

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

A. Justification:

1. The Commission is seeking OMB approval for an extension of this information collection (no change in the reporting and/or third party disclosure requirements) to obtain a three year clearance. There is a change in the Commission's burden estimates. See item 15 for an explanation for the change in burden.

On March 12, 1997, the Federal Communications Commission (Commission) released a *Third Report and Order* (3rd R&O) which adopted rules to govern the future operation and licensing of the 220-222 MHz band (220 MHz service). In establishing this licensing plan, the Commission established a flexible regulatory framework allowing for efficient licensing of the 220 MHz service, eliminating unnecessary regulatory burdens, and enhancing the competitive potential of the 220 MHz service in the mobile service marketplace. In the 3rd R&O, and throughout this supporting statement, licenses granted pursuant to the regulatory framework adopted in 1997 are referred to as Phase II licenses, and licenses granted under the rules that existed prior to the adoption of the 3rd R&O are referred to as Phase I licenses.

In October, 1998, the Commission completed auction # 18, and awarded 908 licenses in the 220 MHz service. In June 1999, the Commission completed auction # 24, in which 16 bidders won 222 licenses that had either not been won at auction in # 18 or for which the prior licensee had defaulted. Further, in January, 2002, the Commission re-auctioned 2 EA and 2 REAG 220 MHz licenses. On June 20, 2007, the Commission held auction # 72, and five high bidders were awarded 76 licenses in various Economic Areas and Economic Area Groupings.

In addition to filing a completed FCC Form 601, applicants for the five channels (channels 181-185) in the 220 MHz service restricted to eligible entities for emergency medical use (EMRS), if not the governmental body with jurisdiction over the state's emergency medical service plan, must obtain from the governmental body having jurisdiction over the state emergency plan a statement indicating that the applicant is included in the state's emergency plan or a statement otherwise supporting the application.

The 3rd R&O requires six Regional licensees operating on Assignment J (Channels 186-200) to operate stations on Channels 196-200 at power levels no greater than 2 watts ERP and at antenna heights above average terrain of no greater than 20 feet.

However, to provide those six Regional licensees with maximum flexibility, the Commission permits them to operate at levels exceeding these power and height restrictions if they obtain the written concurrence of all Phase I and Phase II licensees operating base stations on Channels 1-40 within 6 km of the base stations of the Regional licensees.

Phase II applicants operating geophysical telemetry systems are allowed to obtain secondary authorizations to operate fixed stations on a non-interference basis to both Phase I and Phase II licensees authorized on a primary basis. Although secondary licensees are required to notify any co-channel primary licensees authorized in their area of their operation of the location of their secondary facilities, there are currently no secondary licensees operating geophysical telemetry systems. Hence, there are no secondary licensees, at this time, that are required to meet this burden.

Phase II licensees implementing nationwide land mobile or paging systems are required to meet construction “benchmarks” or requirements. Licensees must meet these benchmarks within five and ten years of the initial license grant. Licensees implementing fixed systems are required to meet a “substantial service” requirement within five and ten years of the initial license grant. To comply with these construction and substantial service requirements, licensees must submit maps and other supporting documents to demonstrate compliance with their five- and ten-year benchmarks. Phase II Regional and Economic Area (EA) licensees implementing land mobile, fixed or paging systems must comply with similar construction or substantial service requirements, and therefore must also provide maps and other supporting documents to demonstrate compliance with the five- and ten-year benchmarks. Failure by nationwide, EA, or Regional licensees to meet either the five- or ten-year construction requirement will result in automatic cancellation of licensee’s authorizations.

Phase II licensees will not be allowed to construct their stations less than 120 km from constructed and operating Phase I, co-channel stations, unless such Phase II licensees submit a technical analysis demonstrating that the predicted 28 dBu V/m interfering contour of their base station does not overlap the predicted 38 dBu V/m service contour of the Phase I licensee’s station. Phase II licensees may locate their stations less than 120 km from existing co-channels or provide less than 10 dB protection to an existing co-channel’s station’s predicted 38 dBu V/m contour if the Phase II licensee obtains the written consent of the affected co-channel licensee.

The 3rd R&O permits Phase II licensees operating in adjacent EAs or Regions to transmit up to a predicted 38 dBu signal at their border. Such licensees may exceed this limit if all affected, co-channel EA and Regional licensees agree to higher field strength.

Finally, the 3rd R&O provides that Phase I and Phase II licensees that seek to renew their authorizations at the end of their license terms will be required to demonstrate in their renewal applications that they have provided substantial service during their license term, and will be required to submit a showing explaining why they should receive a renewal expectancy.

This information collection does not affect individuals or households; thus, there are no impacts under the Privacy Act.

The statutory authority for this collection of information is contained in Sections 4(i), 303(g), 303(r), and 332(a) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. sections 154(i), 303(g), 303(r), 332(a).

