Relocation Payment Clearinghouse (Clearinghouse).<sup>9</sup>

4. The *3.7 GHz Report and Order* specified that an “eligible space station operator’s satisfaction of the Accelerated Relocation Deadlines will be determined by the timely filing of a Certification of Accelerated Relocation demonstrating, in good faith, that it has completed the necessary clearing actions to satisfy each deadline” and directed WTB to prescribe the form of such Certifications and any challenges by relevant stakeholders.<sup>10</sup> WTB was also directed to establish the process for how any challenges may impact incremental decreases in the ARP.<sup>11</sup> Further, “the Bureau, Clearinghouse, and relevant stakeholders will have the opportunity to review the Certification of Accelerated Relocation and identify potential deficiencies,” and if “credible challenges as to the space station operator’s satisfaction

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<sup>4</sup> *3.7 GHz Report and Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 2408, para. 155; 47 CFR § 27.1412(b)(1)-(2). By the Phase I deadline of December 5, 2021, eligible space station operators must repack any existing services and relocate associated incumbent earth stations throughout the contiguous United States into the upper 380 megahertz of the C-band (3820-4200 MHz), and the operators must provide passband filters to block signals from the 3700-3820 MHz band to associated incumbent earth stations in 46 of the top 50 PEAs. *3.7 GHz Report and Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 2414, para. 171; 47 CFR § 27.1412(b)(1)-(2). By the Phase II deadline of December 5, 2023, eligible space station operators must repack any existing service and relocate associated incumbent earth stations throughout the contiguous United States into the upper 200 megahertz of the C-band (4.0-4.2 GHz), and the operators must provide passband filters to block signals from the 3700-4000 MHz band to all associated incumbent earth stations in the contiguous United States. *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> *Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Announces Accelerated Clearing in the 3.7-4.2 GHz Band*, GN Docket No. 18-122, Public Notice, 35 FCC Rcd 5517 (WTB 2020).

<sup>6</sup> Incumbent earth stations are defined as those Fixed Satellite Service earth stations that “(1) were operational as of April 19, 2018; (2) are licensed or registered (or had a pending application for license or registration) in the IBFS database as of November 7, 2018; and (3) have timely certified, to the extent required by the *Order* adopted in FCC 18-91 (as we clarify . . . to include certain renewal applications and license and registration applications filed through November 7, 2018), the accuracy of information on file with the Commission.” *3.7 GHz Report and Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 2392, para. 116; 47 CFR §§ 25.138(c), 27.1411(b)(3).

<sup>7</sup> *3.7 GHz Report and Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 2455, para. 292.

<sup>8</sup> *3.7 GHz Report and Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 2456, para. 297; 47 CFR § 27.1412(b).

<sup>9</sup> *3.7 GHz Report and Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 2457, para. 300. Following validation, the Clearinghouse shall promptly notify the 3.7 GHz Service Licensees, who must pay the ARP to the Clearinghouse within 60 days of the notice. *3.7 GHz Report and Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 2457, para. 300; 47 CFR § 27.1422(c). The Clearinghouse must disburse the ARP to the eligible space station operator within seven (7) days of receipt. *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> *3.7 GHz Report and Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 2457, para. 298; 47 CFR § 27.1412(g).

<sup>11</sup> *3.7 GHz Report and Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 2457, paras. 298-99. Should an eligible space station operator miss the Phase I or Phase II deadline, it may still receive a reduced, but non-zero, ARP if it otherwise meets the Certification requirements within six months after the relevant Accelerated Relocation Deadline. *3.7 GHz Report and Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 2456, para. 297; 47 CFR § 27.1422(d).

of the relevant deadline are made, the Bureau will issue a public notice identifying such challenges.<sup>12</sup> Absent notice from WTB of deficiencies in the Certification within 30 days of its filing, the Certification will be deemed validated.<sup>13</sup> Where challenges or deficiencies are found, the Bureau will render a final decision as to the validity of the Certification no later than 60 days from its filing.<sup>14</sup>

5. As directed, on August 4, 2021, the Bureau issued a Public Notice implementing filing procedures for Phase I Certifications and related challenges.<sup>15</sup> The *Phase I ARP Certification Procedures PN* stated that to satisfy the Phase I deadline, the Certification must describe in detail each action that was taken by the eligible space station operator, including the date of completion, in a similar format and content to that operator's Transition Plan.<sup>16</sup> This description should include (but is not limited to):

