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FCC BEGINS INQUIRY AND PROPOSED RULEMAKING REGARDING "INTERFERENCE TEMPERATURE" APPROACH FOR INTERFERENCE MANAGEMENT

Washington, D.C. – In light of the ever increasing demand for radio spectrum, and recognizing the additional challenges this presents for effectively managing interference, the FCC today adopted a Notice of Inquiry and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that sets forth and seeks comment on a possible new way to quantify and manage interference among different services.

Termed “interference temperature,” this model for addressing interference takes into account the actual cumulative radiofrequency (RF) energy from transmissions of spectrum-based devices, and would set a maximum cap on the aggregate of these transmissions. In contrast, the current approach for managing interference focuses on specifying and limiting the transmit powers of individual spectrum-based devices as the chief way to prevent interference.

The “interference temperature” approach may facilitate more intensive use of the radio spectrum, creating the opportunities for new services and improving the predictability of any interference to existing services.

The Notice of Inquiry seeks comment on a number of issues related to the need for, development, and implementation of an interference temperature model for managing interference.

To test the potential usefulness and applicability of this approach, which was included as one of the recommendations of the Spectrum Policy Task Force, the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking seeks comment on various technical rules that would establish procedures and use the interference temperature model on a limited basis in the following two bands: 6525-6700 MHz and portions of the 12.75-13.25 GHz bands.

Specifically, these procedures would enable unlicensed devices to operate in these bands, which are used primarily for satellite uplinks and fixed point-to-point microwave services. The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking also seeks comment on whether the possible introduction of unlicensed operation into these bands would impact these existing services.

Action by the Commission November 13, 2003, by Notice of Inquiry and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 03-289). Chairman Powell, Commissioners Abernathy, Copps, and Martin with Commissioner Adelstein approving in part and concurring in part. Chairman Powell, Commissioners Copps and Adelstein issued separate statements.

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