

FCC Application for Radio Service Authorization
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau; Public
February 2020
Safety and Homeland Security Bureau

3060-0798

SUPPORTING STATMENT

A. Justification:

1. FCC Form 601 is a consolidated, multi-part application form that is used for market-based and site-based licensing for wireless telecommunications services, including public safety, which are filed through the Commission's Universal Licensing System (ULS). FCC Form 601 is composed of a main form that contains administrative information and a series of schedules used for filing technical and other information. This form is used to apply for a new license, to amend or withdraw a pending application, to modify or renew an existing license, cancel a license, request a duplicate license, submit required notifications, request an extension of time to satisfy construction requirements, request an administrative update to an existing license (such as mailing address change), or request a Special Temporary Authority License. Respondents are encouraged to submit FCC Form 601 electronically and are required to do so when applying for an authorization for which the applicant was the winning bidder in a spectrum auction.

The data collected on FCC Form 601 includes the FCC Registration Number (FRN), which serves as a "common link" for all filings an entity has with the FCC. The Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 requires entities filing with the Commission to use an FRN.

Records such as Form 601 may include information about individuals or households, *e.g.*, personally identifiable information or PII, and the use(s) and disclosure of this information are governed by the requirements of a system of records notice or "SORN", FCC/WTB-1, "Wireless Services Licensing Records." There are no additional impacts under the Privacy Act.

On October 24, 2018, the Commission released a Report and Order, FCC 18-149, in GN Docket No. 17-158, adopting limited changes to the rules governing Priority Access Licenses (PALs) in the 3550-3700 MHz (3.5 GHz) band, including larger license areas, longer license terms, renewability, and performance requirements. The Commission anticipated that the targeted changes made in its 2018 Report and Order will spur additional investment and broader deployment in the band, promote robust and efficient spectrum use, and help ensure the rapid deployment of advanced wireless technologies—including 5G—in the United States. Among these changes, the Commission revised section 96.23(a) of its rules to require that an applicant must file an application for an initial PAL, and that the application must: (1) demonstrate the applicant's qualifications to hold an authorization; (2) state how a grant would serve the public interest, convenience, and necessity; (3) contain all information required by FCC rules and application forms; (4) propose operation of a facility or facilities in compliance with all rules governing the Citizens Broadband Radio Service; and (5) be amended as necessary to remain substantially accurate and complete in all significant respects, in accordance with the provisions of section 1.65 of the Commission's rules. The Commission

therefore seeks approval for a revision to its currently approved information collection on FCC Form 601. In this information collection request, the Commission has increased the number of estimated respondents by 100, and accordingly adjusted the estimated total burden in hours and cost.

Statutory authority for this information collection is contained in 47 U.S.C. §§ 151, 152, 154, 154(i), 155(c), 157, 201, 202, 208, 214, 301, 302a, 303, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 314, 316, 319, 324, 331, 332, 333, 336, 534, 535 and 554.

Section 96.23 outlines the authorization requirements for Priority Access Licenses. An applicant must file an application for an initial PAL. Applications for PALs must: (1) Demonstrate the applicant's qualifications to hold an authorization; (2) State how a grant would serve the public interest, convenience, and necessity; (3) Contain all information required by FCC rules and application forms; (4) Propose operation of a facility or facilities in compliance with all rules governing the Citizens Broadband Radio Service; and (5) Be amended as necessary to remain substantially accurate and complete in all significant respects, in accordance with the provisions of §1.65 of this chapter.

2. The Commission, in accordance with its statutory responsibilities under the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, uses the information provided by applicants on FCC Form 601 to update its licensing database and to determine if the applicant is legally, technically, and financially qualified to provide licensed services and make proper use of the frequency spectrum.

For third party disclosure requirements, approximately 40% of the PLMRS respondents are required to comply with frequency coordination requirements. There is no additional time burden placed on the respondent for this third-party requirement. Again, information about individuals or households, and the use(s) and disclosure of this information is governed by the requirements of system of records, FCC/WTB-1. All information collected is publicly available.

