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

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
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In the Matter of )  
 )  
Petition for Partial Relief )  
From the Current Regulatory ) RM-7913  
Treatment of COMSAT World Systems' )  
Switched Voice, Private Line, and )  
Video and Audio Services )

**COMMENTS OF REUTERS TELEVISION, LTD.  
IN SUPPORT OF PETITION FOR PARTIAL RELIEF**

Reuters Television, Ltd. ("Reuters"), by its undersigned counsel, hereby responds to the Commission's Public Notice of July 26, 1994 in this proceeding (DA 94-820) by submitting the attached Comments in Support of the Petition of COMSAT World Systems' ("COMSAT") for Partial Relief from current regulatory treatment by the Commission. Reuters supports the Petition with particular regard to COMSAT's provision of satellite capacity for audio and video service applications.

Reuters is a London-based supplier of television programming which has, for almost 20 years, employed satellite capacity to distribute its video and associated audio program materials internationally. Since 1983, it has, either directly or through its affiliates, contracted with COMSAT as a reseller of Intelsat space segment capacity. It currently holds full-period leases with COMSAT for three Atlantic Ocean Region transponders, and one in the Pacific Ocean Region. In addition, Reuters routinely utilizes Intelsat, PanAmSat and other non-Intelsat

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space segment capacity for occasional television transmission services in various parts of the globe.

A. Justification for Streamlined Tariff Regulation

Reuters believes that, in its Petition and the supporting study prepared by the Brattle Group, COMSAT has convincingly demonstrated the evolution of the international satellite industry to its present form in which COMSAT, in the provision of satellite services for television transmission services faces substantial and growing competition. As an active participant in the international commercial satellite market for over a decade, Reuters has witnessed the entry of private satellite systems licensed by the Commission, like Panamsat, and the emergence of non-Intelsat regional satellite systems in this and other parts of the world, like certain of the Russian satellites. This trend is scheduled only to continue with the entry of additional private international satellite service operators, like Orion Network Systems, in the next few years. Reuters has also discerned an increasingly aggressive posture by other national signatories to INTELSAT to compete with COMSAT in its proffering of end-to-end services by means of the INTELSAT system.

While Reuters has never viewed the proliferation of international fiber optic cable systems as offering an effective alternative to satellite capacity for the provision of point-to-multipoint distribution of television programming, Reuters concurs that the evolution of the satellite sector itself has materially impacted the manner in which COMSAT competes for its share of the marketplace.

As a long-standing customer of COMSAT, Reuters has observed COMSAT play an increasingly competitive and supportive role in recent years, exhibiting a markedly greater willingness to accommodate the needs and specific objectives of its customers, and exhibiting an increasingly flexible approach in its provision of services.

In this regard, Reuters agrees with COMSAT's premise that the international satellite industry of today is a substantially different, more dynamic, competitive and commercially oriented one than that which the Commission analyzed in 1985 when it adopted the current tariffing requirements for COMSAT which the Petition seeks to ease. Thus, the forms of relief which COMSAT requests in its Petition are, in Reuters' view, reasonable and, if anything, will help to place COMSAT in a more equitable relationship vis-a-vis non-Intelsat satellite systems with which it must compete and which are not subject to the Commission's strict tariffing requirements made applicable to COMSAT. The proposal at hand to permit COMSAT to adopt or amend its tariff requirements on 14 days notice, rather than 45, will still provide its competitors and customers alike a reasonable opportunity to challenge any proposed tariff terms which they consider unfavorable. Similarly, Reuters is prepared to evaluate the merits of COMSAT's future proposed tariff changes without the benefit of the detailed economic and cost support data which the Commission currently requires of COMSAT.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Comsat does not specify in its Petition what is the "minimal cost support data" which it feels it should be required to produce in support of its tariff filings. Presumably, it seeks repeal of its current requirement to file Section 61.38 economic and cost support data. Reuters submits that this detailed numerical analysis be replaced by a more streamlined requirement that COMSAT describe in its tariff transmittals the competitive objectives of its proposed tariff amendments and a narrative statement of how the public interest will be advanced by the proposed change.

B. The procedural Basis of the Petition

Significantly, COMSAT does not suggest in its Petition a procedural basis for the relief it seeks. It acknowledges in the Petition that a rulemaking would be required for a formal change of its carrier classification to non-dominant, and expressly eschews the lengthy period of time which approval of such a formal request would require.<sup>2</sup> Reuters does not concur with the implicit suggestion in the Petition that the requested relief can be granted in the context of a procedural vacuum.

The nature of the request and the fact that the Commission has elected to put it on notice for public comment provide the Petition with the germane characteristics of a request for waiver from existing rules for the streamlined tariffing standards sought. See Commission Rule 1.3, 47 CFR §1.3. Reuters submits that the Petition be treated as one for a waiver and that the requested relief be granted by the Commission for the good cause which Reuters has shown.

