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**For Immediate Release**

**FCC STREAMLINES LICENSING RULES FOR MANY  
SATELLITE OPERATORS**

WASHINGTON, November 18, 2020—The Federal Communications Commission today adopted changes to streamline its satellite licensing process and increase operational flexibility for satellite operators. With the creation of a new satellite licensing framework and the elimination of unnecessary paperwork, the FCC continues to make the regulatory approval process for satellite licenses more efficient and less burdensome.

With today's Report and Order, the FCC establishes a new, optional unified licensing framework. Under its current rules, the FCC issues separate licenses for earth stations and space stations in a satellite system based on the different application requirements that govern satellite services. But with the adoption of the optional unified licensing framework, available to systems operating above 10 GHz, space stations and blanket-licensed earth stations in a satellite system will be able to be authorized under a single license. This licensing framework will eliminate redundancies in the separate licensing processes for space stations and earth stations and accelerate the deployment of new earth stations and, in turn, services to the public.

As an additional streamlining measure, earth station applicants may certify that they will comply with the relevant terms and conditions of the license for the space station with which the earth station will communicate, in lieu of providing redundant technical demonstrations or other information. This measure will afford the benefits of streamlining to independent earth station operators.

The Report and Order also aligns the build-out periods for qualifying earth stations with the accompanying build-out periods for their communicating satellites. This alignment offers satellite operators greater certainty about the location of their gateway earth stations earlier in the satellite design process. In addition, the Report and Order eliminates unnecessary reporting requirements for satellite operators and requirements to notify the FCC of certain minor changes to earth stations.

Action by the Commission November 18, 2020 by Report and Order (FCC 20-159). Chairman Pai, Commissioners O'Rielly, Carr, Rosenworcel, and Starks approving. Chairman Pai issuing a separate statement.

IB Docket No. 18-314

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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).*