3. Electronic filing is mandatory for certain categories of respondents specified in 47 C.F.R. §1.913 and others have the choice of filing manually or electronically. Approximately 98% of all filings are submitted electronically.
4. This agency does not impose a similar information collection on the respondents. There are no similar data available.
5. In conformance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Commission is making an effort to minimize the burden on all respondents, regardless of size. The Commission has limited the information requirements to those absolutely necessary for evaluating and processing each application and to deter possible abuses of the processes.
6. Generally, the frequency of filing FCC Form 601 is determined by the applicant and/or licensee and the frequency of response can be on occasion or periodic.
7. This collection of information is consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR § 1320.

8. The Commission published a 60-day notice which appeared in the Federal Register on October 4, 2019, 84 FR 53145, seeking comment from the public on the information collection requirements contained in this collection. No comments were received on the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) as a result of the notice.
9. Respondents will not receive any payments.
10. Respondents may request that materials or information submitted to the Commission be withheld from public inspection under 47 CFR §0.459 of the FCC rules.

Information on the FCC Form 601 is maintained in the Commission’s system of records notice or ‘SORN’, FCC/WTB-1, “Wireless Services Licensing Records.” These licensee records are publicly available and routinely used in accordance with subsection b. of the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a(b), as amended.

The Commission has in place the following policy and procedures for records retention and disposal: Records will be actively maintained as long as the authorization is valid. Paper records will be archived after being keyed or scanned into the database and destroyed when 12 years old. Electronic records will be backed up and deleted twelve years after the authorization is no longer valid.

11. This collection does not address private matters of a sensitive nature, and the PII is covered by the system of records notice or ‘SORN’, FCC/WTB-1, “Wireless Services Licensing Records.”
12. The Commission estimates that 255,452 respondents (applicants/licensees) will file FCC Form 601 applications annually and that the *average* burden per response is 1.25 hours.

The Commission estimates that 50% of the 255,452 respondents (127,726) will complete the application themselves with no additional assistance and the remaining 50% (127,726) will contract out the completion of the form to a law firm or application preparation service.

The Commission estimates the average burden per response to be approximately 1.25 hours for those respondents completing the forms themselves. For those respondents hiring a consultant, we estimate a burden of approximately 30 minutes (0.5 hours) to coordinate with the consultant.

The estimated annual burden is:

$$\begin{aligned}
 &127,726 \text{ responses} \times 1.25 \text{ hours} = 159,658 \text{ hours} \\
 &127,726 \text{ responses} \times .50 \text{ hours} = 63,863 \text{ hours}
 \end{aligned}$$

Total Annual burden: 159,658 hours + 63,863 hours = 223,521 hours.

The Commission also estimates that between zero and 400 entities will annually file FCC Form 601

applications regarding eligibility for designated entity benefits. We therefore estimate that there will be 400 such entities.

The Commission estimates that 50% of these 400 respondents (200) will complete the application themselves with no additional assistance and the remaining 50% (200) will contract out the completion of the form to a law firm or application preparation service.

The Commission estimates the average burden per response to be approximately 1.25 hours for those respondents completing the form themselves. For those respondents hiring a consultant, we estimate a burden of approximately 45 minutes (0.75 hours) to coordinate with the consultant.

The estimated annual burden is:

200 responses x 1.25 hour = 250 hours

200 responses x 0.75 hours = 150 hours

Annual burden hours: 250 + 150 = 400

TOTAL ANNUAL BURDEN HOURS: 223,521 + 400 = 223,921

TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS: 255,452

TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONSES: 255,452

Commission Rules require that certain applicants obtain frequency coordination prior to submitting their application to the FCC. We estimate that approximately 40% of the total respondents (102,181 respondents) are required to comply with frequency coordination requirements. There is no additional time burden placed on the respondent for this third-party disclosure requirement, however, it adds an extra “step” to the application filing requirements. Applicants forward their applications via the non-profit private sector frequency coordinators designated by type of radio service to the FCC. The frequency coordinator then forwards the application and application remittance to the FCC. The frequency coordinator must file electronically.

“In-House Cost”:

Assuming that 50% of the respondents use personnel comparable in pay to a mid-to-senior level federal employee (GS-13, Step 5) to prepare the collection, we estimate the cost to be about \$55.75 per hour @ 1.25 hours per filing. The cost per filing: $\$55.75 \times 1.25 = \69.69 .

