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Via Electronic Filing

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: IB Docket No. 05-221

Dear Ms. Dortch:

Mobile Satellite Ventures LP ("MSV") is writing to correct various mischaracterizations made by Inmarsat Ventures Limited ("Inmarsat") regarding the ability of the Mobile Satellite Service ("MSS") L band to support broadband and multimedia services. Inmarsat argues that the L band is allegedly not suitable for broadband service. The fact is that the MSS L band is fully capable of supporting broadband service.

The problems with L band that Inmarsat cites are largely of Inmarsat's own making and can be readily resolved if Inmarsat would only cooperate with MSV and other MSS L band operators who want to use the L band more efficiently. The engine for this innovation is the deployment of hybrid satellite/terrestrial systems that will benefit millions of users in the United States by creating the economies of scale required for consumer wireless services that match and surpass those provided by satellite-only providers or terrestrial-only providers. While Inmarsat is the dominant MSS provider, with the largest fleet of satellites, none of its satellites has the power to provide the kind of hybrid satellite/terrestrial service contemplated by the Commission rules and no prospects of serving more than a few tens of thousands of United States customers. As with its longstanding opposition to reasonable rules for hybrid satellite/terrestrial systems, Inmarsat's recent filing in the 2 GHz band proceeding shows that its regulatory strategy continues to be the classic strategy of a dominant provider with large sunk costs: to strangle innovation in order to reduce competition and maximize the return on the enormous investment it has made in older technology. Granting Inmarsat access to additional spectrum in the 2 GHz band will only encourage it to perpetuate its inefficient use of L band spectrum.

Inmarsat focuses on four reasons why the L band is inadequate for broadband and multimedia service, each of which is invalid: (i) an inability to coordinate wideband carriers; (ii) insufficient spectrum; (iii) the need to provide priority and preemptive access to certain maritime and aviation safety services; and (iv) lack of proximity to IMT-2000 terrestrial deployments.

International frequency coordination. The most far-fetched of Inmarsat claims is the one it makes concerning the constraints of the current frequency coordination. There is no good reason why the existing assignments, designed to accommodate narrowband services, could not be reconfigured to assign more contiguous spectrum to each operator. MSV is convinced that

this could be done with the cooperation of the operators, minimal transition costs, and huge gains in the capacity of the spectrum to handle more users and new services. Inmarsat, however, effectively controls the process as a result of its large fleet of satellites and its unique involvement in both the two regional coordination efforts. Moreover, as Inmarsat notes, 14 MHz of new L band spectrum has been made available outside of the United States, thus providing Inmarsat with significantly flexibility to relocate its users in Regions 1 and 3. Inmarsat, however, has been content to perpetuate the current inefficiencies, which serve its interest of undermining competition. MSV is dedicated to continuing to work to ensure that the L band spectrum is used in the most efficient manner possible.

Insufficient spectrum. Inmarsat's claim that it faces a shortage of L band spectrum is equally false. Inmarsat already has access to more spectrum globally and in North America than any other MSS operator. It uses much of this spectrum to operate an inefficient fleet of satellites, including its newest Inmarsat-4 series, and to support outmoded and inefficient user equipment that it has only recently begun slowly to decommission. While maritime and aeronautical users generally are using more bandwidth, those services are increasingly being supplied using Fixed Satellite Service satellites and by new competitors, like Connexion by Boeing, that operate in other frequency bands. Over the years, Inmarsat has forecast high demand for its projected new services, but the demand has never developed, particularly for land-mobile service. These failures will be reversed only with the deployment of a robust ancillary terrestrial component, something Inmarsat appears finally to have accepted too late to take full advantage of in the L band with the low-powered Inmarsat-4 satellites that it has just built at a cost of well over \$1 billion. Until then, the cost of satellite-only service and equipment will remain too high and the value of the service too low to stimulate significant demand. This is certainly the case for Inmarsat's long-delayed BGAN service, for which demand forecasts continue to be reduced.

Priority and preemptive access. MSV disagrees with Inmarsat's unsubstantiated claim regarding the impact of priority and preemptive access obligations on its ability to offer broadband services. Historically, the demand for maritime safety communications has been modest and for aviation safety communications even smaller.

Proximity to IMT-2000. Without any support whatsoever, Inmarsat claims that, because the L band is not adjacent to the IMT-2000 frequencies, L band user terminals cannot be made with 3G form factors, sizes, and capabilities. It may be the case that Inmarsat would have to look to IMT-2000 or other terrestrial bands for its next-generation equipment, but only because it has failed to deploy sufficiently powerful L band satellites to meet the Commission's requirement to provide equipment that works with both the satellite and terrestrial component. If it had built higher-powered satellites, however, Inmarsat could deploy a terrestrial component that would make more efficient use of its assigned spectrum and create economies of scale for the production of user equipment, regardless of the frequency band.

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MSV urges the Commission to reject Inmarsat's arguments and continue to develop policies that foster the efficient use of all radiofrequency spectrum, including the MSS L band.

Very truly yours,

/s/Randy S. Segal

Randy S. Segal

cc: Chairman Kevin J. Martin
Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein
Fred Campbell
Emily Willeford
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