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**For Immediate Release**

**FCC PROPOSES FINE AGAINST NORTH CAROLINIAN FOR  
UNAUTHORIZED RADIO COMMUNICATIONS AND  
IMPERSONATING LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL**

WASHINGTON, October 11, 2018—The Federal Communications Commission today proposed a fine against Mr. Ocean Hinson of Surry County, North Carolina, for apparent intentional misuse of a local public safety radio communications network. Mr. Hinson faces a \$39,278 proposed fine after impersonating first responders in unauthorized radio communications on a public safety frequency licensed to Surry County.

On October 17, 2017, Surry County officials, responding to a fire alarm triggered at a local residence, transmitted a request for a unit from the Westfield Volunteer Fire Department. Shortly thereafter, Mr. Hinson posing as “Westfield VFD Unit 7331” responded by radio and stated that he was en route to the scene of the alarm. Approximately four minutes later, Mr. Hinson, still identifying himself as Westfield VFD Unit 7331, contacted the dispatcher by radio and cancelled the call. As a result of these two transmissions, no real first responder investigated the triggered residential fire alarm. Fortunately, no fire actually occurred at the scene of the alarm. Mr. Hinson later admitted to local law enforcement that he had made the two unauthorized transmissions using a mobile radio in his personal vehicle.

The law prohibits unlicensed operation on licensed radio frequencies like the one licensed to Surry County Communications Center for local public safety uses. Mr. Hinson’s apparent actions had the potential to cause significant harm and apparently violated FCC rules against operating on radio frequencies without a license.

The proposed action, formally called a Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture, or NAL, contains only allegations that advise a party on how it has apparently violated the law and may set forth a proposed monetary penalty. The Commission may not impose a greater monetary penalty in this case than the amount proposed in the NAL. Neither the allegations nor the proposed sanctions in the NAL are final Commission actions. The party will be given an opportunity to respond and the Commission will consider the party’s submission of evidence and legal arguments before acting further to resolve the matter.

Consumer complaints help the Commission in its enforcement and policy-making work. Such complaints can be filed with the FCC at [www.fcc.gov/complaints](http://www.fcc.gov/complaints) or by calling: (888) CALL-FCC.

The Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture can be found at:  
[https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/FCC-18-140A1.pdf](https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-18-140A1.pdf)

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