

Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington DC 20554

In the Matter of)	
)	
Amendment of Part 101 of the Commission's)	
Rules to Facilitate the Use of Microwave for)	
Wireless Backhaul and Other Uses and to)	WT Docket No. 10-153
Provide Additional Flexibility to Broadcast)	
Auxiliary Service and Operational Fixed)	
Microwave Licensees)	
)	
Petition for Rulemaking filed by Fixed)	
Wireless Communications Coalition to)	
Amend Part 101 of the Commission's Rules to)	RM-11602
Authorize 60 and 80 MHz Channels in)	
Certain Bands for Broadband)	
Communications)	

**COMMENTS OF THE
FIXED WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS COALITION
IN RESPONSE TO THE COMMISSION'S
SECOND FURTHER NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING**

The Fixed Wireless Communications Coalition (FWCC)¹ files these comments in response to the Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the above-referenced docket.²

¹ The FWCC is a coalition of companies, associations, and individuals interested in the fixed service—i.e., in terrestrial fixed microwave communications. Our membership includes manufacturers of microwave equipment, fixed microwave engineering firms, licensees of terrestrial fixed microwave systems and their associations, and communications service providers and their associations. The membership also includes railroads, public utilities, petroleum and pipeline entities, public safety agencies, cable TV providers, backhaul providers, and/or their respective associations, communications carriers, and telecommunications attorneys and engineers. Our members build, install, and use both licensed and unlicensed point-to-point, point-to-multipoint, and other fixed wireless systems, in frequency bands from 900 MHz to 95 GHz. For more information, see www.fwcc.us.

² *Amendment of Part 101 of the Commission's Rules to Facilitate the Use of Microwave for Wireless Backhaul*, Second Report and Order, Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Second Notice of Inquiry, Order on Reconsideration, and Memorandum Opinion And Order, WT Docket No. 10-153, FCC 12-87 at ¶¶ 62-75 (released Aug. 3, 2012) (*Second Further Notice*).

The FWCC is also filing a separate submission today in response to the Notice of Inquiry in this same docket.

A. THE COMMISSION SHOULD ADOPT COMSEARCH’S PROPOSED ANTENNA STANDARDS FOR 13 GHz.

Comsearch has requested Category B antenna specifications for the 13 GHz band that allow the use of 2-foot antennas.³ The FWCC supports this proposal.

Adoption of the Comsearch request will further a productive trend toward smaller fixed microwave antennas. The Commission initiated this development five years ago with a relaxation of antenna standards at 11 GHz.⁴ Finding no adverse consequences, and after careful study, the Commission recently took similar measures in the in the 6, 18, and 23 GHz bands.⁵

The Comsearch proposal would relax suppression requirements over the 5-15 degree range but tighten them at 20-180 degrees. This is a workable compromise that allows smaller antennas where congestion is not a problem, while still maintaining an efficient density of spectrum use. Moreover, the limitation on Fixed Service operations in this band to mostly rural areas—those not used by Broadcast Auxiliary Service television pickup stations⁶—means that smaller antennas are very unlikely to cause disruptive interference to other users.

³ *Second Further Notice* at ¶ 64.

⁴ *Amendment of Part 101 of the Commission’s Rules to Modify Antenna Requirements for the 10.7-11.7 GHz Band*, Report and Order, 22 FCC Rcd 17153 (2007).

⁵ *Second Further Notice* at ¶¶ 9-21. In a separate filing today, responding to the Notice of Inquiry in this docket, the FWCC requests comparable treatment for the 71-76 and 81-86 GHz bands.

⁶ 47 C.F.R. § 101.147(a) n. 34.

B. THE COMMISSION SHOULD ADOPT THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE 11 GHZ RULES, WITH AN ADJUSTMENT.

The FWCC, together with Comsearch, has advocated a rule change at 11 GHz to ensure that Category B antenna users must upgrade to Category A or reduce EIRP when necessary to accommodate a new applicant.⁷ The FWCC supports the Commission's proposal to implement this change by amending Sections 101.113 and 101.115(f).

