

BEFORE THE

Federal Communications Commission

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

In the Matter of)	PR Docket No. 92-257
)	RM-7956, 8031, 8352
)	
Amendment to the Commission's Rules Concerning Maritime Communications)	Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

Waterway Communications System, Inc. ("WATERCOM") respectfully submits its Comments in response to the Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the Commission's ongoing view and overhaul of the rules governing maritime communications.

I. Statement of Interest

WATERCOM is a Commercial Mobile Radio Service provider, rendering service to the maritime community along the inland waterway transportation network comprised of the Mississippi, Illinois and Ohio Rivers and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway via an Automated Maritime Telecommunications System (AMTS) licensed under Part 80 of the Commission's regulations. WATERCOM operates fifty-four (54) coast stations along the 4,000-mile corridor served by its system, with network control and management being provided through its Operations and Control Center (OCC) at Jeffersonville, Indiana.

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II. Comments

In the Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, the Commission raises a number of issues concerning the maritime public correspondence services. These issues focus principally upon the VHF service, but also address the single side band and AMTS services. WATERCOM restricts its comments in response to the Second Further Notice to the AMTS-related issues.

With regard to AMTS stations siting (§ 115), substantially all of WATERCOM's transmitters have required broadcaster notification. WATERCOM has had no adverse experience with regard to causing harmful interference to television reception. Notwithstanding WATERCOM's position during the formation of the rules governing AMTS operations that the television protection criteria were overly broad, the rules have proven to be workable; and the resultant design criteria have successfully protected not only the television viewer community but also the operation of the WATERCOM system. As to developing technical limitations to govern the installation and operation of fill-in stations, WATERCOM does not believe that such an effort is warranted. By definition, a fill-in station should be bounded on at least two sides by the existing contours, and should not significantly extend the system coverage. Accordingly, a fill-in station should not have a material, adverse impact upon television broadcast reception.

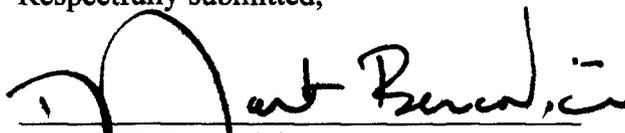
With regard to defining the service area of AMTS stations for purposes of affording protection against harmful interference (§ 117(a)), WATERCOM submits that the appropriate

criteria should entail protection of the corridor designed to be served by the automated system, taking into account propagation and the effect of ducting interference experienced over water. Such a standard is important inasmuch as the AMTS is designed to provide continuity of service over a channel or region of maritime operations, and there may be fringe areas within the maritime operating area which should be protected against interference from another, distant AMTS system. Moreover, with the opening of permissible communications to service to land operations, the primary function of serving the maritime industry should be preserved through protection of the AMTS service region. The Commission adopted AMTS service protection standards in Gen. Doc. No. 93-40, and those standards should be applied here, as well.

WATERCOM supports technical flexibility in the AMTS (§§ 118-122). Such technical flexibility enables operators to implement new services and new capacities without being subject to the potential delays of the administrative process for rulemaking and/or licensing.

WHEREFORE, THE PREMISES CONSIDERED, Waterway Communications System, Inc., respectfully urges the Federal Communications Commission to act in response to the Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in this proceeding in a fashion consistent with the foregoing views.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Martin W. Berco vici". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "M".

Martin W. Berco vici
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