

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

A. Justification:

1. FCC Form 603 is a multi-purpose form that is used by radio services in Wireless Services within the Universal Licensing System (ULS) or any other electronic filing interface the Commission develops. FCC 603 is composed of a main form that contains the administrative information and a series of schedules used for filing technical information. These schedules are required when applying for Auctioned Services, Partitioning and Disaggregation, Undefined Geographical Area Partitioning, and Notification of Consummation or Request for Extension of Time for Consummation. Applicants/licensees in the Public Mobile Services, Personal Communications Services, Private Land Mobile Radio Services (PLMRS), Broadband Radio Service, Educational Broadband Service, Maritime Services (excluding Ship), and Aviation Services (excluding Aircraft) use FCC Form 603 to apply for an assignment or transfer, to establish their parties' basic eligibility and qualifications, to classify the filing, and/or to determine the nature of the proposed service. This form is also used to notify the FCC of consummated assignments and transfers of wireless licenses to which the Commission has previously consented or for which notification but not prior consent is required. Respondents are required to submit FCC 603 electronically.

The data collected on FCC 603 include 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 required that those filing with the Commission to use the FRN, effective December 3, 2001.

Records 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 July 18, 2022, the Commission adopted the Partition, Disaggregation and Leasing of Spectrum Report and Order and Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that modifies partitioning, disaggregation, and leasing rules to provide specific incentives for small carriers and Tribal Nations, and entities in rural areas, to voluntarily participate in ECIP (ECIP Report and Order in WT Docket No. 19-38, FCC 22-53). The ECIP proceeding is in response to Congressional direction in the Making Opportunities for Broadband Investment and Limiting Excessive and Needless Obstacles to Wireless Act (MOBILE NOW Act) to consider steps to increase the diversity of spectrum access and the availability of advanced telecommunications services in rural areas. The ECIP will promote greater competition in the provision of wireless services, facilitate increased availability of advanced

wireless services in rural areas, facilitate new opportunities for small carriers and Tribal Nations to increase access to spectrum, and bring more advanced wireless service including 5G to underserved communities.

The Commission seeks approval for revisions to its currently approved collection of information under OMB Control Number 3060-0800 to permit the collection of the additional information and changes in connection with assignments of authorizations pursuant to the rules adopted by the Commission's ECIP Report and Order. Specifically, in the ECIP Report and Order, the Commission revised its rules to allow partition and/or disaggregation assignment applications pursuant to § 1.950. or full assignments pursuant to § 1.948, to designate a Qualifying Transaction identified in the application as seeking consideration under the ECIP. Respondents are also required to select the applicable ECIP prong to its Qualifying Transaction, pursuant to either § 1.60003 or § 1.60004.

Statutory authority for this collection of information is contained in 47 U.S.C. sections 154, 155, 158, 161, 301, 303(r), 308, 309, 310 and 332.

2. The FCC uses the information in FCC Form 603 to determine whether the applicant is legally, technically, and financially qualified to obtain the requested authorization. Without such information, the Commission can not determine whether to issue the licenses to the applicants that provide telecommunication services to the public, and therefore, to fulfill its statutory responsibilities in accordance with the Communications Act of 1934, as amended. Information provided on this form will also be used to update the database and to provide for proper use of the frequency spectrum.

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 within PLMRS is publicly available except TIN Numbers and material that is afforded confidential treatment pursuant to a request made under 47 C.F.R. § 0.459 of the Commission's rules will not be made available for public inspection.

3. The Commission requires the use of electronic filing. Electronic filing is mandatory for all categories of respondents specified in 47 C.F.R. § 1.913 of the Commission's rules.
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 collection requirements to those absolutely necessary for evaluating and processing each application and to deter against possible abuses of the processes.
6. Generally, the frequency of filing FCC Form 603 is determined by the applicant and the licensee. FCC Form 603 is required when an authorization is assigned or transferred.

7. This collection of information is consistent with the guidelines in 5 C.F.R. § 1320.
8. The Commission published a 60-day notice which appeared in the *Federal Register* on August 15, 2023 (88 FR 55456) seeking comment from the public on the information collection requirements contained in this collection. No comments were received as a result of this notice.
9. Respondents will not receive any payments.
10. Respondents may request materials or information submitted to the Commission be withheld from public inspection under 47 CFR §0.459 of FCC rules.

