

Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC 20556

In the Matter of)
)
Section 68.4(a) of the)
FCC's Rules Governing) WT Docket No. 01-309
Hearing Aid Compatible)
Telephones)

SECOND REPORT

United States Cellular Corporation ("USCC") hereby files its "Second Report" in the above-captioned docket concerning hearing aid compatibility pursuant to the FCC's March 8, 2004 public notice.¹ The March Notice required, *inter alia*, that wireless carriers and manufacturers file their initial reports on May 17, 2004 concerning their efforts to comply with Section 20.19 of the FCC's Rules and the FCC order which adopted that rule, which deal with use of digital wireless devices with hearing aids and that they file such reports every six months thereafter until compliance was achieved.² This is USCC's second report.

Background

USCC is a "Tier II" wireless carrier³ serving approximately 4.7 million cellular and PCS customers in 147 markets. It has reviewed the HAC Order and

¹ See Public Notice "Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Announces Hearing Aid Compatibility Reporting Dates for Wireless Carriers and Handset Manufacturers (WT Docket No. 01-309)," DA 04-630, released March 8, 2004 (19 FCC Rcd 4097) ("March Notice").

² See In the Matter of Section 68.4(a) of the Commission's Rules Governing Hearing Aid-Compatible Telephones, Report and Order, 18 FCC Rcd. 16753 (2003) ("HAC Order").

³ In the Matter of Revision of the Commission's Rules To Ensure Compatibility with Enhanced 911 Emergency Calling Systems, Phase II Compliance Deadlines for Non-Nationwide CMRS Carriers, 17 FCC Rcd 14841, ¶23 (2002).

Section 20.19 of the FCC's Rules and is aware that it must meet the rule's requirements.

As applied to Tier II wireless carriers, Section 20.19 provides that by September 16, 2005 carriers must include in their handset offerings at least two digital handset models which comply with the hearing aid compatibility standards set out in Section 20.19(b)(1) of the rule. That section incorporates the American National Standards Institute [ANSI] technical standard C63.19 for compatibility of digital wireless phones with hearing aids. The rule also provides that, by September 16, 2006, carriers must include in their handset "offerings" at least two handset models which comply with the "inductive coupling" requirements of Section 20.19(b)(2) of the FCC's Rules. Section 20.19(c)(2)(B) also contains a separate requirement that at least 50 percent of a carrier's "handset models for each air interface" must comply with Section 20.19(b)(1) by February 18, 2008. Finally, Section 20.19 contains labeling and other requirements which will apply to hearing aid compatible handsets once they are commercially available.

USCC is cognizant of those deadlines is working diligently to meet them. However, the ability of USCC, or any other carrier, to meet FCC deadlines for implementing technological handset upgrades is obviously dependent on the activities of handset manufacturers which it does not control.

I. USCC Compliance Efforts.

The HAC Order (§ 89) requires wireless carriers and handset manufacturers to report every six months on compliance efforts for three years beginning with the May 17, 2004 report, and annually thereafter through the fifth year of

implementation. The reports should provide information concerning: (1) digital phones tested; (2) the laboratory or laboratories used; (3) test results for each phone tested; (4) compliant phone models and ratings according to ANSI standard C63.19; (5) the status of handset labeling; (6) the status of "outreach" efforts; (7) the retail availability of compliant phones; (8) the incorporation of hearing aid compatibility features into newer models of digital wireless phones; (9) any activities related to ANSI's standard C63.19 or other standards intended to comply with the HAC Order; (10) the total numbers of compliant and non-compliant phone models offered as of the time of the report; and (11) any ongoing efforts regarding "interoperability" testing with hearing aid devices.

Obviously, at this time only handset manufacturers and organizations such as the Alliance for Telecommunications Solutions (ATIS) are in a position to provide information in response to most of these items. Moreover, issues of "labeling," "outreach," and numbers of compliant models offered for sale will be relevant only as compliant handsets are developed by vendors and become commercially available.

USCC has however, contacted its handset vendors, including Audiovox, Kyocera, Nokia , Motorola, and LG, concerning their progress toward meeting the digital hearing aid compatibility deadlines and has received responses from all of those vendors. In all cases, the manufacturers stated that they are working to develop compliant handsets in line with Section 20.19's requirements but do not have such handsets available yet. Motorola, Nokia, Kyocera and Audiovox noted their participation in ATIS as part of their effort to develop compliant handsets.

Rather than submit these vendor responses to USCC's queries, which vary in levels of formality and detail, to the FCC, USCC thought it preferable to allow each of those vendors to submit their own reports to the Commission as part of this process. Those mandatory filings should provide the FCC with the necessary information about those vendors' efforts. USCC hereby represents that we will seek delivery of hearing aid compatible handsets as soon as our vendors make them commercially available, as well as carrying out our labeling and outreach responsibilities under the rule, and filing all necessary reports.

Conclusion

USCC believes that the foregoing is responsive to the FCC's reporting mandate. If the FCC has additional questions at this time concerning USCC's activities in response to the HAC Order, USCC will answer them.

Respectfully submitted,
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