2. The various information reporting and verification requirements, and the requirement that licensees coordinate and provide written consent, concurrence or agreement with other licensees, will be used by the Commission to verify licensee compliance with Commission rules and regulations and to ensure that licensees continue to fulfill their statutory responsibilities in accordance with the Communications Act of 1934, as amended. Such information has been used in the past and will continue to be used to minimize interference, verify that applicants are legally, technically, and financially qualified to hold licenses, and to determine compliance with Commission Rules.

3. The Commission's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau conducts an analysis to ensure that improved information technology can be used to reduce the burden on the public. This analysis considers the possibility of obtaining and/or computer-generating the required data from existing data bases in the Commission or other Federal agencies. Therefore, electronic means will be used to submit information collections for this collection.

4. The Commission does not impose a similar information collection on the respondents. There is 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. For example, the Commission recognized that a number of non-nationwide Phase I licensees have acquired several site-specific licenses that create a contiguous, compatible, interconnected system. Instead of limiting partitioning through regulation, the Commission, in its *Fourth Report and Order* in this docket, eliminated the forty-mile restriction rule, thereby letting the marketplace determine whether partitioning is economically or technologically feasible.

6. The respondents will determine whether or not they wish to request a partitioned license or disaggregated spectrum. Thus, the frequency of filing is determined by the respondents' decision to act or not.

7. No special circumstances exist with this collection of information.

8. The Commission has met the notice requirements of 5 C.F.R. § 1320.8(d). The public has been given the opportunity to comment via publication of the Notice in the Federal Register on May 5, 2025 (90 FR 18981). No PRA comments were received.

9. Respondents will not receive any payments.
10. There is no need for confidentiality with this collection of information.
11. This collection of information does not address any private matters of a sensitive nature.
12. Cost to the respondents:

a. According to the Commission's Universal Licensing System (ULS) database, there are approximately 8 licensees for Emergency Medical Use/Public Safety channels who, pursuant to Section 90.20(a), are required at the time of initial licensing to provide documentation from governmental bodies with jurisdiction over state emergency plans supporting the appropriateness of their applications. We anticipate receiving approximately one application per year for these channels. Obtaining such documentation will be a one-time burden and should take each of the applicants about 2 hours per license, to meet this requirement.

1(application) x 2 hrs./application = 2 **hours**.

b. The Commission anticipates that burden on state governmental bodies in processing the 1 request that they receive and providing the supporting documentation will be about 2 hours per request, for a total of 2 hours.

1 request x 2 hrs./request = 2 **hours**.

c. The Commission estimated that approximately 2 nationwide Phase II licensees would be required, pursuant to Section 90.769, to comply with five and ten-year construction requirements. Since the last collection, the nationwide Phase II licensees have complied with the five year burden, but remain subject to the ten year filing requirements, which have been revised to require a demonstration of continuity of service. The Commission estimates that these documents, which would be prepared and submitted by a staff engineer, would take approximately 8 hours per submission, for a total of 16 burden hours.

2 submissions by Phase II licensees x 8 hrs./submission = 16 **hours**.

d. Based upon prior compliance with interim or final benchmarks for certain licensees, license cancellation and industry consolidation in the 220 MHz band, the Commission confirms that, during the next three year collection period, no Economic Area/Regional Phase II licensees will be required, pursuant to Section 90.767, to meet five- and/or ten-year construction requirements.

e. The Commission estimates that approximately 10 Economic Area/Regional licensees, pursuant to Section 90.763(b)(1)(i)(a), will choose to locate approximately

5 of their base stations less than 120 km from the base stations of co-channel Phase I licensees, by submitting a technical analysis. The Commission estimates that 50% of these licensees (5) will use in-house staff engineers to prepare this technical analysis. This will take approximately 5 hours per base station. The remaining 5 licensees will contract out this burden. It will take these licensees approximately 5 hours per submission to coordinate this data with the contract engineers.

[5 technical analysis x 5 hrs./technical analysis (done by in-house engineer)] = **25 hours** + [5 coordination sessions x 5 hrs./session (coordination for respondents contracting out the work)] = **25 hours = total of 50 hours.**

f. The Commission estimates that, pursuant to Section 90.763(b)(1)(i)(B), approximately 10 Economic Area/Regional (Phase II) licensees will seek to locate approximately 5 of their base stations less than 120 km from the base stations of co-channel Phase I licensees, or provide less than 10 dB protection to the base stations of co-channel Phase I licensees, by seeking the consent for such operation by one affected Phase I licensee per base station. There will be a total of 10 respondents filing 50 responses associated with this burden. Negotiating this consent places an additional burden only on the Phase II licensee, resulting in an additional one-time burden of 8 hours per response.