Respectfully submitted,

REUTERS TELEVISION, LTD.

By:   
Delbert D. Smith  
Stefan M. Lopatkiewicz

REED SMITH SHAW & McCLAY  
1200 18th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
(202) 457-8690

August 25, 1994

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<sup>2</sup> See COMSAT Petition, at 34. This is consistent with the fact that the Commission's 1985 determination subjecting COMSAT to the current tariffing standards under which it operates was made in the context of a rulemaking. International Competitive Carrier Policies, 102 F.C.C. 2d 812, 838-841 (1985).

## CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Michele A. Depasse, certify the copies of the foregoing "COMMENTS IN SUPPORT OF PETITION FOR PARTIAL RELIEF" were served by first-class mail, postage prepaid, this 25th day of August, 1994 on the following:

The Honorable Reed E. Hundt  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
8th Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20554\*

The Honorable James H. Quello  
Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
8th Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20554\*

The Honorable Andrew C. Barrett  
Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
8th Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20554\*

The Honorable Rachelle B. Chong  
Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
8th Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20554\*

The Honorable Susan Ness  
Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
8th Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20554\*

Wendall R. Harris  
Assistant Bureau Chief - International  
Common Carrier Bureau  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Room 534  
Washington, D.C. 20554\*

Diane Cornell  
Chief, International Policy Division  
Common Carrier Bureau  
Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Room 534  
Washington, D.C. 20554\*

Joel Pearlman  
International Division  
Common Carrier Bureau  
Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Room 534  
Washington, D.C. 20554\*

Jennifer Manner  
International Division  
Common Carrier Bureau  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Room 534  
Washington, D.C. 20554\*

Scott B. Harris  
Director  
Office of International Communications  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Room 658  
Washington, D.C. 20554\*

James L. Ball  
Deputy Director  
Office of International Communications  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Room 658  
Washington, D.C. 20554\*

Kathleen A. Wallman  
Chief  
Common Carrier Bureau  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Room 500  
Washington, D.C. 20554\*

Gregory J. Vogt  
Chief, Tariff Division  
Common Carrier Bureau  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Room 518  
Washington, D.C. 20554\*

Michael Katz  
Chief Economist  
Office of Plans and Policy  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Room 822  
Washington, D.C. 20554\*

Warren Y. Zeger  
Keith H. Fagan  
COMSAT World Systems  
950 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20024

Richard E. Wiley, Esquire  
Philip V. Permut, Esquire  
Jeffrey S. Linder, Esquire  
Wiley, Rein & Fielding  
1776 K Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
(Counsel for COMSA5 World Systems)

Larry Irving  
Assistant Secretary of Commerce  
Department of Commerce  
4898 HCH Building  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Vonya McCann  
Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Communications & Information Policy  
Department of State  
2201 C Street, N.W.  
Room 6312  
Washington, D.C. 20520-5818

Gail L. Polivy, Esq.  
GTE Service Corporation  
1850 M Street, N.W.  
Suite 1200  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
(Counsel for GTE Hawaiian Telephone Company)

Raul R. Rodriguez, Esquire  
Leventhal, Senter & Lerman  
2000 K Street, N.W.  
Suite 600  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
(Counsel for Aeronautical Radio, Inc.)

Leon M. Kestenbaum, Esquire  
Michael B. Fingerhut, Esquire  
1850 M Street, N.W.  
Suite 1110  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
(Counsel for Sprint Communications Company L.P.)

Henry Goldberg, Esq.  
Phillip L. Spector, Esq.  
Goldberg & Spector  
1229 Nineteenth Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
(Counsel for Pan American Satellite)

John M. Scorce, Esq.  
Jodi L. Cooper, Esq.  
1801 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
(Counsel for MCI Telecommunications Corp.)

Robert S. Koppel  
Vice President, Legal and  
Regulatory Affairs  
IDB Communications Group, Inc.  
15245 Shady Grove Road  
Suite 640  
Rockville, MD 20850

Francine J. Berry, Esq.  
David P. Conduit, Esq.  
Ivars V. Mellups, Esq.  
295 North Maple Avenue  
Room 3244J1  
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920  
(Counsel for American Telephone  
& Telegraph Company)

Randolph J. May, Esq.  
Sutherland, Asbill & Brennan  
1275 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20004  
(Counsel for Capital Cities/ABC  
Company, Inc.; CBS Inc.; National  
Broadcasting Co., Inc.; Turner  
Broadcasting System, Inc.)

International Transcription  
Services  
2100 M Street, N.W.  
Room 140  
Washington, D.C. 20026\*

  
Michele A. Depasse

\*by hand delivery