127,726 applications x \$69.69 per filing = \$8,901,224.94

The Commission estimates that 50% will contract out the completion of the form to a law firm or

application preparation service and will spend approximately 30 minutes (0.5 hours) coordinating this information. Assuming they use personnel comparable in pay to a mid-to-senior level federal employee (GS-13, Step 5) to coordinate this submission we estimate the cost to be approximately \$55.75 per hour @ 0.5 hours per filing. The cost per filing = \$27.88.

$$127,726 \text{ applications} \times \$27.88 \text{ per filing} = \$3,561,000.88$$

Assuming that 50% of the respondents filing the 601 annually for designated entity benefits use personnel comparable in pay to a mid-to-senior level federal employee (GS-13, Step 5) to prepare the collection, we estimate the cost to be about \$55.75 per hour @ 1 hour per filing. The cost per filing = \$55.75

$$200 \text{ responses} \times \$55.75 \text{ per response} = \$11,150$$

The Commission estimates that 50% will contract out the completion of the form to a law firm or application preparation service and will spend approximately 30 minutes (0.5 hours) coordinating this information. Assuming they use personnel comparable in pay to a mid-to-senior level federal employee (GS-13, Step 5) to coordinate this submission we estimate the cost to be approximately \$55.75 per hour @ 0.5 hours per filing. The cost per filing = \$27.88.

$$200 \text{ responses} \times \$27.88 \text{ per response} = \$5,576$$

TOTAL IN-HOUSE COST:

$$\mathbf{\$8,901,224.94 + \$3,561,000.88 + \$11,150 + \$5,576 = \$12,478,951.80}$$

13. Cost to the Respondent:

- a. Total annualized capital/start-up costs: \$0.00
- b. Total annualized cost requested to prepare FCC 601 are:

There is no cost to file the application electronically with the FCC.

FCC application filing fees:

We estimate that approximately 75% of 255,452 various applications filed require an application fee of \$65-\$430 each. (The balance of the respondents would be exempt from filing fees due to type of entity, i.e. public safety, governmental entities, non-commercial educational broadcasters, or because the purpose for which they are filing does not require a fee.)

For purposes of this submission, we estimate the total application fees using an average of \$125 per filing:

255,452 total respondents x 75% (feeable) = 191,590 feeable filings

191,590 filings x \$125 average fee = \$23,948,750

We estimate that 50% of the respondents will contract out the completion of the form and would use an attorney or application preparation service at a cost of \$300/hour to prepare the FCC 601 and take the consultant 1.25 hours to complete each form.

127,726 applications x 1.25 hours x \$300/hour = \$47,897,250

Regarding respondents eligible for designated entity benefits, there is no application fee because the services involved are subject to auctions.

We estimate that 50% of the respondents will contract out the completion of the form and would use an attorney or application preparation service at a cost of \$300 per hour to prepare in 1 hour the FCC Form 601.

200 applications x 1 hour x \$300 hour = \$60,000

TOTAL ESTIMATED RESPONDENT COST: \$23,948,750 + \$47,897,250 + \$60,000 = \$71,906,000

14. Cost to the Federal Government:

FCC Form 601 Applications estimated to be filed: 255,352

127,726 applications x 30 mins. (0.50 hrs)
@ \$26.43 per hour (GS-7 Step 5) for an Industry Analyst = \$1,687,899.09 (Processing)

127,726 applications x 10 mins. (0.166 hrs) = \$560,382.50 (Processing)
@ \$26.43 per hour (GS-7 Step 5) for an
Industry Analyst

Total = \$2,248,281.59

15. The Commission has program changes to this collection as a result of the information collection requirements adopted in FCC 18-149 because a new radio service will use Form 601 and add the new radio service to the Form 601. The program changes are as follows: 100 to the number of respondents, 100 to the annual number of responses, 88 to the annual number of hours and \$28,250 to the annual cost.

There are no adjustments to this collection.

16. The data will not be published for statistical use.

17. The Commission is requesting a continued waiver from displaying the OMB expiration date on FCC Form 601. Granting this waiver will prevent the Commission from destroying excess forms, having to update computer versions and thus reduce waste. All OMB-approved information collections are published in 47 CFR 0.408. This section includes the OMB control number, title of the collection and the OMB expiration date.

18. There are no exceptions to the "Certification Statement."

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods:

This information collection does not use any statistical methods.