



OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN BRENDAN CARR

Carr Proposes Spectrum Abundance for Next-Gen Orbital Missions

Plan Would Bring Reliable Spectrum Access to Orbital Laboratories, In-Space Repairs, Inhabitable Spacecraft, and Other “Weird Space Stuff”

WASHINGTON, March 5, 2026—FCC Chairman Brendan Carr proposed a plan to bring spectrum abundance to “weird space stuff”—cutting-edge, emergent ventures in space, namely supporting telemetry, tracking, and command (TT&C) for on-the-horizon endeavors like orbital laboratories, satellite repairs, and private inhabitable spacecraft.

If adopted by a vote of the full Commission at its March monthly meeting, the FCC would start a formal proceeding to meet the spectrum needs of these technologies in two ways. First, the FCC would explore opportunities to clarify its rules so that emergent space operations have reliable access to spectrum for their missions. Second, the FCC intends to identify new spectrum bands that meet the safety and operational needs of emergent space activities.

Chairman Carr issued the following statement:

“America’s leadership in space relies on predictable spectrum resources. Nowhere is this more clear than when it comes to the cutting-edge space operations that come right out of sci-fi and into our modern reality. Whether we’re talking about repairing a satellite in orbit or creating pharmaceutical solutions to our health care challenges in a space lab, these very real ventures will require very real resources, including secure radio signals for control and basic operations. Today’s proposal is the first step toward the spectrum abundance needed to give America’s space activities the predictable spectrum environment they need to thrive.”

Additional Background Information:

Chairman Carr shared with his fellow Commissioners a draft Notice of Proposed Rulemaking which would, if adopted, look to find ways to use market-based principles to see spectrum resources put to more intensive use in the service of the space economy. The NPRM seeks to clarify and expand the FCC’s traditional regulatory classifications so that emergent operations have more predictable spectrum access. The proceeding would also explore new spectrum bands that could support new use cases on a dedicated basis to provide a clear, reliable, and expeditious path to support the groundbreaking technologies and services that companies are developing in space.

Spectrum is a critical component of all space operations. Even for spacecraft that do not provide radiocommunications services to the public, reliable spectrum access is mandatory for safety functions like telemetry, tracking, and command to control spacecraft in orbit. American innovators, however, currently face an acute shortage of usable and readily accessible spectrum for TT&C, and that spectrum crunch threatens to delay—or even prevent—the growth of domestic space technologies and jeopardize U.S. leadership in the booming global space economy.

The Commission is aggressively pursuing a policy of spectrum abundance in outer space. Earlier this year, it launched a proceeding to release up to 20,000 megahertz of spectrum for traditional connectivity services, including high-speed broadband from constellations in low-Earth orbit. The Commission has also begun a [comprehensive review](#) of its licensing and regulatory framework for space communications.

The public draft of the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking will be made available later today at: <https://www.fcc.gov/March2026>.

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