



PUBLIC NOTICE

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WIRELINE COMPETITION BUREAU ANNOUNCES CORRECTED ENHANCED ALTERNATIVE CONNECT AMERICA COST MODEL SUPPORT OFFERS FOR 82 COMPANIES

WC Docket No. 10-90

The Wireline Competition Bureau (Bureau) announces corrected Enhanced Alternative Connect America Model (Enhanced A-CAM) offers for 82 companies. These offers correct two errors, discussed below, that have been identified with the original Enhanced A-CAM offers extended by the Bureau on August 31, 2023.¹ In addition, this Public Notice provides preliminary guidance regarding the assignment to carriers, in the Enhanced A-CAM offers, of locations outside their study area boundaries or in areas with overlapping study area boundaries.

The Commission adopted the Enhanced A-CAM program on July 24, 2023, as a voluntary path for supporting the widespread deployment of 100/20 Mbps or better broadband service throughout the rural areas served by carriers currently receiving A-CAM support and in areas served by legacy rate-of-return support recipients.² On August 30, 2023, the Bureau released a Public Notice announcing Enhanced A-CAM offers for eligible carriers, as well as the Enhanced A-CAM Implementation Order, which addressed matters that had been delegated to the Bureau by the Commission.³ Pursuant to the *Enhanced A-CAM Offer Public Notice*, eligible carriers may elect the Enhanced A-CAM offers until September 29, 2023.⁴

Subsequent to the release of the Enhanced A-CAM offers, two errors affecting the offers were identified. First, some locations to which competitors provide 100/20 Mbps or faster service were not identified as “competitor-served” because the competitors were not identified as providing qualifying voice service in the state, despite having reported doing so. This error was caused by some carriers making recent changes to their BDC Provider IDs which resulted in a mismatch between the voice and broadband deployment data. As a result, some locations served by a competitor with 100/20 Mbps or

¹ *Wireline Competition Bureau Announces Enhanced Alternative Connect America Cost Model Support Amounts Offered to Rate-of-Return Carriers to Expand Rural Broadband*, WC Docket No. 10-90, Public Notice, DA 23-779 (WCB Aug. 30, 2023) (*Enhanced A-CAM Offer PN*).

² *See Connect America Fund; ETC Annual Reports and Certifications; Telecommunications Carriers Eligible to Receive Universal Service Support; Connect America Fund – Alaska Plan; Expanding Broadband Service Through the ACAM Program*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 14-58, 09-197, and 16-271; RM-1168, Report and Order, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, and Notice of Inquiry, FCC 23-60, at 42, para. 98 (July 24, 2023) (*Enhanced A-CAM Order*).

³ *See Enhanced A-CAM Offer PN; Connect America Fund; ETC Annual Reports and Certifications; Telecommunications Carriers Eligible to Receive Universal Service Support; Connect America Fund – Alaska Plan; Expanding Broadband Service Through the ACAM Program*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 14-58, 09-197, and 16-271; RM-1168, Order, DA 23-778 (WCB Aug. 30, 2023) (*Enhanced A-CAM Implementation Order*).

⁴ *Enhanced A-CAM Offer PN* at 1.

faster broadband were not counted as competitively served in the initial offers. Correcting this error reduces the number of required locations—to which the electing Enhanced A-CAM carrier must deploy 100/20 Mbps or faster service—by 27,841 locations. The vast majority of these locations are below the funding threshold, however, and do not affect the amount of the Enhanced A-CAM offer. In addition, some locations that were treated as ILEC-only served in the original offer are now identified as ILEC and competitor-served in the corrected offer and will therefore receive 33% of the existing support amount, rather than 60%.

Second, due to a coding error in the support calculations, 10,354 locations to which an ILEC provides 100/20 Mbps or faster that were also subject to an enforceable commitment to serve by a competitor were identified as “competitor-only served,” rather than “ILEC and competitor served.” As a result, those locations received no support in the initial Enhanced A-CAM calculations, when they should have been assigned 33% of their existing support. This correction has no effect on the number of required locations.

The corrected offers released today include five reports.⁵ Reports 2.1 through 2.4 are revised versions of the reports associated with the original offer, updated to reflect the corrections.⁶ These reports show data associated with all of the offers, including those not subject to correction today. Report 2.5 provides a list of carriers receiving corrected offers today, along with a brief analysis of the changes to the offers, including changes in annual support amounts, the total number of supported locations, and required locations.

Finally, the Bureau acknowledges an issue that has been raised regarding the assignment of locations to a carrier outside its certified study area boundaries. This issue is caused by an algorithm in the Connect America Model which assumes locations are served from the nearest point along a road and, if that point is in an adjacent study area, assigns the location to the adjacent study area. We are aware that some locations may have been assigned to incorrect study areas in the original offer, resulting in some locations assigned to the provider that actually provides service to a location, even though the location is outside the provider’s certified study area. The Bureau further notes a related issue in which a location may lie within multiple overlapping study areas and such locations were assigned to a single study area in the modeling.

The Bureau expects to take further action to resolve issues related to the assignment of locations outside electing carriers’ certified study areas or in overlapping study areas as part of the post-election adjustment process. Carriers considering Enhanced A-CAM offers should recognize that, by electing Enhanced A-CAM, they would be committing to serve all locations in their study areas that are currently without 100/20 Mbps and may therefore be required to serve locations that the Enhanced A-CAM offers assigned to adjacent study areas. Conversely, carriers considering Enhanced A-CAM offers should recognize that they will not be required to serve, and may not ultimately receive support for, locations outside their study areas.⁷ In order to permit carriers to analyze the effect of these issues on their election decisions, the Potentially Eligible Location File on the A-CAM website has been updated to reflect all

⁵ Available at <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-397100A1.xlsx>. In addition, this report corrects an error in the calculation of the number of Supported Locations shown in Enhanced A-CAM Offer Report 1, which affected some A-CAM I carriers that serve Tribal locations. This correction does not change the calculated Enhanced A-CAM support amounts or the number of required locations for any carrier.

⁶ See *Enhanced A-CAM Offer PN* at 2-3.

⁷ In a case where an Enhanced A-CAM carrier actually provides service to a location and may appropriately be considered the incumbent carrier, the Bureau may adjust the study area boundary for the purpose of Enhanced A-CAM obligations.

study area code(s) in which the geocoded location falls as well as the study area code to which it is currently assigned.⁸

The Bureau will continue to consider any questions or concerns raised by parties, and provide additional guidance or updates as warranted.

For additional information on this proceeding, please contact Stephen Wang (Stephen.Wang@fcc.gov) of the Wireline Competition Bureau, Telecommunications Access Policy Division, (202) 418-7400.

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⁸ See cacm.usac.org.