The Commission's proposal for Section 101.113(b), however, departs from the FWCC's original language in what appears to be a clerical error.⁸ We ask the Commission to restore the FWCC's version as shown (marked to show corrections from the proposed rule in Appendix C):

(b) The maximum power of transmitters that use Automatic Transmitter Power Control (ATPC) and the power of non-ATPC transmitters shall not exceed, and ~~the power input or output specified in the instrument of station authorization. The power of non-ATPC transmitters shall be~~ maintained as near as practicable to, the power input or output specified in the instrument of station authorization. A licensee that reduces power in order to resolve interference pursuant to Section 101.115(f) must update its license to reflect the reduced power level.

A similar error occurs in the body of the *Second Further Notice*.⁹

C. THE COMMISSION SHOULD REJECT THE PROPOSAL OF WIRELESS STRATEGIES, INC. ON INTERMEDIATE ANTENNA UPGRADES.

The present rules require an incumbent operating a Category B antenna to upgrade to Category A if a new applicant would receive predicted interference from the Category B antenna

⁷ See also Part C, below.

⁸ *Second Further Notice* at Appendix C, proposed rules. Compare to Letter from Mitchell Lazarus, Counsel for FWCC, to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC in WT Docket No. 10-153 at 4 (filed March 9, 2012).

⁹ *Second Further Notice* at ¶ 68 n.179.

but not the Category A.¹⁰ Wireless Strategies, Inc. (WSI) suggests that a Category B user predicted to cause interference should be allowed to upgrade to an improved Category B, adequate to resolve the interference case, but not necessarily to Category A.¹¹

The FWCC opposes this proposal. We have stated our objections in detail elsewhere in the docket.¹² A copy of that *ex parte* submission is attached; we ask the Commission to consider it as part of the present pleading. A brief summary follows.

No Category B incumbent is eager to upgrade. Not only is the improved antenna a cost element in itself, but the larger size typically incurs higher tower rental costs. Worse, if the tower cannot accommodate the upgraded antenna, the incumbent may have to engineer and install a completely new path. The prospect of this expense and disruption often motivates the incumbent to delay, while the applicant entitled to interference protection can only wait. The current rules at least ensure this dispute occurs only once for a given installation: an incumbent required to upgrade must install a Category A antenna, after which it is free of further upgrade obligations. Under the WSI proposal, in contrast, the same dispute may have to play out repeatedly. An incumbent required to upgrade can minimize both its antenna purchase and tower lease costs (and improve its chances of staying on the same tower) by choosing an antenna just barely adequate to protect the newcomer. In consequence, another applicant seeking to operate

¹⁰ 47 C.F.R. § 101.115(c).

¹¹ *Second Further Notice* at ¶ 71. WSI also proposes allowing antennas inferior to Category B. *Id.* The FWCC strongly opposes this idea. Inasmuch as the Commission has rejected it, *id.* at ¶ 75, we need not address it further here.

¹² Letter from Mitchell Lazarus, Counsel for FWCC, to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC in WT Docket No. 10-153 (filed Dec. 30, 2011).

in the same area may trigger the same process all over again, but with potentially more than one recalcitrant incumbent.

The Commission responds to this objection by noting that its rules impose a duty to upgrade a sub-Category A antenna when needed to resolve predicted interference.¹³ We agree. But the rules do not put a time limit on compliance. An incumbent can thus stall indefinitely without triggering a violation.¹⁴

The current rules have the further advantage of giving frequency coordinators a rational basis for planning. A coordinator studying a new application can choose a frequency that both minimizes disruption to existing users and also leaves the maximum possible room for later entrants. These calculations rely, in part, on knowing in advance the minimum antenna characteristics of both the present applicant and the later entrants. WSI's proposal would eliminate these certainties, and hamper coordinators in looking ahead to maximize use of the spectrum, both now and in the future.

For each of these reasons, and as stated in the attached *ex parte* letter, WSI's proposal would result in far less efficient use of the spectrum. The Commission should reject it.

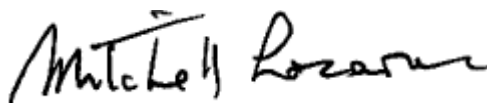
¹³ *Second Further Notice* at ¶ 73.

¹⁴ The FWCC has previously asked the Commission to require that antenna upgrades be completed within a specified time. *See* Reply Comments of the Fixed Wireless Communications Coalition in WT Docket No. 10-153 at 3 (filed Oct. 25, 2011); Comments of the Fixed Wireless Communications Coalition in WT Docket No. 10-153 at 4 (filed Oct. 4, 2011); Comments of the Fixed Wireless Communications Coalition in WT Docket No. 10-153 at 15, n.31 (filed Oct. 25, 2010).

