

**STATEMENT OF  
CHAIRMAN TOM WHEELER**

Re: *2004 and 2006 Biennial Regulatory Reviews - Streamlining and Other Revisions of Parts 1 and 17 of the Commission's Rules Governing Construction, Marking and Lighting of Antenna Structures, WT Docket No. 10-88, Amendments to Modernize and Clarify Part 17 of the Commission's Rules Concerning Construction, Marking and Lighting of Antenna Structures, RM 11349*

In order to keep up with the rapid pace of change in the industries that we oversee, we must hold ourselves to a high standard to be as agile, efficient, and transparent as possible.

That's why, under the leadership of Diane Cornell, we have been moving forward with changes to streamline how the Commission functions, including overhauling outdated Commission rules. This decision is an example: the issues resolved in this proceeding were first raised more than nine years ago. Today they move off of that backlog.

With this item, we are updating our rules regarding antenna structure lighting and marking to provide clarity and reduce regulatory burdens on antenna structure owners and licensees. The reforms we adopt here will remove barriers to wireless deployment, reduce unnecessary costs, and encourage providers to continue to deploy advanced systems that facilitate safety.

More specifically, this Report and Order will streamline and eliminate outdated provisions of the Commission's Part 17 rules governing the construction, marking, and lighting of antenna structures. The amended rules will improve efficiency, reduce regulatory burdens, and enhance compliance with tower painting and lighting requirements, while continuing to ensure the safety of pilots and aircraft passengers nationwide. This is an area where the FCC and the FAA have overlapping jurisdiction. The Report and Order aims to harmonize our rules with the FAA's guidelines that also govern antenna structure lighting and marking, recognizing that the FAA is the expert agency on matters of air safety.

The Report and Order makes many common sense updates to our rules, which will meaningfully lower the costs of mobile broadband deployment. For example, instead of requiring tower owners to physically send tenants a copy of their FCC Antenna Structure Registration, they can now use mail, email, or other electronic means to deliver a link to the same information that is contained on the FCC website. We've already heard from one tower company familiar with the order that this rule change will reduce costs substantially by modernizing the way it can notify tenants on its 20,000 towers that its Antenna Structure Registrations have been modified.

Similarly, instead of requiring tower owners to conduct quarterly physical inspections of their lighting equipment, technology can be harnessed to do the job. Towers that are continuously monitored remotely will be exempt from the physical inspection obligations. These advanced systems employ self-diagnostic features, such as alarm notification and 24-hour polling, to report malfunctions of either the lighting or monitoring system to a Network Operations Center that is staffed around the clock. This will save tower companies millions of dollars per year without compromising safety. American Tower estimates, for example, that it spends approximately \$1.7 million/year to conduct required inspections – even though it maintains a state-of-the-art monitoring system.

While this item eases regulatory burdens, it also preserves safeguards that prevent deleterious impacts on historical, environmental, and local interests.

This is one piece of the puzzle in our ongoing work to make the regulatory approval processes for wireless infrastructure more efficient and effective, benefitting the companies that deploy wireless networks and the consumers that are demanding more and more spectrum-based services all the time.

Thank you to the Wireless Bureau for their work on this item.