[10 (respondents) x 5 (base stations occurrences)] = 50 responses x 8 hrs. (negotiating) = **400 hours.**

g. The Commission anticipates that approximately 10 Economic Area/Regional licensees will seek to exceed the established field strength limitation, pursuant to Section 90.771(b), by coordinating higher field strength limits with one other EA or Regional licensee, each. This burden on the licensees seeking to exceed the established field strength limitations should take an in-house engineer about 8 hours per coordination.

10 (respondents) x 8 hrs. (coordination) = **80 hours.**

h. Finally, given the current expiration dates of auctioned 220 MHz QA radio service licenses, as reflected in ULS, the Commission anticipates that, no such licensee will seek to renew its license, pursuant to Section 90.743 in the next collection period.

Burden to the Respondents:

- a. Documentation burden for 2 EMRS applicants = 2 hrs.
- b. Supporting documentation from governmental entities with EMRS jurisdiction = 2 hrs.
- c. Construction documentation for 2 nationwide, Phase II licensees = 16 hrs.
- d. Construction documents for EA/Regional Phase II land mobile or paging system licensees = 0 hrs.

- e. Technical analysis for EA/Regional licensees locating within 120 km of a co-channel Phase I licensee = 50 hrs.
- f. Technical analysis burden on EA/Regional licensees and consent obtained by EA/Regional licensees to locate stations less than required distance from Phase I licensees' stations = 400 hrs.
- g. Coordination among EA/Regional licensees to exceed established field strength = 80 hrs.
- h. 220 MHz licensees submitting renewal applications and demonstrating renewal expectancy = 0

Total Burden Hours: 550 hrs.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS IS:

- 1 EMERGENCY MEDICAL USE/PUBLIC SAFETY CHANNEL LICENSEE
- 1 STATE GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL
- 2 NATIONWIDE PHASE II LICENSEES
- 10 EA/REGIONAL LICENSEES
- 14 RESPONDENTS**

TOTAL NUMBER OF ANNUAL RESPONSES:

- 1 APPLICATION**
- 1 REQUEST**
- 2 SUBMISSIONS**
- 10 RESPONSES**
- 50 RESPONSES**
- 10 RESPONSES**
- 74 RESPONSES**

In-House Cost: The Commission estimates the following in-house engineering staff will complete most of the work on behalf of respondents. The hourly wage for the engineer staff is estimated at \$45/hour. The in-house cost is as follows:

$$550 \text{ burden hours} \times \$45/\text{hour}/\text{engineering staff} = \mathbf{\$24,750.}$$

13. There is outside contracting costs for requirements (e) and (f) list above, only. Contracting attorneys will complete the requirements for respondents at a rate of \$300/hour. It will take the attorneys 5 hours per response to fulfill the requirements on behalf of the respondents. The estimates contracting costs are as follows:

$$10 \text{ responses} \times 5 \text{ hrs./response} \times 1 \text{ (10 yr. benchmark)} \times \$300/\text{hour} = \$15,000.$$

$$50 \text{ responses} \times 5 \text{ hrs./response} \times \$300/\text{hour} = \$75,000.$$

Total outside contracting costs: \$15,000 + \$75,000 = \$90,000.

14. Cost to the Federal Government is estimated as follows:

It should take a Legal Instrument Examiner performing at the GS-7/5 level, earning \$31.04/hr., approximately ½ hour per submission, to review the EMRS documentation (See 12a, above).

1 (application) x .5 hours x \$31.04/hr. (examiner) = \$15.52.

It should take an engineer at the GS-11/5 level earning \$45.94/hr., approximately ½ hour per submission, to review construction documents (See 12c, above).

2 submissions x .5 hours x \$45.94/hr. (engineer) = \$45.94.

It should take an engineer at the GS-11/5 level earning \$45.94/hr., approximately ½ hour per submission, to review technically analyzed data. (See 12e, above.).

10 responses x .5 hours x \$45.94/hr. (engineer) = \$229.70.

It should take an engineer at the GS-11/5 level earning \$45.94/hr., approximately 5 minutes per submission, to review consent statements of Phase II licensees who seek to locate stations less than the required distance from Phase I licensees' stations (see 12f, above).

50 responses x .085 hours x \$45.94/hr. (engineer) = \$195.25.

There are no Federal Government Costs for items 12(b), (d), (g) and (h) above.

TOTAL COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS: \$486.41.

15. There are no program changes to this collections. There are adjustments to the collections which are due to estimates changes for the various figures contained in this collection. The adjustments are -17 to the number of respondents, -37 to and annual number of responses and -228 to the annual burden hours.

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

17. No OMB expiration date will be displayed because the requirements are

contained in FCC rules. The Commission publishes the OMB Control Number, OMB Expiration Date and titles of all their OMB-approved information collections on OMB's website.

18. There are no exceptions to the Certification Statement.

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods:

No statistical methods are employed.