CONCLUSION

The Commission has made great strides in improving the regulatory environment for Fixed Service broadband backhaul. We urge it to further modify its rules as detailed above.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mitchell Lazarus". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'M' and 'L'.

Mitchell Lazarus
FLETCHER, HEALD & HILDRETH, P.L.C.
1300 North 17th Street, 11th Floor
Arlington, VA 22209
703-812-0400
Counsel for the Fixed Wireless
Communications Coalition

October 5, 2012



HARRY F. COLE
ANNE GOODWIN CRUMP
PAUL J. FELDMAN
CHRISTINE GOEPP
KEVIN M. GOLDBERG
FRANK R. JAZZO
M. SCOTT JOHNSON
DANIEL A. KIRKPATRICK
MITCHELL LAZARUS
STEPHEN T. LOVELADY
SUSAN A. MARSHALL
HARRY C. MARTIN
MICHELLE A. McCLURE
MATTHEW H. McCORMICK
FRANCISCO R. MONTERO
RAYMOND J. QUIANZON
JAMES P. RILEY
DAVINA SASHKIN
PETER TANNENWALD
KATHLEEN VICTORY
HOWARD M. WEISS

1300 NORTH 17th STREET, 11th FLOOR
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22209

OFFICE: (703) 812-0400
FAX: (703) 812-0486
www.fhhlaw.com
www.commlawblog.com

RETIRED MEMBERS
VINCENT J. CURTIS, JR.
RICHARD HILDRETH
GEORGE PETRUTSAS

OF COUNSEL
ALAN C. CAMPBELL
THOMAS J. DOUGHERTY, JR.
DONALD J. EVANS
ROBERT M. GURSS*
ROBERT J. SCHILL
RICHARD F. SWIFT

December 30, 2011

MITCHELL LAZARUS]
(703) 812-0440
LAZARUS@FHHLAW.COM

* NOT ADMITTED IN VIRGINIA

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Re: WT Docket No. 10-153, Amendment of Part 101 to Facilitate Wireless Backhaul

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On behalf of the Fixed Wireless Communications Coalition (FWCC),¹ pursuant to Section 1.1206(b)(1) of the Commission's Rules, I am electronically filing this written *ex parte* communication in the above-referenced docket.

¹ The FWCC is a coalition of companies, associations, and individuals interested in the Fixed Service—i.e., in terrestrial fixed microwave communications. Our membership includes manufacturers of microwave equipment, fixed microwave engineering firms, licensees of terrestrial fixed microwave systems and their associations, and communications service providers and their associations. The membership also includes railroads, public utilities, petroleum and pipeline entities, public safety agencies, cable TV providers, backhaul providers, and/or their respective associations, communications carriers, and telecom attorneys and engineers. Our members build, install, and use both licensed and unlicensed point-to-point, point-to-multipoint, and other fixed wireless systems, in frequency bands from 900 MHz to 95 GHz. For more information, see www.fwcc.us.

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The FWCC opposes the suggestion of Wireless Strategies, Inc. (WSI) to relax the Commission's antenna standards in the Fixed Service.²

WSI asks the Commission to abolish the Category B antenna standard and, for most purposes, the Category A standard as well. WSI would allow any antenna to be deployed, regardless of pattern, subject only to the requirement that, if interference is caused to another licensee or applicant, the licensee must resolve the interference by cutting back power and/or upgrading to a more directional antenna. The improved antenna need not meet Category A standards, unless necessary to address the interference. In no circumstances could the improved antenna be required to exceed Category A.

The present rules, by contrast, require Fixed Service antennas to meet at least the Category B standard in all cases, and to upgrade to Category A if use of a Category B antenna causes interference to another licensee or applicant.³ These rules reflect good engineering practice.

At first glance the WSI proposal has some appeal. Why require better (and more expensive) antennas than are strictly necessary? But a closer look at the proposal shows it will severely impair spectrum efficiency for all users.

