

**Before the  
Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Promoting Investment in the 3550-3700 MHz	)	GN Docket No. 17-258
Band	)	

**REPLY COMMENTS OF NOKIA**

Nokia submits Reply Comments in this proceeding asking for comment on proposed changes to the rules governing the 3550-3700 MHz band.<sup>1</sup> In these Reply Comments, Nokia supports the proposal raised by T-Mobile and included in the *NPRM* to “allow [Priority Access License (PAL)] applicants to bid on particular channels, rather than bidding solely on an amount of spectrum that will later be assigned by the [Spectrum Access System (SAS)].”<sup>2</sup>

Nokia advocates for a balanced approach to the 3.5 GHz Band, promoting diverse uses of the band facilitated through micro-deployments as well as larger-scale buildouts. Nokia also has expertise and experience with band sharing and SAS capabilities. Specifically, Nokia has submitted to the Commission a proposal to become a SAS Administrator,<sup>3</sup> and – pending Commission approval – has moved forward with building a fully operational end-to-end SAS solution.

As evidenced in the Commission’s existing rules governing the 3.5 GHz band, predictable, stable and contiguous PAL channel assignments serve the public interest. The Commission’s rules already require the SAS to “assign geographically contiguous PALs held by

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<sup>1</sup> *Promoting Investment in the 3550-3700 MHz Band*, GN Docket No. 17-258, FCC 17-134 (rel. Oct. 24, 2017) (“*NPRM*”).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* ¶ 46.

<sup>3</sup> See “Proposal of Nokia to Operate as a Spectrum Access System (SAS) Administrator and Environmental Sensing Capability Operator,” GN Docket 15-319 (filed Mar. 28, 2017).

the same Priority Access Licensee to the same channels in each geographic area” and “assign multiple channels held by the same Priority Access Licensee to contiguous frequencies within the same License Area” when feasible to do so.<sup>4</sup>

Nokia believes that it would be even more efficient for PAL applicants to bid on specific channel assignments at auction rather than wait until it establishes a SAS relationship to find out what spectrum blocks it has been assigned. As AT&T notes in its Comments, “Effective network planning requires access to predictable spectrum allocations; however, the current framework inhibits the ability of providers to undertake that planning and will result in depressed investment in the band.”<sup>5</sup> Nokia further agrees with AT&T that bidding on specific spectrum blocks will add certainty to the auction process, increasing auction participation by large and small entities alike, if they know the precise channels on which they are bidding.<sup>6</sup>

Setting channel assignments during the auction phase could also facilitate more vibrant competition among SASs. While the current rules would allow a licensee to work with a SAS administrator to obtain specific channels it desires, this could tie the licensee to a given SAS administrator. By winning the specific PAL channel assignments at auction, those assignments become more “portable,” should a PAL holder determine it wants to change to a new SAS administrator. While the *NPRM* raises questions that must be worked through regarding tools the Commission would use to assign specific blocks at auction, the Commission has substantial experience in that area. In contrast, it is not clear in the rules how a SAS would determine how to assign specific PAL channels to interested parties.

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<sup>4</sup> *NPRM* at ¶ 46 (quoting 47 C.F.R. § 96.59(b)).

<sup>5</sup> Comments of AT&T, GN Docket No. 17-258, at 11 (filed Dec. 28, 2017).

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

There is a misunderstanding in the record that a SAS would not be able to reassign a PAL channel if an incumbent needs the channel assigned to the PAL-holder.<sup>7</sup> To the contrary, Nokia believes that a SAS Administrator can, and should, retain discretion to dynamically move PAL users to channels different from the ones won at auction if an incumbent needs to use the assigned channels. In addition, General Authorized Access (GAA) should have dynamic access to the entire band, including unused PAL channels. Indeed, the Commission's rules dictate that a maximum of seven PALs will be auctioned in the first 100 MHz portion of the band. The remaining 30 MHz will be reliably available for GAA use, and will also be an outlet for PAL reassignment if an incumbent needs any of the assigned PAL channels.

For the foregoing reasons, Nokia urges that the Commission revise its rules consistent with these Reply Comments and Nokia's earlier Comments submitted in this proceeding.

Respectfully submitted,

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<sup>7</sup> See, e.g., Comments of NCTA – the Internet & Television Association, GN Docket No. 17-258, at 15 (filed Dec. 28, 2017) (“If an operator has static access to a specific 10-MHz PAL channel it won at auction and incumbent radar begins to operate there, the operator and its customers must cease using its PAL spectrum.”).