

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

In the Matter of)	
)	
Amendment of Parts 1 and 22 of the Commission’s Rules with Regard to the Cellular Service, Including Changes in Licensing of Unserved Area)	WT Docket No. 12-40
)	
)	RM No. 11510
)	
Amendment of the Commission’s Rules with Regard to Relocation of Part 24 to Part 27)	
)	
Interim Restrictions and Procedures for Cellular Service Applications)	
)	
)	
Amendment of Parts 0, 1, and 22 of the Commission’s Rules with Regard to Frequency Coordination for the Cellular Service)	
)	
)	
Amendment of the Commission’s Rules Governing Power Limits for the Cellular Service)	RM No. 11660
)	

**REPLY COMMENTS OF PCIA –
THE WIRELESS INFRASTRUCTURE ASSOCIATION**

PCIA – The Wireless Infrastructure Association (“PCIA”) respectfully submits these reply comments concerning the FCC’s proposal in its Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in this proceeding to introduce the use of frequency coordination procedures in the Cellular Radiotelephone Service (“Cellular”).¹ PCIA has been certified as a nationwide Part 90 frequency coordinator since 1986, and recognizes the value a qualified frequency coordinator

¹ *Amendment of Parts 0, 1, and 22 of the Commission’s Rules with Regard to Frequency Coordination for the Cellular Service*, Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 29 FCC Rcd 14100 (2014).

brings to the FCC application process. In these reply comments, PCIA reiterates its interest in serving as a Cellular frequency coordinator should the FCC adopt its proposal.

DISCUSSION

Aside from PCIA, only three commenters addressed the frequency coordination proposal.² The Rural Wireless Association, Inc. (“RWA”) supports the proposal,³ while AT&T, like PCIA, suggests a number of improvements should the FCC move forward, including reducing the application processing fee for new license/major modification applications.⁴ In light of concerns raised by Verizon questioning the need and expense of third party frequency coordination,⁵ the FCC could, as discussed below, make coordination optional but extend conditional operating authority only to frequency-coordinated applications. Such an option would provide an incentive (but not an obligation) for parties to utilize frequency coordination services, which in turn would reduce application processing burdens on FCC staff. Conversely, parties not wanting to utilize frequency coordination services would not be required to do so, but also would not be eligible for conditional operating authority.

² See Comments of AT&T, WT Docket No. 12-40 (Jan. 21, 2015) (“AT&T Comments”); Comments of Rural Wireless Association, Inc., WT Docket No. 12-40 (Jan. 21, 2015) (“RWA Comments”); Comments of Verizon, WT Docket No. 12-40 (Jan. 21, 2015) (“Verizon Comments”).

³ See RWA Comments at 5-6.

⁴ See AT&T Comments at 4, 6-9; Comments of PCIA – The Wireless Infrastructure Association, WT Docket No. 12-40, at 5 (Jan. 21, 2015) (“PCIA Comments”).

⁵ Verizon Comments at 8-9.

I. AS PROPOSED BY COMMENTERS, APPLICATION PROCESSING FEES FOR FREQUENCY-COORDINATED APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE REDUCED.

As PCIA explained in its comments, fewer staff resources will be needed to process frequency-coordinated cellular license and major modification applications.⁶ Specifically, by utilizing coordinators to perform the first-line review of these complex applications to ensure compliance with the Cellular technical rules, the FCC can reduce the error rate in applications most likely to consume significant staff resources.⁷ RWA likewise explains that “[f]requency coordination will reduce the expenditure of Commission resources by ensuring that applications comply with the Commission’s rules and are complete before they are filed.”⁸ And AT&T notes that frequency-coordinated applications will result in “reduced Commission time and resources needed to review applications.”⁹

Given these circumstances, AT&T’s proposal to reduce the current application fee for a new system license, or the major modification of an existing license, from \$430 to \$115 – the cost of a minor modification application – is reasonable and should be adopted if the Commission adopts its Cellular frequency coordination proposal.¹⁰ While such fee reductions may not fully offset the cost of frequency coordination services, applicants are likely to realize cost savings from a more streamlined and expedient Cellular application process if frequency coordination is implemented.

⁶ PCIA Comments at 5.

⁷ PCIA Comments at 3.

⁸ RWA Comments at 5.

⁹ AT&T Comments at 4.

¹⁰ See AT&T Comments at 9.

II. COMMENTERS SUPPORT MAKING FREQUENCY-COORDINATED APPLICATIONS ELIGIBLE FOR CONDITIONAL OPERATING AUTHORITY.

Applicants in other wireless radio services are allowed to commence operation of a new or modified system on a conditional basis after filing a frequency coordinated application with the FCC.¹¹ Because there is a narrow possibility of interference being caused by a new or modified system that has been fully-vetted by a frequency coordinator, there is limited risk of allowing applicants to conditionally operate while their applications are being processed. Coupling frequency coordination and conditional operating authority in this way can be used to speed deployment of new service to the public, while also ensuring that such systems do not cause harmful interference to others. As both AT&T and RWA observe, the same is true for the Cellular service.¹²

For example, AT&T explains that “granting Cellular licensees conditional authority would have little potential for negative consequences, as interference concerns are unlikely to materialize after frequency coordinator review.”¹³ At the same time, “[g]ranting applicants conditional authority will provide Cellular licensees with more flexibility to extend into unserved areas and benefit consumers by permitting more rapid deployment of Cellular service into those unserved areas.”¹⁴ Similarly, RWA notes that because the frequency coordinator will have determined that the proposed facilities will not cause harmful interference, the “likelihood of harm resulting from applicants operating under conditional authority is minimal” and allowing

¹¹ See, e.g., 47 C.F.R. §§ 90.159(b), 101.31(b).

¹² AT&T Comments at 9; RWA Comments at 6.

¹³ AT&T Comments at 9.

¹⁴ *Id.*

applicants to do so will “promot[e] the timely deployment of service to the public.”¹⁵ PCIA agrees.

However, in light of the concerns raised by Verizon questioning the need and expense of frequency coordination in the Cellular service,¹⁶ the FCC could consider making Cellular frequency coordination optional. Under this option, applicants choosing not to undergo frequency coordination would file their uncoordinated applications directly with the FCC but – as is currently the case – they would need to wait for FCC approval before commencing operations (it is unclear how conditional operating authority could be implemented without a frequency coordination requirement). While this would create an incentive to use frequency coordination, thereby reducing processing burdens on FCC staff, it would not impose an obligation. As a result, applicants would be allowed to make their own cost-benefit analyses in deciding which approach to pursue.

¹⁵ RWA Comments at 6.

¹⁶ Verizon Comments at 8-9.

CONCLUSION

PCIA reaffirms its preliminary interest in seeking certification as a Cellular frequency coordinator should the FCC adopt its proposal to introduce the use of third-party frequency coordinators to process Cellular applications claiming new or expanded Cellular Geographic Service Area. To the extent the FCC implements a Cellular frequency coordination approach, it should be consistent with the rules and policies recommended herein as well as in PCIA's initial comments.

Respectfully submitted,

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