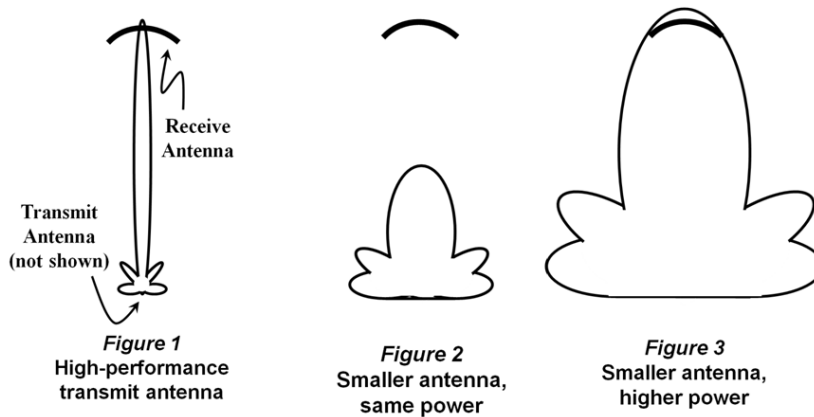
Other things being equal, the directionality of an antenna depends closely on its size. Figure 1 shows the pattern of a highly directional transmitting antenna, in which a large fraction of the emitted energy forms a narrow beam directed toward the receive antenna.⁴ The beam nevertheless has significant width, with some additional energy being lost to the sides and back. These properties result from the wave property of diffraction. Minimizing the effects of diffraction, so as to achieve high directionality, requires a relatively big antenna, one whose diameter is many times the wavelength of the signal. In the 6 GHz band, for example, where the wavelength is about 5 cm (2 inches), an antenna meeting the Commission's Category A directionality standard is typically at least 180 cm (6 feet) in diameter.

² See Ex Parte Filing of Wireless Strategies Inc. to the Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making (filed Nov. 9, 2011); Reply Comments of Wireless Strategies Inc. to the Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making (filed Oct. 25, 2011); Reply Comments of Wireless Strategies Inc. Regarding the Notice of Inquiry Review of Part 101 Antenna Standards, WT Docket 10-153 (filed Oct. 4, 2011).

³ 47 C.F.R. § 101.115(c). The FWCC is on record as supporting the addition of relaxed Category B standards to the Commission's Rules. See Comments of the Fixed Wireless Communications Coalition at 3-5 (filed Oct. 4, 2011).

⁴ The antenna pattern shows the relative strength of the transmitted signal in each direction. All figures show simplified patterns for clarity. Radiation behind the antenna is omitted.

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A smaller antenna spreads the signal in a broader pattern, with more leakage to the sides and back. Figure 2 shows a hypothetical smaller antenna, driven by a transmitter having the same power as in Figure 1.

Because a small antenna wastes much of the radiated energy off to the sides, the fraction of the signal that reaches the receive antenna may be inadequate to maintain communications. Making matters worse, a smaller antenna used at the receiving station collects less energy than a larger antenna. Thus, the small-antenna user may have to crank up the transmitter power, beyond that in Figure 1, to deliver a sufficiently strong signal. This case is shown in Figure 3. Note, however, that the higher power increases the emissions not only toward the receiver, but also to the sides (and back) as well. Where multiple links of the kind shown in Figure 1 on the same frequency can co-exist in close geographic proximity, the smaller antenna in Figure 3 “sterilizes” a much greater area against use by others.

The WSI proposal puts no limit on how small an antenna can be, and hence no limit on how broad a pattern it produces. In the absence of those limits, an applicant benefits economically by deploying the smallest possible antenna, despite its propensity to interfere over a wide area. Not only does a smaller antenna cost less at the outset, but it incurs lower costs in tower lease charges. Indeed, WSI cites reduced tower costs as an advantage of its proposal.⁵ But there is a strong downside: every new antenna will make a large geographic area unavailable to others, on that frequency.

Not a problem! says WSI. Its proposed rules would require a small antenna user to upgrade, if needed, to accommodate another entrant.

But consider the realities. At the very least, the small-antenna incumbent will incur substantial expense, not only in acquiring and installing a larger antenna, but also in paying higher ongoing costs for tower space.

⁵ Reply Comments of Wireless Strategies Inc. at 1 (filed Oct. 4, 2011).

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The situation may be worse, however. In some cases, the tower holding the small antenna will not be able to accommodate an antenna large enough to protect the newcomer from interference. The incumbent would then have to engineer and construct an entirely new link using a different tower. Worse still, depending on the geography and tower availability, it may take two or more links to replace the single link that relied on the small antenna.

