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For Immediate Release**PIRATE RADIO EQUIPMENT SEIZED
FROM ILLEGAL RADIO STATION IN MANHATTAN**

WASHINGTON, May 15, 2018—Taking action against a pirate radio operator, Federal Communications Commission agents, in coordination with the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of New York and the U.S. Marshals Service, seized radio transmission equipment from an unauthorized radio station on April 10, which was operating illegally in Manhattan. The FCC’s Enforcement Bureau has been leading an effort to crack down on this illegal activity, resulting in unlawful broadcasts going off the air, seizure of equipment, fines against pirates, proposed fines against pirates and property owners actively aiding pirate radio operations, and numerous other enforcement actions.

“Pirate radio stations are illegal, as they operate without an FCC license, and cause real harm. These stations can cause interference to legitimate, licensed broadcasters and can prevent those broadcasters from delivering critical public-safety information to listeners,” said Rosemary Harold, Chief of the FCC’s Enforcement Bureau. “We are pursuing multiple legal routes to stop pirate broadcasters and this seizure action in Manhattan is one of them. We thank our partners in the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of New York and the U.S. Marshals Service, and we’re particularly thankful for the great work of FCC field agents in combatting this problem.”

“Rumba FM,” which broadcast on 95.3 FM from a high-rise apartment building in Manhattan, was operating without an FCC license, as required by law. The FCC issued multiple warnings to the illegal operators but the radio station continued to broadcast. Pursuant to a federal court order, authorities seized equipment operated by the illegal radio station at that station’s antenna location on St. Nicholas Avenue in Manhattan.

The Communications Act of 1934 prohibits the operation of radio broadcasting equipment above certain low-intensity thresholds without a license issued by the FCC. The Act authorizes the seizure and forfeiture of any electronic or radio frequency equipment used to broadcast without an FCC license. The number of available radio frequencies is limited, and unlicensed broadcasting can interfere with the broadcasting of legitimate licensed radio stations, potentially causing chaos in the radio spectrum.

In an action to seize a pirate radio station’s equipment, the FCC performs the initial investigation. Once the FCC has built a case against the station, the matter is referred to the relevant U.S. Attorney’s Office, which is then responsible for filing the case and obtaining a warrant to seize the illegal radio equipment from the court. The U.S. Marshals Service is responsible for executing the warrant and seizing the pirate radio station equipment, with FCC personnel provide technical assistance during the seizure.

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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).

