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For Immediate Release

FCC SEEKS COMMENT ON PROMOTING PUBLIC SAFETY USE OF THE 4.9 GHz BAND

WASHINGTON, September 30, 2021—The Federal Communications Commission today took action to protect public safety operations in the 4.9 GHz spectrum band and to move towards establishment of a nationwide, coordinated framework that would emphasize public safety needs while increasing overall use of the band and putting public safety on a path to 5G.

In 2002, the Commission designated the 4.9 GHz band for public safety operations. Last October, the Commission adopted a state-by-state leasing framework that would have allowed states to take this prime mid-band spectrum away from public safety. After public safety organizations filed petitions for reconsideration of the Commission's order, the Commission today rescinded the state-by-state leasing rules, finding that they risked fragmenting the band. The Commission also partially lifted a freeze on applications in this band to allow existing public safety licensees to modify their licenses and to license new permanent fixed sites.

Additionally, the Commission adopted a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that seeks to establish a nationwide framework for the band that will spur technical innovation, lower equipment costs, and promote interoperable communications. The Further Notice explores options to ensure public safety use of the band, including protecting public safety users from harmful interference, collecting more granular licensing data, and adopting technical standards to promote interoperability. The Further Notice also seeks comment on ways to encourage use of new technologies, including 5G, and dynamic spectrum access systems to facilitate coexistence between public safety and non-public safety uses of the band.

Taken together, today's actions reset the 4.9 GHz band rules and chart a new course for enhancing public safety and realizing the full potential of the band.

Action by the Commission September 30, 2021 by Order on Reconsideration and Eighth Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 21-106). Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioners Starks and Simington approving. Commissioner Carr approving in part and concurring in part. Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioners Carr and Starks issuing separate statements.

WP Docket No. 07-100

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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).