



NEWS

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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).

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FCC ESTABLISHES OFFICE OF NATIVE AFFAIRS AND POLICY

Washington, DC -- In order to develop and advance an agenda aimed at bringing the benefits of a modern communications infrastructure to all Native communities, the Federal Communications Commission has established an Office of Native Affairs and Policy. The office will work to promote the deployment and adoption of communications services and technologies throughout Tribal Lands and Native communities, by, among other things, ensuring robust government-to-government consultation with Tribal governments and increased coordination with Native organizations.

“Tribal lands and Native communities suffer unacceptably low levels of communications services, especially broadband,” said FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski. “Increasing connectivity in Native America is one of the FCC’s top priorities. With this new office, the Commission will work closely with Native leaders to develop and implement policies that ensure their communities enjoy the benefits of 21st Century communications infrastructure.”

The office will be headed by Geoffrey Blackwell, and will be part of the FCC’s Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau. “The Office of Native Affairs and Policy is a historic milestone and the culmination of many years of effort by leaders in Indian Country and at the FCC,” said Blackwell. “There is a lot of good hard work that remains on the path ahead. As Tribal Nations and Native communities exercise their sovereignty and self-determination to ensure a bright future for their generations, the entire agency now has a new capability to engage with them. Many people throughout the FCC have worked diligently on behalf of Tribes for a number of years. I look forward to working with them to further advance the Commission’s efforts on behalf of Native communities.”

The Office of Native Affairs and Policy will handle ongoing consultation and coordination with American Indian Tribes, Alaska Native Villages, Native Hawaiian Organizations, and other Native and Tribal entities, and will be the official Commission contact point for these activities. It will also engage in work with Commissioners, bureaus, and offices, as well as with other government agencies, private organizations, and the communications industries, to develop and implement FCC policies regarding Tribal Nations and Native communities.

Action by the Commission July 29, 2010, by Order (FCC 10-141). Chairman Genachowski, Commissioners Copps, McDowell, Clyburn and Baker with Commissioner Copps issuing a statement.

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