

National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration  
**Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546



December 1, 2008

Reply to the Attn of: SCaN

The Honorable Meredith Attwell Baker  
Acting Assistant Secretary of Commerce  
United States Department of Commerce  
Herbert C. Hoover Building  
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Ms. Baker:

In response to your letter of November 10, 2008, regarding the FY2008 Progress Report on the President's Spectrum Policy Initiative, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) offers the following responses:

1. NASA has recently updated its long-range spectrum plan (see enclosure), including bandwidth and frequency location for future technologies or services. We are committed to updating this plan on an annual basis to remain current with national priorities.
2. Planned uses of new technologies or expanded services are considered in the NASA plan. NASA is also undertaking a technology development initiative in the area of optical communications to alleviate spectrum congestion and prepare to meet the high data rate requirements envisioned for future human exploration of the Moon and Mars.
3. NASA always strives to use spectrum in the most efficient way possible in support of our space flight missions due to launch constraints and congestion imposed by sharing the available spectrum with other users of the same frequency bands. Service designations and propagation characteristics determine which frequency bands best suite each mission requirement, whether near-Earth or Deep Space.

A process for evaluating NASA's proposed needs for spectrum has been implemented through the Agency's Center/Facility Spectrum Managers, including guidance to NASA projects and programs on requirements for efficient spectrum utilization. Regarding "...methods for improving capital planning and investment control procedures," NASA has not received any specific OMB guidance. Our systems review process for every new mission requires review and approval from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Spectrum Planning Subcommittee (SPS) which issues a certification of compliance. Further, any frequency assignment must be approved by the NTIA Frequency Assignment Subcommittee (FAS) which issues a Radio Frequency Authorization (RFA) for use of the specific frequency or band of frequencies requested and approved.

Thus, our process fully supports the requirements of OMB Circular A-11. Although we believe this review process addresses the OMB capital planning and investment control guidance, we welcome any further suggested improvements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ronald L. Carbery". The signature is written in a cursive style and is placed on a light blue rectangular background.

Ronald L. Carbery  
Acting Director, Spectrum Policy and Planning

Enclosure

bcc:

Mr. Badri Younes/Space Communicaitons and Navigation (SCaN)

- Ms. Cathy Sham/SCaN
- Mr. Ronald Carbery
- Mr. Wayne Whyte/SCaN
- Ms. Crystal Pickens/SCaN
- Official File/SCaN