



NEWS

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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. Circ 1974).

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FCC MAKES ADDITIONAL SPECTRUM AVAILABLE FOR UNLICENSED USE

Washington, DC - As part of its ongoing effort to promote more flexible, innovative, and market driven uses of the radio spectrum, the FCC today made available an additional 255 megahertz of spectrum in the 5.470-5.725 GHz band for unlicensed devices.

In the Report and Order approved yesterday, the Commission made the spectrum available for use by unlicensed National Information Infrastructure (U-NII) devices, including Radio Local Area Networks (RLANs), operating under Part 15 of the FCC's rules. This increases the spectrum available for use by unlicensed devices in the 5 GHz region of the spectrum by nearly 80% -- and is a significant increase in the spectrum available for unlicensed devices across the overall radio spectrum. This action will also harmonize the spectrum available for these U-NII devices throughout the world, enabling manufacturers to reduce product development costs by allowing the same products to be used in many parts of the world.

The additional available spectrum for U-NII devices will enable continued growth and innovation in wireless broadband services, including services offered by wireless internet service providers (WISPs). WISPs use unlicensed devices to provide a broadband alternative for rural and underserved areas. Although they are a relatively nascent industry, their deployment rates have been increasing rapidly.

In addition to making additional spectrum available for U-NII devices, the Commission also adopted several allocation changes consistent with the results of the 2003 World Radio Conference and an agreement reached with the U.S. Department of Defense, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). These changes will ensure that critical Federal Government operations are protected from harmful interference. In addition to the allocation changes, to provide federal users with additional protection from harmful interference, the Order requires that U-NII devices operating in the 5.250-5.350 GHz and the 5.470-5.725 GHz bands employ dynamic frequency selection (DFS) -- a listen-before-talk mechanism -- and transmit power control (TPC).

Action by the Commission November 12, 2003, by Report and Order (FCC 03-287). Chairman Powell, Commissioners Abernathy, Copps, Martin, and Adelstein. Chairman Powell issuing a statement and Commissioner Abernathy issuing a separate statement.

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