



NEWS

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See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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FCC SEEKS COMMENT ON PROPOSED RULE CHANGES FOR ADVANCED WIRELESS SERVICES (AWS) SPECTRUM IN THE 1.9 AND 2.1 GHz BANDS

Proposal Would Support Public Access to Free, High-Speed Broadband Internet Services

Washington, D.C. – Today, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (Further Notice) that proposes public access to free, nationwide, high-speed wireless broadband Internet services using a portion of the winning bidder's network in the 2.1 GHz Advanced Wireless Services (AWS) spectrum. Today's action builds on the FCC's efforts to promote the deployment and ubiquitous availability of affordable broadband services for consumers.

The Further Notice specifically seeks comment on proposed rules for the AWS spectrum in the 1915-1920 MHz, 1995-2000 MHz, and 2155-2180 MHz bands. In 2004, the FCC sought comment on service rules for the 1915-1920 MHz, 1995-2000 MHz, 2020-2025 MHz, and 2175-2180 MHz bands ("AWS-2"), and in 2007, the FCC sought comment on service rules for the 2155-2175 MHz band ("AWS-3"). To supplement the comments received in response to these earlier notices, today's Further Notice requests comment on specific service rules for these spectrum bands.

Regarding the 2155-2180 MHz band, today's Further Notice proposes combining the 2155-2175 MHz band with the 2175-2180 MHz band to create a 25 megahertz block of spectrum and a single nationwide license for the 2155-2180 MHz band. This larger block size may allow the AWS-3 licensee to make more robust use of the spectrum while operating at a stricter out-of-band emission limit. Alternatively, another proposed option would be to retain the 2155-2175 MHz AWS-3 block and allow the licensee to operate with a more traditional out-of-band emission limit.

The Further Notice also proposes requiring the licensee for the 2155-2180 MHz spectrum to provide – using up to 25 percent of its wireless network capacity – free, two-way broadband Internet service at engineered data rates of at least 768 kbps downstream. Additional obligations associated with the licensee's free broadband service would include a requirement to provide a network-based filtering mechanism for the free Internet service in order to protect children and families, and a requirement that the network allow for the use of open devices.

The build-out requirements for the licensee, as proposed today, would be to provide signal coverage and offer service to at least 50 percent of the total U.S. within four years and to at least 95 percent of the U.S. population by the end of the 10-year license term. Today's Notice also proposes permitting both downlink and uplink transmissions throughout the entire 2155-2180 MHz band.

The Further Notice also proposes service rules for the AWS spectrum in the 1915-1920 MHz and 1995-2000 MHz (H Block). These proposed rules include licensing the H Block on a Basic Trading Area (BTA) basis for 10-year license terms, and requiring licensees to provide signal coverage and offer service to at least 35 percent of the population in each licensed area within four years and at least 70 percent of the population in each licensed area by the end of the license term. Under the technical rules proposed today, base and fixed transmissions would be prohibited in the 1915-1920 MHz band, and mobile transmissions would be prohibited in the 1995-2000 MHz band.

Action by the Commission on June 20, 2008, by Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 08-158). Chairman Martin and Commissioners Copps, Adelstein, Tate, and McDowell.

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WT Docket Nos. 07-195 and 04-356

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