



NEWS

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

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FCC TAKES ACTION TO ADVANCE INTEROPERABILITY FOR PUBLIC SAFETY BROADBAND COMMUNICATIONS

Washington, D.C. -- The FCC's Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau (PSHSB) today adopted an Order that establishes a technical framework to ensure interoperability in the public safety mobile broadband networks states, counties and cities approved for early deployment are planning to construct. These regional broadband networks must be technically compatible and fully interoperable with one another, as well as the nationwide network envisioned for America's first responders.

James Arden Barnett, Jr., Rear Admiral (ret.) and Chief of the PSHSB, said, "There are many forces that pull against interoperability, this is why it is critical that we have an iron rule of interoperability for America's public safety mobile broadband networks. Our goal is to make sure that nationwide interoperability is built into these networks from the beginning, and we will continue to work with public safety to make sure their immediate and long-term communications needs are met."

Jennifer Manner, Deputy Bureau Chief, PSHSB, and Acting Director of ERIC, said, "Interoperability for America's first responders is crucial to ensuring effective broadband communications nationwide. The technical framework we've set forth will help ensure that these regional public safety mobile broadband networks are interoperable and capable of seamlessly evolving and integrating into a nationwide network as it is constructed. We look forward to our continued work with public safety on the technical and policy considerations necessary to achieve this."

The FCC requirements for a baseline technical framework address core aspects for interoperable communications, such as roaming capabilities, system identifiers, service coverage and secure communications, to ensure that public safety officials can communicate effectively and seamlessly with one another regardless of what network they are operating on. The Order is based on recommendations made by the FCC's Emergency Response Interoperability Center (ERIC) to ensure that public safety broadband communications are interoperable nationwide.

Under the baseline technical framework, waiver recipients will:

- Construct networks that support Long Term Evolution (LTE) interfaces that support roaming and interoperability;
- Construct networks that provide outdoor coverage at minimum data rates of 256 Kbps uplink and 768 Kbps downlink for all types of devices throughout the cell coverage area;
- Provide 95 percent reliability of signal coverage for all services and applications throughout the network;
- Conduct conformance testing on devices to ensure compliance with technical requirements associated with 3GPP Release 8 (LTE) and higher release standards;
- Perform interoperability testing of the LTE interfaces to determine their roaming capabilities and make sure that these capabilities are sufficient;

- Build security and encryption features into their networks based on certain optional features of the 3GPP security features for LTE Network Access Domain;
- Allow to use permanent fixed point-to-point and point-to-multipoint stations only on an ancillary basis and on a non-interference basis to the primary mobile operations; and
- Coordinate with one another when their networks overlap or operate adjacent to one another to avoid signal/spectral interference or disruption to communications.

For additional information about the Order please contact Jennifer Manner, Deputy Bureau Chief, PSHSB and acting Director of ERIC, at 202-418-3619 or via email: jennifer.manner@fcc.gov.

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