- The operations that were repacked to satisfy the Phase I deadline;
- The number of new satellites, if any, that the eligible space station operator launched, including the dates of launch, reaching final orbit, and start of operations;
- A description of how services were migrated to the upper portion of the band, including the pre- and post-transition frequencies that each customer occupied and now occupies;
- Any necessary technology upgrades or other solutions, such as video compression or modulation, that the eligible space station operator implemented, described on a per antenna and/or feed basis, as appropriate;
- The number and location of antennas and feeds that were transitioned to satisfy the Phase I deadline, including the actions taken (e.g., retuning and repointing) for each;
- The date of completion of the above items;
- A description of the steps that the eligible space station operator has taken to identify all associated earth stations, antennas, and feeds, and to ensure that they are all transitioned as of the date of Certification;
- Details relating to any variances from the eligible space station operator's Transition Plan, such as antennas and feeds involving circumstances beyond the control of the eligible space station operator and therefore subject to a transition delay notice,<sup>17</sup> and antennas and feeds that are

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<sup>12</sup> *3.7 GHz Report and Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 2457, para. 299; 47 CFR §§ 27.1412(g)(1)-(2).

<sup>13</sup> *3.7 GHz Report and Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 2457, para. 299; 47 CFR § 27.1412(g)(2).

<sup>14</sup> *3.7 GHz Report and Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 2457, paras. 298-99.

<sup>15</sup> See *Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Opens a New Docket and Establishes the Process for C-Band Space Station Operator Phase I Certification of Accelerated Relocation*, Public Notice, GN Docket Nos. 18-122 and 21-320, DA 21-957 (WTB Aug. 4, 2021) (*Phase I ARP Certification Procedures PN*). The *Phase I ARP Certification Procedures PN* stated that Challenges to a Certification must be filed in GN Docket No. 21-320 within ten (10) days after the Certification is published in ECFS and the eligible space station operators' replies must be filed in that docket within five (5) days. *Id.* at 5. In the *Phase I Incremental Reduction Comment PN*, also released on August 4, 2021, the Bureau sought comment on how different Phase I Certification scenarios would affect both the challenge process and incremental decreases in the ARP. *Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Seeks Comment on Implementation of the Commission's Incremental Reduction Plan for Phase I Accelerated Relocation Payments*, Public Notice, GN Docket Nos. 18-122 and 21-320, DA 21-958 (WTB Aug. 4, 2021) (*Phase I Incremental Reduction Comment PN*). The Bureau announced its implementation of the final incremental reduction process on September 29, 2021. *Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Announces Implementation of the Commission's Incremental Reduction Plan for Phase I Accelerated Relocation Payments*, Public Notice, GN Docket Nos. 18-122 and 21-320, DA 21-1223 (WTB Sept. 29, 2021) (*Phase I Incremental Reduction Plan PN*).

<sup>16</sup> *Phase I ARP Certification Procedures PN* at 3.

<sup>17</sup> *3.7 GHz Report and Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 2455, para. 294; 47 CFR 27.1412(b)(3)(i).

otherwise pending removal from the most recent Incumbent Earth Station list<sup>18</sup> or subject to an agreement regarding the transition between the eligible space station operator and the earth station operator.<sup>19</sup>

6. Each eligible space station operator was required to certify that it attests to the truthfulness of the above information included in its Certification and is making the Certification in good faith.<sup>20</sup>

7. Eutelsat Americas submitted its Phase I Certification of Accelerated Relocation on September 27, 2021. The Bureau received no Challenges.

8. Eutelsat Americas asserts that it has met all the elements required in the *Phase I ARP Certification Procedures PN*.<sup>21</sup> Specifically, Eutelsat Americas certifies that it has completed the necessary clearing actions to satisfy the Phase I accelerated relocation deadline by repacking its existing space segment C-band downlink services into the upper 380 megahertz of the C-band (3820-4200 MHz) throughout the contiguous United States and by relocating associated incumbent earth stations in 46 of the top 50 Partial Economic Areas (“PEAs”), including by modifying the earth stations with passband filters or otherwise as appropriate, so that they will receive “substantially the same or better service” after the transition.<sup>22</sup>