Information on the FCC Form 603 is maintained in the Commission's system of records, 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. TIN Numbers and material that is afforded confidential treatment pursuant to a request made under 47 CFR §0.459 of the Commission's rules will not be available for public inspection.

The Commission has in place the following policy and procedures for records retention and disposal: Records will be actively maintained as long as the individual remains a licensee. Paper records will be archived after being keyed or scanned into the system. Electronic records will be backed up on tape. Electronic and paper records will be maintained for at least twelve years and three months.

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 **2,567 respondents** (applicants/licensees) will file **2,567 FCC Form 603 applications annually** and that the average burden per respondent will be 1.80 Hours. The burden calculations are stated below.

Of the estimated 2,567 respondents, we estimate approximately 10 are Cellular Service respondents that will be required to submit the maps (in GIS format and PDF) when applying for Partitioning and Disaggregation, and that the average burden associated with creating and filing the maps is 30 minutes (0.5 hours).

Of the estimated 2,567 respondents, we estimate approximately 10 are ECIP participants when applying for Partitioning and Disaggregation, and that the average burden associated with answering two new questions indicating whether or not the application in part of ECIP, and if so what prong, is roughly 3 minutes (0.05 hours).

We estimate that 50% of the respondents (1,283) will complete the application themselves with no additional assistance. The remaining 50% (1,284) will contract out completing the

form to a law firm or application preparation service. We estimate that it will take 1.80 hours per respondent to complete FCC Form 603 for the respondents completing the forms and keeping records of the forms without hiring a consultant. For those respondents hiring a consultant, we estimate a burden of approximately 30 minutes (0.5 hours) to coordinate with the consultant.

The total annual burden is:

1,283 @ 1.80 hours = 2,309 hours

1,284 @ 0.5 hours = 642 hours

10 @ .50 = 5 hours

10 @ 0.05 = 0.5 hours

Total Burden Hours: 2,309 + 642 + 5 + 0.5 = 2,956.5 rounded to 2,957 hours

In-House Cost: Respondents use personnel comparable in pay to a mid-to-senior level federal employee (GS-13, Step 5) to prepare this collection of information, we estimate the cost to be about \$60.83 per hour.

Total in-house cost to the respondents: 2,957 hours x \$60.83/hour = **\$179,874.31**

13. Cost to the Respondent:

- a. There are no capital and start-up costs to prepare FCC Form 603.
- b. The annual costs (O&M) consist of the following:

There is no cost to file the application electronically with the FCC other than the cost of a long distance phone call and/or Internet access. We assume that respondents that file manually will incur postage costs, which are considered "in house costs."

- (1) The FCC filing fees for this application vary based on radio service. For purpose of this submission, we estimate an average filing fee of \$132.50 per application:

2,567 applications @ \$132.50/response = **\$340,127.50.**

- (2) We also estimate that 50% of the respondents will contract out the completion of Form 603 and will use an attorney/engineer or application preparation service at a cost of \$300/hour to prepare the FCC Form 603. It will take the attorney/preparation service .5 hours to complete the FCC Form 603 application for respondents:

1,284 applications x .5 hours @ \$300/hour = **\$192,600**

Total Estimated Annual Costs: \$340,127.50 + \$192,600 = \$532,727.50 rounded to \$532,728.00.

14. Cost to the Federal Government:

FCC Form 603 applications estimated to be filed: 2,567.

2,567 applications x 30 min. (0.5 hrs.)
@ \$42.68 per hour (GS-11, Step 5) for an Industry Analyst = \$54,779.78

Total \$54,779.78

15. The Commission has program changes to this information collection which are due to the form changes for this collection. They are as follows: 10 to the number of respondents, 10 to the annual number of responses, 0 to the annual burden hours and -\$353,827 to the annual cost.

There are adjustments to this collection which are due to the Commission re-evaluating the figures for this collection. These adjustments are as follows: 10 to the number of respondents, 10 to the annual number of responses, 85 to the annual burden hours and \$149,428 to the annual cost.

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 the FCC Form 603. Granting this waiver will prevent the Commission from destroying stock upon re-approval of the form or updating the electronic screens in ULS. The OMB-approved information collections along with their OMB Control Numbers, titles, and OMB expiration dates will be stated on OMB's website.

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.