

28 June 2018

**Ex Parte**

Marlene H. Dortch  
Secretary, Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

*Re: Amendment of Parts 2 and 25 of the Commission's Rules to Facilitate the Use of Earth Stations in Motion Communicating with Geostationary Orbit Space Stations in Frequency Bands Allocated to the Fixed Satellite Service; IB Docket No. 17-95*

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On June 27, 2018, Thomas D. Hickey, General Counsel of Iridium Communications, Inc. ("Iridium"), Robert McDowell of Cooley LLP, and Shiva Goel and I of Harris, Wiltshire & Grannis LLP met with Erin McGrath, Legal Advisor to Commissioner O'Rielly.

We explained that it is undisputed that earth stations in motion ("ESIMs") operating in the 29.25-29.3 GHz band will create bursts of interference that result in the temporary unavailability of Iridium's feeder uplinks. The only question is whether there are viable strategies to reduce the occurrence of these interference events to acceptable levels. ESIM operators propose to limit interference by calculating exclusion zones around Iridium's feeder-link earth stations within which ESIMs would not operate. These proposals, however, would be unworkable. The coordinates of each exclusion zone are a function of the number of terminals in operation and their locations in time and space, which, for ESIMs, are known unknowns that cannot be determined *a priori*. Coordination through exclusion zones thus would rely on little more than risky and unverifiable guesswork.

We also explained that recent efforts by ESIM advocates to inflate the value of the 29.25-29.3 GHz band for ESIMs make little sense:

- Viasat recently claimed that the 29.25-29.3 GHz band is uniquely valuable because excluding it would create a "donut hole" that would interfere with ESIM channelization.<sup>1</sup> As Iridium explained, however, a quick look at the band plan shows that no such "donut hole" would exist.<sup>2</sup>

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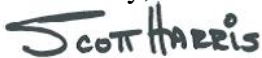
<sup>1</sup> Letter from John P. Janka and Elizabeth R. Park, Counsel to Viasat, Inc., to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, IB Docket No. 17-95 (filed Mar. 26, 2018).

<sup>2</sup> See Letter from Scott Blake Harris, Counsel to Iridium Communications, Inc., to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, IB Docket No. 17-95 (filed Apr. 11, 2018); Letter from Scott Blake Harris, Counsel to Iridium Communications, Inc., to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, at 1, IB Docket No. 17-95 (June 11, 2018) ("Iridium June 11, 2018 Ex Parte").

- Viasat then claimed that it needed access to the 29.25-29.3 GHz band to provide streaming video service.<sup>3</sup> But the 29.25-29.3 GHz band cannot provide any capacity for streaming video service because it is an *uplink* band, and satellite-based streaming video service is delivered using *downlink* spectrum.
- Viasat also claimed that access to the 29.25-29.3 GHz band would allow it to service an additional 250,000 users.<sup>4</sup> But if true, Viasat's math merely demonstrates that even without access to the 29.25-29.3 GHz band, it would have about four times the bandwidth needed to deploy ESIMs on every flight and every tractor-trailer in the country.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, to ESIM users, the 50 megahertz of bandwidth available in the 29.25-29.3 GHz band is beyond insignificant. In light of the band's unique coexistence challenges, the Commission should exclude the 29.25-29.3 GHz band from the ESIMs proposal, or at least defer consideration of the band until the need is shown and the industry identifies a workable coordination solution.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,  


Scott Blake Harris  
*Counsel to Iridium Communications, Inc.*

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<sup>3</sup> See Letter from John P. Janka and Elizabeth R. Park, Counsel to Viasat, Inc., to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, at 1, IB Docket No. 17-95 (filed Apr. 26, 2018) ("Viasat April 26, 2018 Response"); Letter from Elizabeth R. Park, Counsel to Viasat, Inc., to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, at 2, IB Docket No. 17-95 (filed Apr. 26, 2018) ("Viasat April 26, 2018 Notice of Ex Parte").

<sup>4</sup> See Viasat April 26, 2018 Response at 1; Viasat April 26, 2018 Notice of Ex Parte at 2.

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., Letter from Scott Blake Harris, Counsel to Iridium Communications, Inc., to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, at 1, IB Docket No. 17-95 (June 18, 2018); Iridium June 11, 2018 Ex Parte at 1.