



TELECOMMUNICATIONS
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Via Electronic Filing (<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/>)

March 10, 2014

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth St., S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Re: *GN Docket No. 12-268, Expanding the Economic and Innovation Opportunities of Spectrum Through Incentive Auctions*

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On March 6, the Telecommunications Industry Association ("TIA") met with Gary Epstein, head of the Federal Communications Commission's ("Commission") Incentive Auction Task Force, and his team, to discuss issues related to the above-mentioned docket. In attendance were: Gary Epstein, Bill Lake, Julie Knapp, Matthew Hussey, Bob Weller, A.J. Glusman, Martin Doczkat, Chris Helzer, Madelaine Maior, and Jennifer Tomchin, all of the FCC. Also in attendance were Mary Brown of Cisco, Peter Pitsch of Intel, Jeffrey Marks of Alcatel-Lucent, Alexander Gerdenitsch of Motorola Mobility, Derek Khlopin of Nokia Solutions & Networks, and Mark Uncapher, Dileep Srihari, Lauren McCarty and Joel Thayer, all of TIA.

During this meeting, TIA reiterated its strong support for the Commission to maximize licensed use in the incentive auction process and enhance pre-auction outreach to broadcasters especially in the Top 10 markets.

Maximizing Licensed Spectrum

First, TIA re-iterated Congress' expectation that the incentive auction will maximize the amount of spectrum available for licensed uses, and that the Commission should adopt approaches to TV station repacking and guard-band size and usage with that ultimate objective in mind. With respect to guard bands, although the statute affords the FCC some discretion in the size and use of guard bands, that discretion is limited by language requiring that the guard bands be "no larger than is technically reasonable to prevent harmful interference between licensed services outside the guard bands."

Second, TIA noted that any auction rules reducing the amount of expected revenue – such as by failing to maximize the amount of licensed spectrum available for bid at auction – would reduce the pool of available funds for incentive payments to broadcasters. Since broadcaster participation is voluntary, broadcasters will be making decisions about whether to participate in the reverse auction based on their estimates of the payments likely to be received. However, if broadcasters perceive that the forward auction rules will result in smaller auction revenues, they may be less likely to participate in the reverse auction. Alternatively, a misalignment between high broadcaster expectations and lower forward auction revenues (caused by FCC rules) could cause the auction to fail in certain markets.

Third, although unlicensed uses in the actual TV “white spaces” (gaps between licensed stations) that remain after repacking can and should continue, TIA noted that recent engineering analyses show that interference issues may arise from unlicensed uses in guard bands. (See Qualcomm ex parte filing, Feb. 19, 2014, in GN Docket No. 12-268.)

Openness to Unlicensed and Alternative Approaches in Other Bands

With respect to other bands, TIA stated that it is open to considering various spectrum allocation approaches which may be suitable depending on the specific band. In particular, TIA re-iterated its strong support of the Commission’s work to expand access for unlicensed operations in the 5 GHz band.

Broadcaster Outreach

TIA expressed its support for the steps announced at the Commission’s recent open meeting to enhance outreach to broadcasters, especially in the Top 10 markets. Significant broadcaster participation is essential to ensuring a successful incentive auction that frees up enough spectrum and meets funding targets.

However, TIA expressed concerns that more outreach needs to be done, particularly to all broadcasters operating in the Top 10 markets. TIA mentioned that the Commission needs to engage in boardroom-level outreach to ensure that the owners and operators of these stations are fully aware of, and have sufficient information regarding, their options to participate in the auction.

Pursuant to the Commission’s rules,¹ this letter is being electronically filed via ECFS and a copy of this submission is being provided electronically to the meeting attendees.

¹ 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206.

Respectfully submitted,

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