No incumbent will be eager to undertake these costs and disruptions. The incumbent is much more likely to dispute the frequency coordinator's interference calculations, argue that other frequencies are available, or otherwise challenge and stall. The newcomer in turn, rather than shoulder the costs and delays of dealing with the incumbent, will likely switch to another, less suitable band, or give up on fixed microwave altogether. We speak from experience: although the present rules require an incumbent to upgrade from Category B antennas to Category A, where necessary to accommodate an applicant, the Category B users have been chronically slow to comply.⁶

The WSI proposal would create yet another pernicious incentive. Even if an incumbent does upgrade, it can minimize both its antenna purchase and tower lease costs (and improve its chances of staying on the same tower) by choosing an antenna just barely adequate to protect the newcomer. The consequence, of course, is that another applicant seeking to operate in the same area may trigger the same process all over again, this time with potentially more than one recalcitrant incumbent.

Fixed Service users have always shared their bands on a co-equal basis. A first-in user has rights against later applicants, but only if it uses a Category A antenna. The WSI proposal would upset that co-equal balance by letting the user of an inferior, interfering antenna effectively block later entrants.

Finally, the deployment of many small antennas over a geographic area would raise the noise floor, and require additional margin in the interference calculation algorithms due to massive multiple exposure. This form of spectrum pollution would impede frequency coordination and further limit the number of licensees who can operate in the area.

The current rules requiring Category B antennas at a minimum, and Category A when needed to accommodate other users, give frequency coordinators a basis for planning. Today a coordinator studying a new application can pick a frequency that both minimizes disruption to existing users and also leaves the maximum possible room for later entrants. These calculations rely, in part, on knowing in advance the minimum antenna characteristics of both the present applicant and the later entrants. WSI's proposal would

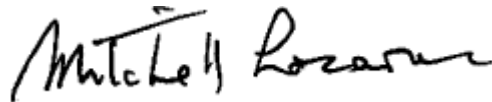
⁶ Earlier in this proceeding, the FWCC suggested a rule to change to require that needed upgrades from Category B to Category A antennas take place within a set time. Comments of the Fixed Wireless Communications Coalition at 4 (filed Oct. 4, 2011)

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eliminate these certainties, and greatly hamper coordinators in looking ahead to maximize use of the spectrum, both now and in the future.

In short, for all of the reasons given above, WSI's proposal would result in far less efficient use of the spectrum. The Commission should reject it.

Respectfully submitted,



Mitchell Lazarus
Counsel for the Fixed Wireless
Communications Coalition

cc: Chairman Julius Genachowski
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Robert McDowell
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Rick Kaplan, Chief, Wireless Telecom. Bur.
James Schlichting, Senior Deputy Chief, Wireless Telecom. Bur.
John S. Leibovitz, Deputy Chief, Wireless Telecom. Bur.
Tom Peters, Chief Engineer, Wireless Telecom. Bur.
Blaise Scinto, Chief, Broadband Division, Wireless Telecom. Bur.
John Schauble, Deputy Chief, Broadband Division, Wireless Telecom. Bur.
Stephen Buenzow, Deputy Chief, Broadband Division, Wireless Telecom. Bur.
Charles Oliver, Attorney Advisor, Broadband Division, Wireless Telecom. Bur.
Brian Wondrack, Attorney Advisor, Broadband Division, Wireless Telecom. Bur.
Michael Mulcay, Chairman and CTO, Wireless Strategies Inc.

COURTESY SERVICE LIST

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Commissioner Robert McDowell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Commissioner Ajit V. Pai
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Ruth Milkman, Chief
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

James Schlichting, Senior Deputy Chief
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

John S. Leibovitz, Deputy Chief
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Tom Peters, Chief Engineer
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Melissa Glidden Tye, Legal Advisor
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Blaise Scinto, Chief
Broadband Division
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

John Schauble, Deputy Chief
Broadband Division
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Charles Oliver, Attorney Advisor
Broadband Division
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Brian Wondrack, Attorney Advisor
Broadband Division
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Stephen Buenzow, Deputy Chief
Broadband Division
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
1280 Fairfield Road
Gettysburg, PA 17325