9. In its Certification, Eutelsat Americas addresses each of the eight criteria set forth in the *Phase I ARP Certification Procedures PN*. With respect to repacking, Eutelsat states that it has met its Phase I relocation requirement by repacking all of its C-band downlink transmissions into the upper 200 megahertz of the C-band (4000-4200 MHz) and that it no longer provides C-band downlink services to customers located within the contiguous United States in any portion of the 3700-4000 MHz band.<sup>23</sup> Eutelsat says that it only operates four C-band satellites that serve the Continental U.S. (CONUS)<sup>24</sup> and did not need to launch any new satellites to meet its Phase I obligations.<sup>25</sup> To facilitate migration to the upper portion of the band, Eutelsat reports it implemented a grooming plan which mapped the migration of all of Eutelsat’s CONUS C-band downlink transmissions from the lower portion of the band to the

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<sup>18</sup> See *International Bureau Release Updated List of Incumbent Earth Stations in the 3.7-4.2 GHz Band in the Contiguous United States*, IB Docket No. 2-205, GN Docket No. 20-305, Public Notice, DA 21-731 (IB June 22, 2021).

<sup>19</sup> Such agreements may, for example, reflect that the earth station operator, whose station is associated with the eligible space station operator and included on its Transition Plan, has relieved said eligible space station operator of any obligation to effectuate the transition (in whole or in part, as per the agreement) of the subject earth station. *Phase I ARP Certification Procedures PN* at 3-4.

<sup>20</sup> *3.7 GHz Report and Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 2457, para. 298; *Phase I ARP Certification Procedures PN* at 4. The Bureau will determine that a Certification has been made in bad faith if, for example, the certifying party makes a statement that is false and if it finds the party did not use due diligence in providing information that is correct and not misleading to the Commission, including taking appropriate affirmative steps to determine the truthfulness of what is being submitted. *In Re Amend. of Section 1.17 of Commission's Rules Concerning Truthful Statements to Comm'n*, 18 FCC Rcd 4016, 4021 at para. 12 (2003). In cases where it is found that the ARP was disbursed based on a Certification that the eligible space station operator had filed in bad faith, the operator may be subject to the additional consequence of having to return some or all of the ARP, depending on the circumstances. See 47 CFR § 27.1412(a). Certifications are subject to section 1.17 of the Commission’s rules. 47 CFR § 1.17.

<sup>21</sup> *Phase I ARP Certification Procedures PN* at 3-4.

<sup>22</sup> Eutelsat Certification at 1-2.

<sup>23</sup> Eutelsat Certification at 2-3.

<sup>24</sup> Eutelsat operates four C-band satellites that serve the CONUS: Eutelsat 113 West A, Eutelsat 115 West B, Eutelsat 117 West A, and Eutelsat 117 West B. Eutelsat Certification at 3.

<sup>25</sup> Eutelsat Certification at 3-4.

upper 200 megahertz (4.0-4.2 GHz) of the band.<sup>26</sup> For its associated incumbent earth stations, Eutelsat indicates it provided duplicate downlink transmissions at both original and new frequencies which it says will offer the “same or better service” after the transition.<sup>27</sup> Eutelsat further indicates that it did not need to implement any technology upgrades or video compression or modulation to complete the Phase I transition.<sup>28</sup>

10. Eutelsat claims responsibility for transitioning 46 earth stations, with their corresponding antennas and feeds, and describes the filter installation and retuning work it performed on these earth stations.<sup>29</sup> In this context, Eutelsat reports that a number of satellite earth station operators voluntarily chose to perform the relocation work themselves.<sup>30</sup> According to Eutelsat, it entered into written agreements with all the operators who chose this “self-install” option.<sup>31</sup>

11. Eutelsat provides completion date information for various transition steps it performed in Exhibits B and C to its Certification.<sup>32</sup> Eutelsat also characterizes as “extensive” its outreach to its customers, earth station operators, other satellite operators, and the Relocation Coordinator to identify all associated earth stations.<sup>33</sup>

12. With respect to variances from its Transition Plan, Eutelsat’s Certification points to only two instances it argues were circumstances beyond its control due to the incumbent earth station operator either opting to transition itself or declining to cooperate with Eutelsat on any relocation work.<sup>34</sup> Eutelsat also references written agreements it has entered into with earth station operators where it says the operator has opted to perform the relocation work itself, rather than availing itself of the relocation services offered by Eutelsat.<sup>35</sup>

13. Based on the record presented, the Phase I Certification of Accelerated Relocation filed by Eutelsat Americas on September 27, 2021 is hereby validated.<sup>36</sup> As required in the *Phase I ARP Certification Procedures PN*, if after the disbursement of the ARP, the Bureau subsequently finds that Eutelsat Americas should have transitioned additional earth stations, antennas, or feeds regardless of

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<sup>26</sup> Eutelsat Certification at 4.

