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For Immediate Release

**FCC STREAMLINES APPLICATION PROCESS FOR
SMALL SATELLITES**

WASHINGTON, August 1, 2019—The Federal Communications Commission today significantly streamlined the application process for a category of satellites known as small satellites. Its action provides an alternative, cheaper, and more flexible authorization process for this fast-growing segment of the commercial satellite communications market.

Small satellite systems have myriad uses, including scientific and research missions as well as communications and remote sensing, and are now increasingly used for commercial endeavors. Many small satellites are launched not as large constellations, but as part of small-scale operations consisting of a single satellite or only a few satellites. This new licensing process is optional and intended to cover these types of smaller-scale operations rather than the large constellations of satellites that are planning to provide broadband service or other satellite systems that require constant spectrum availability.

Given recent innovation in the small satellite sector and the increasing number of commercial operations, the regulations adopted today set out a new optional authorization process, within Part 25 of the Commission's rules, to govern satellite licensing that is tailored to small satellite operations. The new process addresses current needs in this evolving industry sector, as technological developments have outpaced existing Commission licensing rules and processes.

Specifically, this decision allows for a new, optional process to be used by satellites with certain characteristics, such as having a short on-orbit lifetime, a maximum wet mass of 180 kilograms, and having a mission profile designed to produce a low risk of orbital debris and spectrum interference.

Today's action also adopts a new application fee category for small satellite applicants seeking a U.S. license or access to the U.S. market, and adopts a new small satellite regulatory fee category.

Action by the Commission August 1, 2019 by Report and Order (FCC 19-81). Chairman Pai, Commissioners O'Rielly, Carr, Rosenworcel, and Starks approving and issuing separate statements.

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