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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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Report No. WT 98-34

WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACTION

September 17, 1998

## **COMMISSION ADOPTS RULES TO IMPLEMENT UNIVERSAL LICENSING SYSTEM FOR WIRELESS SERVICES** (WT Docket Nos. 98-20, 96-188)

Today, the Commission adopted rules that consolidate, revise, and streamline its license application procedures for radio services licensed by the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (Wireless Bureau). Specifically, the Report and Order (R&O) adopts rule changes that will implement the Universal Licensing System (ULS), the integrated database and automated processing system developed by the Wireless Bureau to facilitate electronic filing of wireless applications, licensing information, and public access to such information for all wireless radio services. This rulemaking is also the first R&O that is part of the Commission's 1998 biennial review of regulations pursuant to Section 11 of the Communications Act.

ULS will fundamentally change the way the Commission receives and processes wireless applications. It will eliminate the need for wireless carriers to file duplicative applications, and increase the accuracy and reliability of licensing information. ULS will enable all wireless applicants and licensees for the first time to file all licensing-related applications and other filings electronically, thus increasing the speed and efficiency of the application process. The enhanced information collection capabilities of ULS will, in turn, enable the Commission staff to easily monitor spectrum use and competitive conditions in the wireless marketplace and will promote effective implementation of spectrum management policies. Finally, ULS will enhance the availability of licensing information to the public, which will for the first time have access to all wireless licensing data on-line, including maps showing licensing areas and service providers.

Specifically, the Commission took the following actions in the R&O:

- The Commission adopted the following four consolidated ULS application forms for wireless services replacing over 40 existing forms: Form 601 is the Long-Form or FCC Application for Wireless Telecommunication Bureau Radio Service Authorization; Form 602 is the FCC Ownership Disclosure Information for the Wireless Telecommunications Services; Form 603 is the FCC Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Application for Assignment of Authorization or Transfer of Control; Form 605 is the Quick-Form Application for Authorization in the Ship, Aircraft, Amateur, Restricted and Commercial Operator, and General Mobile Radio Services. The Commission will allow continued use of existing forms for a transition period of six months after the effective date of these rules.
- The Commission provided for collection of ownership information on Form 602 from applicants and licensees in auctioned services already subject to specific ownership reporting requirements under Part 1. Licensees in non-auctioned wireless services are not subject to these ownership reporting requirements, and therefore are not required to file Form 602.
- The Commission consolidated wireless licensing rules currently contained in service-specific rule parts into in a single set of rules in Part 1, eliminating duplicative and unnecessary rules.

- Electronic filing in ULS will be mandatory for applicants and licensees in services that are licensed by auction, but not for applicants and licensees in other wireless services. As a result, all common carrier services (e.g., cellular) and geographically licensed services (e.g., PCS, LMDS) will be subject to mandatory electronic filing. However, public safety, private land mobile services on shared spectrum, Amateur Radio, GMRS, Ship and Aircraft, and Commercial Radio Operators will have the option of filing electronically or manually.

- Electronic filing in ULS will be mandatory for frequency coordinators regardless of the service, and by volunteer examiner-coordinators (VECs) in the Amateur service.

- These mandatory electronic filing requirements will take effect on July 1, 1999, or six months after the use of ULS in the particular service, whichever is later. This does not affect the Commission's prior decision to require applicants for auctions to file both pre-auction short forms and post-auction long form applications electronically as of January 1, 1999.

- The Commission took steps to ensure that ULS electronic filing and data programs are accessible to persons with disabilities in compliance with its program accessibility rules and the new requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

- After six months from the effective date of the rules adopted in this Report and Order, a transition period, applicants may not file letter requests for purposes that are specifically provided for on ULS forms. This includes requests for extension of time, special temporary authority, license cancellation, and administrative changes such as changes of address.

- The Commission adopted a consolidated rule for determining whether a change to a pending application or existing authorization is treated as a major or minor change. The Commission also clarified that under this rule, no license modification application is required for geographic licensees to move, add, or delete internal sites in their licensing areas, except those requiring international coordination or environmental approval.

- The Commission eliminated reinstatement procedures in wireless services that previously had them. ULS will be used to notify wireless licensees ninety days in advance of license expiration, but all licensees must file a timely renewal application on or prior to the expiration date of the license, regardless of whether they receive such notification.

- For transfer and assignment applications, the Commission adopted a combined form to be used by all wireless services, instead of separate assignment and transfer forms previously proposed. The combined form can also be used to provide notification of consummation of a transfer or assignment transaction, including notifications of pro forma transactions under the Commission's forbearance procedures for telecommunications carriers.

- The Commission adopted requirements for the submission of Taxpayer Identification Numbers (TINs) in ULS consistent with the requirements of the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996. The Commission stated that all TIN information will be kept confidential.

- The Commission adopted proposals made in WT Docket 96-188 to authorize reciprocal operation by foreign amateur radio licensees by rule, pursuant to recent international reciprocal operating agreements.

- The Commission identified numerous General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS) rules to be eliminated and streamlined as duplicative or unnecessary to its regulatory responsibilities. The rule changes will also facilitate the conversion of GMRS data collection procedures and databases to ULS.

For more information on ULS the Commission's ULS webpage can be accessed at:  
<http://www.fcc.gov/wtb/uls/>

Action by the Commission, Thursday, September 17, 1998, by Report and Order (FCC 98-234).  
Chairman Kennard, Commissioners Ness, Furchtgott-Roth, Powell and Tristani with Commissioner Furchtgott-Roth issuing a separate statement.

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