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Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554

BY

DA 93-1534

In the Matter of)
)
An Inquiry into the Commission's)
Policies and Rules regarding AM)
Radio Service Directional Antenna)
Performance Verification)

MM Docket No. 93-177 ✓
RM-7594

ORDER GRANTING FURTHER EXTENSION OF TIME

Adopted: December 20, 1993; Released: December 21, 1993

Reply Comment Date: March 1, 1994

By the Chief, Mass Media Bureau:

1. On June 14, 1993, the Commission adopted a Notice of Inquiry, 8 FCC Rcd 4345 (1993), ("Inquiry") in MM Docket 93-177 to examine the policies and rules pertaining to the performance verification of directional antenna systems at AM Broadcast Radio Service stations. The directional antenna rules were initially promulgated in the late 1930s when there were few operational stations and all engineering calculations were performed manually. In the years since those rules were established, they have been amended many times, but no thorough top-to-bottom review has ever been undertaken in order to bring them uniformly up to a state-of-the-art status. The purpose of the Inquiry was to commence such a process by gathering all of the data and other information necessary for releasing a comprehensive set of proposals for rule amendments. The original deadlines for filing comments and reply comments to the Inquiry were August 20, 1993 and September 7, 1993, respectively.

2. On July 12, 1993, the Association of Federal Communications Consulting Engineers requested an extension of the comment and reply comment periods. An Order Granting Extension of Time, 8 FCC Rcd 6324 (1993), was adopted on August 19, 1993, extending the dates for comments and replies to October 29, 1993 and December 29, 1993, respectively. As of the end of the comment period, approximately 20 formal comments had been received at the agency. In addition, a meeting was held on November 17, 1993 at the Commission between agency staff and several representatives of engineering consulting firms to discuss the progress of gathering data for use in drafting proposed rule amendments.

3. The Commission now has before it a petition to further extend the date for filing of reply comments by 60 days. The petition was filed by the engineering firms du Treil, Lundin & Rackley; Hatfield & Dawson; Suffa & Cavell; Silliman & Silliman;

and Moffet, Larson & Johnson. These firms are also the petitioners who originally requested this Inquiry. Petitioners state that they and others in the broadcast industry are engaged in a study of the issues raised in the Inquiry and that a forum will be held in January where all interested parties can discuss these matters with the aim of developing reply comments which are thorough and focused.

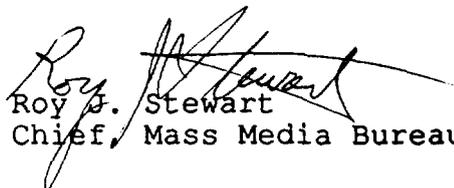
4. After reviewing the Inquiry comments and discussing some of the relevant issues with industry representatives, it is clear that the technical complexity involved in formulating certain of the necessary amendments to our rules is quite significant. For example, some of the computer software programs now available for analyzing antenna patterns are extremely complicated and any action by the agency to eliminate existing measurement requirements and substitute in their place theoretical calculations based on these programs must be based on a thorough examination of the software and an evaluation of how its use would affect antenna pattern accuracy. We believe that the petitioners and others are making progress in formulating their proposals, but that further work is necessary and that such work would be materially aided by the forum planned for January. Therefore we agree with petitioners that a further extension of the deadline for filing reply comments is warranted.

5. Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED THAT the request to extend the reply comment date filed by du Treil, Lundin & Rackley; Hatfield & Dawson; Suffa & Cavell; Silliman & Silliman; and Moffet, Larson & Johnson IS GRANTED. The date for filing reply comments IS EXTENDED to March 1, 1994.

6. This action is taken pursuant to authority found in Sections 4(i) and 303(r) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, and Sections 0.204(b), 0.283, 1.45 and 1.46 of the Commission's Rules.

7. Further information may be obtained from Joseph Johnson, Mass Media Bureau, Engineering Policy Branch, (202) 632-9660.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION


Roy J. Stewart
Chief, Mass Media Bureau