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For Immediate Release

FCC ISSUES FINES FOR MISUSE OF RADIO LOCATION SPECTRUM

Air-Tel and IOU Face Hundreds of Thousands of Dollars in Fines for Providing Unauthorized GPS Services and Illegally Altering Equipment to Do So

WASHINGTON, May 20, 2021—The Federal Communications Commission today fined Air-Tel, LLC and IOU Acquisitions, Inc. \$327,290 and \$207,290 respectively for providing unlicensed wireless broadband-based GPS services under the guise of providing radar-based location services. The companies also altered equipment to provide these services and to operate outside of the spectrum band for which they are authorized.

Air-Tel and IOU hold authorizations to provide Radiolocation Services in the 3300-3650 MHz band. These services are generally radar-based and rely on the propagation properties of radio waves to determine the position of an object for non-navigation purposes. Instead, the companies offered technologically distinct wireless broadband-based GPS services which rely on satellite communications and wireless broadband, not radiolocation.

To offer this different service than was authorized under their FCC licenses, the companies altered the settings of wireless equipment both to support this unauthorized service and to operate outside the authorized frequency bands allowed for the equipment.

The Communications Act and FCC rules require licensees to provide only the wireless services for which they are licensed in the given spectrum band and to use radio frequency devices in a manner consistent with their underlying FCC equipment authorization. These spectrum management rules are central to the FCC's vital role in organizing and coordinating spectrum use in America to avoid interference and other problems that can result from misuse.

The FCC investigation was prompted by a complaint about the companies' misuse of spectrum. An FCC field agent visited their joint facility in Denver, Colorado and a Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture was [issued](#) in 2018. Both companies have ceased operating on the licenses at issue in this case.

Actions by the Commission May 20, 2021 by two Forfeiture Orders (FCC 21-64 and FCC 21-65). Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioners Carr, Starks, and Simington approving. Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel issuing a separate statement.

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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).