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For Immediate Release

FCC FURTHER STREAMLINES SATELLITE LICENSING RULES

WASHINGTON, December 17, 2015 – The Federal Communications Commission adopted rules to comprehensively simplify and streamline the regulatory approval process for satellite licenses. These rules are also known as the Part 25 rules. This rulemaking is one of the key reforms under the Commission’s process reform initiative.

Today’s Report and Order increases satellite operational flexibility, eliminates unnecessary filing requirements, and updates our rules to better accommodate evolving technology. The changes will significantly reduce regulatory burdens and costs.

Specifically, the Commission’s Report and Order adopts changes that will:

- Facilitate international coordination of proposed satellite networks by permitting submissions of advanced publication and coordination requests by the FCC to the International Telecommunication Union before a full license application is filed at the Commission;
- Eliminate interim satellite milestone implementation requirements;
- Deter spectrum warehousing by creating a post-licensing bond requirement that increases in value over time, providing an incentive for licensees to surrender their authorizations early if business plans change;
- Refine the “two-degree” orbital spacing requirements to better accommodate the use of small antennas, and
- Expand options for simplified routine earth station licensing.

The Report and Order also simplifies, eliminates, updates, or clarifies definitions and technical terms throughout the Part 25 rules.

Action by the Commission December 17, 2015 by Second Report and Order (FCC 15-167). Chairman Wheeler, Commissioners Clyburn, Rosenworcel, Pai, and O’Rielly approving and issuing separate statements.

(IB Docket No. 12-267)

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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. Cir. 1974).