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For Immediate Release

FCC SEEKS INPUT ON OFFSHORE SPECTRUM NEEDS AND USES

WASHINGTON, June 8, 2022—The Federal Communications Commission today voted to begin gathering information on the possible current and future needs, uses, and impacts of offshore wireless spectrum use. With wind turbine projects, cruise ships, oceanography, and other offshore projects possibly benefiting from increased spectrum access and updated spectrum management guidelines, this Notice of Inquiry seeks public comment on how best to address these needs.

The Commission seeks input on the possible future demand and use cases for offshore spectrum. The Notice of Inquiry asks for comment on different spectrum rights models such as shared, tiered, and primary rights structures, and what potential initial license assignment mechanisms for offshore operations might work best. The Notice of Inquiry also seeks information on which spectrum bands might best meet offshore spectrum needs, how to protect any incumbents in those bands, and what has and has not worked in other countries.

The FCC asks questions about the needs of commercial or private maritime or aeronautical uses. It seeks input on details such as how far from land demand exists for wireless operations and if potential wireless infrastructure would be fixed, drifting in the water, airborne, or deployed in another way. For windfarms, the FCC seeks information about how spectrum might be useful for testing, daily operations, maintenance, communications with ships and the shore, and communications between offshore operations.

Today's new proceeding launches a discussion on how to potentially build on and look beyond the FCC's existing offshore spectrum policies to future needs and technologies.

Action by the Commission June 8, 2022 by Notice of Inquiry seeing (FCC 22-41).
Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioners Carr, Starks, and Simington approving.
Chairwoman Rosenworcel and Commissioner Starks issuing separate statements.

WT Docket No. 22-204

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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).