

FCC CONSIDERS ACCELERATED 2 GHZ BAS RELOCATION PLAN

On December 6 2007, Sprint Nextel Corporation (Sprint Nextel) together with the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), Association for Maximum Service Television (MSTV) and the Society of Broadcast Engineers (SBE) (the "Joint Parties") filed a Consensus Plan that would hasten the relocation of 2 GHz BAS licensees into the new band plan on frequencies above 2025 MHz.

Previously, on September 4, the Joint Parties petitioned the FCC to extend the original September 7, 2007 2GHz transition deadline by 29 months (January 2010). On September 7, the FCC issued an Order (http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-07-162A1.pdf) extending the original deadline and gave itself 60 days to consider how to proceed. Subsequently, on November 6, the FCC announced a second 60-day extension (http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-07-193A1.pdf) which required the Joint Parties to submit, by December 6, a "consensus plan or specific proposals" for expediting the completion of the 2 GHz transition that would take into consideration the needs of the Mobile Satellite Service (MSS) licensees. Channels A1 and A2 of the 2 GHz BAS band were reallocated to MSS back in 2000 and two of the licenses — Terrestrial Networks (TerreStar) and ICO Global Communications Limited (ICO) — would require access to their spectrum before the end of the 29-month extension requested by the Joint Parties.

The Joint Parties' Consensus Plan states that Sprint Nextel participated in a series of industry discussions that culminated in a day-long conference on how to increase the pace of the BAS transition while accommodating all affected parties. The conference included representatives from each of the Joint Parties, BAS licensees, systems integrators, BAS installation firms, BAS equipment manufacturers, T-Mobile USA, Inc. (T-Mobile) and the mobile satellite service licensees TerreStar and ICO.

The Consensus Plan outlines four elements that could conclude the 2 GHz BAS transition by August 2009, five months earlier than previously estimated. The Joint Parties' comprehensive BAS acceleration plan:

- establishes a comprehensive monthly market-by-market relocation schedule based in large part on the market-entry needs of the MSS licensees, T-Mobile and Sprint Nextel, which will aid all parties in planning the BAS transition and deploying new wireless services;
- adopts benchmarks to accelerate the process of negotiating BAS frequency relocation agreements and ordering new BAS equipment;
- reduces paperwork burdens associated with finalizing equipment agreements and simplifies the change order process to speed equipment to market; and
- appoints more than 200 discrete "BAS Acceleration Teams" comprised of experienced representatives from the broadcast industry and Sprint Nextel with the goal of facilitating and accelerating the nationwide BAS transition process.

The Consensus Plan goes on to state that the successful relocation of thousands of BAS transmitters and receivers will require all parties to continue finalizing deal packages, signing contracts, ordering, installing and testing equipment, and completing the BAS digital conversion. Collectively, the four-part plan that the Joint Parties and other stakeholders have developed has the potential to save substantial time over earlier projections. These measures will also help the ability of ICO, TerreStar, T-Mobile, and Sprint Nextel to meet their near and long-term deployment needs.

The Consensus Plan further explains that a direct connection exists between the objectives of the BAS relocation process and the February 17, 2009 statutory deadline for completing the over-the-air digital

television (DTV) transition. Many of the resources devoted to the BAS relocation process, including station engineers, tower crews, and installers, already are working at full capacity to meet the DTV transition deadline. Nonetheless, the broadcasters understand the compelling need to complete this relocation and will use their best efforts to accelerate the process consistent with the timeframes outlined in this submission.

This Consensus Plan was filed in Docket WT 02-55. It is available on the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS). Go to http://gulfoss2.fcc.gov/prod/ecfs/comsrch_v2.cgi and enter "02-55" (no quotes) in the first box (marked "Proceeding") then click on the "Retrieve Document List" button.

NAB Seeks Nominations for 2008 Engineering Achievement Awards

NAB is looking for nominees to consider for the prestigious NAB Engineering Achievement awards. Separate awards will be given for achievements in radio and television at the Technology Luncheon at the NAB Show on April 16, 2008 in Las Vegas, Nevada. The qualifications for nominating someone and the nomination form are downloadable on [NAB's technology resources Webpage](#). You may also request a nomination form by calling NAB Science & Technology at (202) 429-5346. The deadline for nominations is January 15, 2008.