<sup>27</sup> Eutelsat Certification at 4-5.

<sup>28</sup> Eutelsat Certification at 5.

<sup>29</sup> Eutelsat Certification at 5-7 and Exhibit C: “Eutelsat Americas Phase I Claimed Earth Stations.”

<sup>30</sup> Eutelsat Certification at 6.

<sup>31</sup> Eutelsat Certification at 6-7, 14, and *see* Exhibit C, Column E, cases designated as “Self-Install with Filter Delivery” and “Self-Install without Equipment Delivery.”

<sup>32</sup> Eutelsat Certification at 7. Completion dates for the migration of Phase I content downlink satellite transmissions are shown in Column K (“Content Available in Upper Frequencies”) of Exhibit B: “Eutelsat Grooming Plan and Change Log,” Eutelsat Certification, and completion dates for Phase I earth stations are shown in Column F of Exhibit C, Eutelsat Certification.

<sup>33</sup> Eutelsat Certification at 7.

<sup>34</sup> Eutelsat Certification at 11-13. As noted below, if after the disbursement of the ARP, the Bureau subsequently finds that Eutelsat Americas should have transitioned these earth stations, Eutelsat Americas will be required to complete all Phase I transition work relating to these earth stations.

<sup>35</sup> Eutelsat Certification at 14; *see* Exhibit C, Column E, listing earth station operators designated as “Self-Install”

<sup>36</sup> While the Bureau validates Eutelsat’s Certification in the absence of Challenges or other contrary evidence, we make no specific findings as to its Phase I transition performance. *See, e.g.*, *infra* para. 17. We reiterate that validation of this Phase I Certification is without prejudice to any procedures and processes the Bureau may adopt for Phase II Certifications, or any future showing made by Eutelsat Americas in conjunction with Phase II of the ongoing transition of the 3.7 GHz band.

whether or not they were accounted for in its Transition Plan and Certification, Eutelsat Americas will be required to complete all Phase I transition work relating to such earth stations, antennas, or feeds in a prompt and effective manner to ensure that the earth stations, antennas or feeds continue to receive substantially the same service that they were able to receive before the transition.<sup>37</sup>

14. ACCORDINGLY, IT IS ORDERED, that, pursuant to sections 1, 4(i), 4(j), 5, and 303(r) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. §§ 151, 154(i), 154(j), 155, 303(r), and the authority delegated pursuant to sections 0.131 and 0.331 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR §§ 0.131, 0.331, this Order IS HEREBY ADOPTED, and the Phase I Certification of Accelerated Relocation filed by Eutelsat Americas is HEREBY VALIDATED.

15. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Relocation Payment Clearinghouse shall promptly notify the 3.7 GHz Service Licensees that the Bureau has validated the Phase I Certification of Accelerated Relocation filed by Eutelsat Americas.

16. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the 3.7 GHz Service Licensees shall pay their portion of the relevant Phase I Accelerated Relocation Payment to the Clearinghouse within sixty days of receiving notice from the Clearinghouse, and the Clearinghouse shall disburse the relevant Phase I Accelerated Relocation Payment to Eutelsat Americas within seven days of receiving the payment from the 3.7 GHz Service Licensees.

17. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Eutelsat Americas must complete all Phase I transition work for any earth stations, antennas, or feeds later determined to be associated with Eutelsat Americas, regardless of whether they were accounted for in its Transition Plan and Certification, in a prompt and effective manner.

18. This action is taken under delegated authority pursuant to Sections 0.131 and 0.331 of the Commission's Rules, 47 CFR §§ 0.131, 0.331, and is effective on release.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Joel Taubenblatt  
Acting Chief, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau

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<sup>37</sup> *Phase I ARP Certification Procedures PN* at 4; see 47 CFR § 27.1412(a). ("Eligible space station operators are responsible for all necessary actions...to migrate the existing services of incumbent earth stations in CONUS to the 4000-4200 MHz band (unless the incumbent earth station opts out of the formal relocation process, per paragraph (e) of this section), as of December 5, 2025. Eligible space station operators that fail to do so will be in violation of the conditions of their license authorization and potentially subject to forfeitures and other sanctions"). The obligation to remediate is independent from, and without prejudice to, any determination that the Certification (or any subsequent remediation effort) was made in bad faith. *Phase I ARP Certification Procedures PN* at 4.