



# PUBLIC NOTICE

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
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## COMMISSION SEEKS ADDITIONAL COMMENT ON AUTOMATIC ROAMING PROPOSALS FOR CELLULAR, BROADBAND PCS, AND COVERED SMR NETWORKS CC Docket No. 94-54

Comments Due: January 5, 1998  
Reply Comments Due: January 20, 1998

On August 15, 1996, the Commission released a Third Notice of Proposed Rulemaking ("NPRM") in CC Docket No. 94-54 seeking comment on whether it should adopt an automatic roaming rule governing cellular, broadband Personal Communications Service ("PCS"), and covered Specialized Mobile Radio ("SMR") providers. Pursuant to Section 1.415(d) of the Commission's Rules, the Commission now seeks additional comment on whether it should adopt an automatic roaming rule.

Roaming is defined as a telecommunications service occurring when the subscriber of one CMRS provider utilizes the facilities of another CMRS provider with which the subscriber has no direct pre-existing service or financial relationship to place an outgoing call, to receive an incoming call, or to continue an in-progress call.<sup>1</sup> Most often, roaming occurs when the subscriber is physically located outside the service area of his or her provider.<sup>2</sup>

Automatic roaming occurs when the roaming subscriber is able to originate or terminate a call without taking any action other than turning on his or her telephone.<sup>3</sup> This form of roaming requires a contract between the home system and the roamed-on host system. Before a subscriber can complete an originating call, the subscriber's host carrier identifies the subscriber's home carrier by means of the subscriber's telephone number.<sup>4</sup> Next, the host carrier verifies that it has an agreement with the subscriber's home carrier and queries the carrier to verify that the subscriber's account is current.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Interconnection and Resale Obligations Pertaining to Local Exchange Carrier Provision of Commercial Mobile Radio Services, CC Docket 94-54, *Second Report and Order and Third Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, 11 FCC Rcd 9462, 9464 (1996), *citing* 47 C.F.R. § 22.99 (defining "roamer" as a mobile station receiving service from a station or system in the Public Mobile Services other than one to which it is a subscriber).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> *Id.* at 9465-66.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* at 9466.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

In the NPRM, the Commission asked, *inter alia*, whether it should adopt a rule requiring cellular, broadband PCS, and covered SMR providers to enter into automatic roaming agreements on a nondiscriminatory basis. Comments on the NPRM were filed on October 4, 1996, and reply comments were filed on November 22, 1996. Having reviewed the comments received in this proceeding, we believe the record should be reopened to allow interested parties to provide updated comments on the Commission's automatic roaming proposals. Specifically, commenters are encouraged to address any developments in the following areas since the closing of the original comment/reply period: (1) the ability of new CMRS entrants, particularly PCS C, D, E, and F block licensees, to provide automatic roaming; (2) the extent to which CMRS providers, including new entrants, have entered into roaming agreements, and the nature of those agreements; and (3) any other recent developments that have an impact on the technical feasibility or cost of our automatic roaming proposals.

The Commission also invites comment on whether our roaming proposals are technically compatible with the CMRS number portability requirements established in the *Number Portability First Report and Order* in CC Docket No. 95-115.<sup>6</sup> This Order required cellular, broadband PCS, and covered SMR carriers to have the capability of querying number portability database systems in order to deliver calls from their networks to ported numbers anywhere in the country by December 31, 1998.<sup>7</sup> Cellular, broadband, and covered SMR carriers were also required to offer service provider portability throughout their networks, including the ability to support roaming, by June 30, 1999.<sup>8</sup> We seek comment on the technical capability of CMRS providers to support automatic roaming on systems that are configured to meet these CMRS number portability requirements.

Interested parties may file comments by January 5, 1998; reply comments should be filed by January 20, 1998. All comments should reference CC Docket No. 94-54 and this Public Notice. An original and four copies of all comments must be filed with the Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, 1919 M Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20554. One copy of comments and reply comments should be sent to Janice M. Jamison, Policy & Rules Branch, Commercial Wireless Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Seventh Floor, 2100 M Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20554. One copy should also be sent to the International Transcription Service, Inc. (ITS), 1231 20th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Parties are encouraged to submit comments and reply comments on diskette. Such diskette submissions would be in addition to and not a substitute for the formal filing requirements described above. Parties submitting diskettes should submit them to Janice M. Jamison, Policy & Rules Branch, Commercial Wireless Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Seventh Floor, 2100 M Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20554. Such a submission should be on a 3.5 inch diskette formatted in an IBM compatible form using Word Perfect 5.1 for Windows software. The diskette should be submitted in "read only" mode, and should be clearly labeled with the party's name, proceeding, type of pleading (comment or reply comment), and date of submission.

The full text of comments and reply comments will be available for inspection and duplication during regular business hours in the Public Reference Room, 2025 M Street, N.W., Room 5608, Washington, DC 20554. Copies may also be obtained from ITS, 1231 20th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 857-3800.

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<sup>6</sup> Telephone Number Portability, *First Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, 11 FCC Rcd 8352 (1996), *recon pending*, ("*Number Portability First Report and Order*")

<sup>7</sup> *Number Portability First Report and Order*, 11 FCC 8352, 8439 at ¶ 165.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.* at 8440, ¶ 166. Service provider number portability allows customers to retain the same telephone number as they change from one service provider to another.

For further information contact Janice M. Jamison, Commercial Wireless Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, at (202) 418-7240.