



NEWS

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20554

News Media Information 202 / 418-0500
TTY 202 / 418-2555
Fax-On-Demand 202 / 418-2830
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>
[ftp.fcc.gov](ftp://ftp.fcc.gov)

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News Media Contact:
Ira Keltz (202) 418-0616
E-mail: ikeltz@fcc.gov

FCC PROPOSES TO UPDATE RULES FOR BAS; CONFORM TECHNICAL RULES FOR BAS, CARS AND FS; AND ALLOW VIDEO ASSIST DEVICES

Washington, DC - The Federal Communications Commission adopted a *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (Notice)* today, proposing to update the Broadcast Auxiliary Service (BAS) rules to enable BAS licensees throughout the country to take advantage of the latest digital technology. The BAS is an integral part of the broadcasting industry. BAS stations are used by broadcast stations to conduct electronic news gathering (ENG) and to transmit broadcast material from the studio to the transmitter (Studio-to-Transmitter Link or STL).

The Commission also proposed to conform certain technical rules for the BAS, Cable Television Relay Service (CARS) and Fixed Microwave Services (FS), and to allow certain additional users of wireless assist video devices on unused TV channels.

The action taken today addresses the broadcast industry's desire to use the latest digital technology in all frequency bands allocated for the BAS. The rules proposed in this *Notice* will help ensure a smooth transition from analog to digital TV and enable broadcasters to have an end-to-end digital broadcasting system using any BAS frequency band.

In addition, today's action proposed other modifications to simplify and streamline the BAS rules. These include extending to all BAS licenses the ability to operate under temporary conditional authority, implementing common coordination procedures for all BAS bands, and ensuring that BAS licensees can take full advantage of the Commission's Universal Licensing System. These proposals will expedite the time it takes for an applicant to begin providing service.

The Commission further proposed rule changes designed to increase spectrum efficiency by ensuring that similar services operating on shared spectrum are regulated in a consistent manner. The BAS, CARS, and FS share several frequency bands, but in some cases operate under different technical rules. Today's action proposes to amend and conform certain technical rules, such as transmitter power and emission limits, for all of these services.

Finally, the Commission proposed to allow motion picture and television producers to use wireless assist video devices on unused TV channels, under certain conditions designed to protect current users of the band. These devices produce low resolution video images and are used by production crews for content, lighting and image framing. Currently, these devices may be used by broadcasters to assist them in producing films and programs. This action proposes to extend the use of these devices to all film and program producers.

Action by the Commission March 16, 2001, by Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 01-92). Chairman Powell, Commissioners Ness, Furchtgott-Roth and Tristani.

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Staff contact: Ira Keltz , OET at (202) 418-0616, e-mail: ikeltz@fcc.gov

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