UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

DRAFT PRELIMINARY VIEWS ON WRC-11

AGENDA ITEM 1.7: To consider the results of ITU-R studies in accordance with Resolution 222 (Rev. WRC-07) in order to ensure long term spectrum availability and access to spectrum necessary to meet requirements for the aeronautical mobile-satellite (R) service and to take action on this subject, while retaining unchanged the generic allocation to the mobile-satellite service in the bands 1 525-1 559 MHz and 1 626.5-1 660.5 MHz.

ISSUE: To satisfy specific aeronautical mobile-satellite (R) service (AMS(R)S) requirements identified in the ITU-R studies, and ensure long term spectrum availability and access for AMS(R)S.

BACKGROUND: WRC-07 considered the matter of long-term spectrum availability for AMS(R)S and as a result adopted Resolution 222 (Rev. WRC-07). This resolution invites the ITU-R to conduct technical, operational and regulatory studies to ensure long-term spectrum availability for the AMS(R)S. The ITU-R is studying the existing and future spectrum requirements of the AMS(R)S and if the long-term requirements of the AMS(R)S can be met within the existing allocations with respect to No. 5.357A, while retaining unchanged the generic allocation for the mobile-satellite service in the bands 1 525 – 1 559 MHz and 1 626.5 – 1 660.5 MHz. Studies should determine the feasibility and practicality of technical or regulatory means, other than the coordination process, to ensure adequate access to spectrum to accommodate the AMS(R)S requirements. Additionally, the ITU-R will study existing MSS allocations or possible new allocations needed to satisfy the requirements of the AMS(R)S for communications with priority categories 1 to 6 of Article 44 (of the Radio Regulations) (if it is determined that AMS(R)S requirements cannot be met).¹

ICAO released its draft WRC-11 position on this issue for consultation by Member States. ICAO supports, taking into account the results of ITU-R studies, further regulatory provisions to strengthen AMS(R)S access to the bands 1 545 - 1 555 MHz and 1 646.5 - 1 656.5 MHz including, if required, changes to No. 5.357A, No. 5.362A and Resolution 222.² ICAO believes that if the studies identified by Res. 222 (Rev. WRC-07) indicate that the long term needs of AMS(R)S cannot be satisfied in the bands 1 545 - 1 555 MHz and 1 646.5 - 1 656.5 MHz, then ICAO supports AMS(R)S in other frequency bands through appropriate regulatory provisions.³

¹ See generally Int'l Telecomm. Union [ITU], Use of the Bands 1 525-1 559 MHz and 1 626.5-1 660.5 MHz by the Mobile-Satellite Service, and Studies to Ensure Long-Term Spectrum Availability for the Aeronautical Mobile-Satellite (R) Service, Resolution 222 (Rev. WRC-07) (2007).


³ Id. (emphasis in original).
ICAO’s Air Navigation Commission and its Council will consider Member State comments and will develop its final position in the second quarter of 2009.4

Studies are underway on the present and future AMS(R)S spectrum requirements, and at this point the ITU-R has not determined the adequacy of the current MSS allocations in 1 525 – 1 559 MHz and 1 626.5 – 1 660.5 MHz bands for accommodating those AMS(R)S requirements. WRCs before 1997 allocated the bands 1 530 – 1 544 MHz (space-to-Earth) and 1 626.5 – 1 645.5 MHz (Earth-to-space) to the maritime mobile-satellite service and allocated the bands 1 545 – 1 555 MHz (space-to-Earth) and 1 646.5 – 1 656.5 MHz (Earth-to-space) on an exclusive basis to the AMS(R)S. To facilitate the efficient use of that spectrum, WRC-97 allocated the bands 1 525 – 1 559 MHz (space-to-Earth) and 1 626.5 – 1 660.5 MHz (Earth-to-space) to the generic mobile-satellite service (MSS), with priority given to the maritime and aeronautical services in the bands where these services previously had exclusive allocations. WRC-11 adopted agenda item 1.7 based on inputs to WRC-07. These inputs concluded that the combination of the generic allocation to MSS and priority for aviation, does not satisfy the current and near or long term spectrum access requirements of AMS(R)S. While current ITU-R reports or recommendations do not reflect a need for specific changes, studies are underway on the topic. The agenda item specifically precludes returning the frequency bands to exclusive AMS(R)S spectrum.

U.S. VIEW: Any changes to the Radio Regulations that are taken to ensure the long term availability and adequate access to spectrum for AMS(R)S in the 1 525 – 1 559 and 1 626.5 – 1 660.5 MHz bands must be supported by studies. (Ref. RCS-2172/2)

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4 The ICAO Aeronautical Communications Panel (ACP) Working Party F is to consider comments received to this Draft ICAO position at its next meeting March 24, 2009.