



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>

This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
July 12, 2002

News Media Contact:
Lisa Gaisford: 202-418-7280

OET ESTABLISHES WAIVER PROCESS TO PERMIT EXISTING ULTRA WIDEBAND DEVICES TO CONTINUE OPERATION

Washington, DC – The Federal Communications Commission’s Office of Engineering and Technology (OET) adopted an Order today establishing a waiver procedure that will permit the continued operation of Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) devices and wall-imaging devices. Under the new procedure, eligible users may operate under a blanket waiver to Part 15 regulations provided that they register their devices with the Commission. The waiver will be contingent on no evidence of harmful interference to authorized services. The Order denies a Motion for Interim Stay of Enforcement of the Commission’s UWB rules filed by the Ground Penetrating Radar Industry. However, the new waiver procedure established in the Order provides a means to bring legacy equipment into compliance without imposing a significant burden on users.

Additionally, the Order clarifies Part 15 of the Commission’s rules with regard to the parties that are eligible to operate ultra-wideband systems. GPRs and wall imaging systems may be used only by law enforcement, fire and emergency rescue organizations, by scientific research institutes, by commercial mining companies, and by construction companies. The Order clarifies that GPRs and wall imaging systems may be operated for one of the purposes described in the regulations, but need not be operated directly by one of the described parties.

These actions will permit the accommodation of existing products while ensuring that the authorized radio services are protected from harmful interference and that all new equipment complies with the appropriate standards. These actions will help ensure that critical public safety services and other public benefits provided by GPRs and wall imaging systems are not disrupted.

On February 12, 2002, the Commission adopted a *First Report and Order* amending Part 15 of Commission’s rules to permit the marketing and operation of products incorporating UWB technology. Several categories of UWB devices were permitted under the regulations including imaging systems, vehicular radar devices and indoor and outdoor communication systems. Imaging systems consist of GPRs, wall imaging systems, through-wall imaging systems, surveillance systems, and medical imaging systems. GPRs are radar devices that are designed to obtain the images of buried objects or to determine the physical properties within the ground. Wall imaging systems are functionally identical to GPRs except that they are used to detect these features within walls or ceilings. GPRs and wall imaging systems have been used for many years to perform critical safety services. Common applications include inspections of highways, bridges and runways, and determining the location of gas pipelines. Other applications include uses in forensic and archaeology studies.

Action by Chief, Office of Engineering and Technology on July 12, 2002 Order (DA 02-1658).

Staff Contact: John Reed at (202) 418-2455, e-mail: jreed@fcc.gov.