

Remarks of Michael K. Powell  
Chairman, Federal Communications Commission  
Video-taped Comments for the Opening Session  
International Telecommunications Union  
Task Group on Ultra-Wideband Communications  
Boston, Massachusetts  
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On behalf of the United States and as Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, I want to welcome you to the United States and to Boston for this third meeting of the ITU's task group on ultra-wideband communications.

Boston is a historic city that goes back to the beginning of this country, and to the revolution that created it. Thus it seems appropriate that your discussions on the revolutionary technology of ultra-wideband are being held in this location. I trust that you will have a pleasant and productive week here in the U.S.

I am pleased to open this meeting because it gives me an opportunity to highlight the important role ultra-wideband technology will play in the communications market. UWB technology holds great promise for a vast array of new applications that will provide significant benefits for businesses, consumers, and the public safety community. In addition, because ultra-wideband devices can operate using spectrum occupied by existing radio services, they promote the efficient use of scarce spectrum resources.

Firefighters, police officers, emergency personnel, and industry can make use of UWB technology to detect and provide images of objects that are behind walls, buried underground or even inside the human body. Automotive applications such as collision avoidance and improved airbag mechanisms will have a direct impact on consumer safety. Consumers also stand to benefit from enhanced laptops, phones, video recorders, and personal digital assistant devices that can send and receive streams of digital video, audio, and data without wires.

What is especially exciting from a spectrum manager's perspective is that ultra-wideband technology challenges the notion that use of particular frequencies or bands must be restricted to specified users. Whereas the traditional allocation paradigm often forces us to pick "winners and losers" in the face of competing spectrum demands, UWB technology will allow us to have more winners.

Of course, UWB's substantial benefits can only be realized if regulators adopt the proper regulatory environment - - - that is, an environment that ensures UWB devices do not cause harmful interference to existing licensees and other important radio operations.

At the FCC, we know first-hand how challenging and complex the spectrum management decisions involving the introduction of UWB are. I am pleased to say that last year, after much public debate, we adopted final rules with technical standards and operational restrictions for the use of ultra-wideband devices within the U.S.

But, while UWB presents challenges for spectrum managers, they are challenges we should all embrace. The promise of UWB technology is simply too great to do otherwise.

That is why your work on developing UWB global standards and recommendations is so important. In an environment where spectrum resources need to be used efficiently to meet growing demand, it is vital that we all make interference and sharing decisions that promote the best use of spectrum.

The work you are continuing here at this meeting will allow us to do just that. Thank you. I wish you much success.

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