

Fact Sheet on Recommendations to Improve Spectrum Management

Today the Department of Commerce (DOC) released two spectrum reports with recommendations to develop a U.S. spectrum policy for the 21st century. These reports arose out of an Executive Memorandum that the President signed in June 2003, creating the Spectrum Policy Initiative, chaired by DOC, to improve spectrum management policies and procedures:

- Report 1: Recommendations of the Federal Government Spectrum Task Force
- Report 2: Recommendations for Spectrum Use by State and Local Governments and the Private Sector.

The Overall Importance of the Recommendations

- Will foster economic growth; ensure our national and homeland security; maintain U.S. global leadership in communications technology development and services; and satisfy other vital U.S. needs in areas such as public safety, scientific research, federal transportation infrastructure, and law enforcement.
- Support the President's recent announcement that all Americans should have universal, affordable access to broadband technology by 2007. Some of the most promising new broadband technologies are wireless. By expanding the amount of spectrum available for commercial uses, we will increase high speed Internet access.
- Build upon the recent successes of the Administration to implement new technologies: Third Generation (3G) Wireless; Wireless Fidelity (WiFi); and Ultrawideband (UWB).

Highlights of the Recommendations in the Two Reports

- *Encourage Innovation and New Technologies*

Establish a Spectrum Sharing Innovation Test-Bed: Within two years, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) of DOC and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) should establish a pilot program between federal and non-federal government users for sharing of two equal bands of spectrum.

Identify and Analyze New Technologies: NTIA, working with the FCC and research and development laboratories in the federal government and the private sector, should improve approaches for assessing emerging technologies and expanded services in a timely manner.

Increase Private Sector Input on Policy Issues: NTIA will establish a Spectrum Management Advisory Committee to provide top level input to formulate positions

and plans on such difficult policy issues as the transition to Digital Television, universal and affordable broadband access, and public safety interoperability.

- *Modernize the Spectrum Management System*

Establish a National Strategic Spectrum Plan and Long-Range Spectrum Planning: NTIA and the FCC should coordinate the development of a National Strategic Spectrum plan. Federal government spectrum users should biennially provide a strategic plan to be combined into the National Strategic Plan. State, regional, and local government agencies should establish similar long-range plans.

- *Establish Economic and Efficiency Incentives*

Examine Spectrum Rights as Incentives: NTIA, in conjunction with the FCC, should examine the possibility of modifying spectrum rights to encourage the deployment of spectrally efficient technologies.

Expand Secondary Market Incentives: The FCC should consider expanding the application of secondary markets across services.

Urge Congress to Pass Legislation: Congress should enact legislation to: 1) provide the FCC with permanent authority to conduct spectrum auctions for licenses; 2) allow the FCC to collect fees for spectrum use; and 3) establish a spectrum relocation fund to streamline the process for reimbursing government spectrum users and facilitate their relocation to comparable spectrum.

- *Ensure the Protection of Critical Government Spectrum Users and Services*

Address Public Safety Issues: 1) DHS, in coordination with NTIA, the FCC, regional, state and local governments, and the private sector, should develop a comprehensive plan to address public safety spectrum issues, including fragmentation, shortage, interference, and security; and 2) NTIA should examine the feasibility of sharing spectrum among public safety stakeholders and implement one or more demonstration programs to test sharing spectrum and infrastructure among them.

Facilitate Interoperability and Continuity of Government Communications : The Department of Homeland Security (DHS), NTIA, and the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) should coordinate with appropriate federal agencies, to develop and implement a plan to address the spectrum needs of federal, state, and local communication interoperability and continuity of government operations in light of terrorist threats, emergencies and day-to-day operations.

Establish a Policy and Plans Steering Group (PPSG): NTIA should establish a Policy and Plans Steering Group (PPSG), comprised of Assistant Secretaries of federal government officials, to help resolve spectrum policy disputes.