

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
Amendment of Part 2 of the Commission's)	ET Docket No. 00-258
Rules to Allocate Spectrum Below 3 GHz for)	
Mobile and Fixed Services to Support the)	
Introduction of New Advanced Wireless)	
Services, including Third Generation Wireless)	
Systems)	
)	
Amendment of Section 2.106 of the)	ET Docket No. 95-18
Commission's Rules to Allocate Spectrum at 2)	
GHz for Use By the Mobile-Satellite Service)	
)	
The Establishment of Policies and Service)	IB Docket No. 99-81
Rules for the Mobile-Satellite Service in the 2)	
GHz Band)	
)	
Petition for Rule Making of the Wireless)	RM-9498
Information Networks Forum Concerning the)	
Unlicensed Personal Communications Service)	
)	
Petition for Rule Making of UTStarcom, Inc.,)	RM-10024
Concerning the Unlicensed Personal)	
Communications Service)	

**REPLY COMMENTS
OF THE
NATIONAL TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION**

The National Telephone Cooperative Association (NTCA)¹ submits the following comments in response to the Commission's Memorandum Opinion and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 01-224) released August 20, 2001, regarding the reallocation of certain spectrum in the 1910-1930 MHz, 1990-2025 MHz,

¹ NTCA is a national association of more than 500 local exchange carriers. NTCA's members provide telecommunications services to end users and interexchange carriers throughout rural America.

2150-2160 MHz, 2165-2200 MHz, and 2390-2400 MHz bands for new advanced third generation (3G) wireless services. NTCA focuses its reply comments on the 1910-1930 MHz Unlicensed Personal Communications Service (“UPCS”) band. This band includes the 1910-1920 MHz sub-band currently designated for asynchronous data devices, and the 1920-1930 MHz sub-band currently designated for isochronous voice devices.

NTCA supports the comments filed its member companies Blackfoot Telephone Cooperative, Inc., Midstate Communications, Inc., and Penasco Valley Telephone Cooperative, Inc. stating that the 1910-1930 MHz band should be opened to other services, such as the “Community Wireless Network” that will allow wireless communications for local and campus-type uses.²

In its allocation of the 1850-1990 MHz band to PCS in 1994, the Commission carved out the 1910-1930 MHz for UPCS applications, such as low-power, in-building, cordless branch exchange (“PBX”), and wide area networks (“WAN”). The UPCS spectrum was divided equally into two blocks to accommodate asynchronous (data) services and isochronous (voice) services. The Commission also implemented spectrum “etiquette” rules to allow fair access to the spectrum for widely differing “nomadic” and “non-nomadic” applications and devices.

NTCA concurs with its members and recommends the Commission leave the 1910-1930 MHz spectrum unlicensed, relax the spectrum etiquette, and allow modest increases in the power levels. Doing so would allow for a wider use of this under-utilized spectrum, including the “Community Wireless Network”.

² UTStarcom states that it has developed the “Community Wireless Network” to facilitate local wireless deployment in rural, tribal, and underserved areas. This network is described as a long-range cordless telephone and Internet access system that can extend from a few city blocks to several square miles.

In the alternative, should the Commission decide to license the 1910-1930 MHz band, the agency should designate very small “sub-licensing” or “pocket” licensing areas, or implement a mandatory partitioning and/or disaggregation procedure for the small amount of spectrum rural carriers would need to deploy low-power systems within defined areas of a few square miles.

NTCA members also requested, and NTCA supports, the concept that the under-utilized 1910-1920 MHz asynchronous data sub-band be opened to non-interfering isochronous voice communications. NTCA members state that the proposed “Community Wireless Network” can provide data transport at speeds up to 64 Kbps. While this speed is below broadband rates of digital subscriber line (DSL), it is above the 56 Kbps rate of dial-up Internet traffic over standard copper telephone lines.

The most significant problem facing small, rural carriers is the high cost of doing business in sparsely populated and geographically difficult regions. These systems could offer rural carriers an economical way to provide access in rural and underserved areas. It is estimated that deployment of a basic “Community Wireless Network” may be less than \$100,000 in smaller communities, compared to an average cost of \$300,000 for a single cellular or PCS site. Rural customers will benefit from wider use of the 1910-1930 MHz band. The Commission in turn has the opportunity to promote the policies in Section 309(j) by adopting these changes. Section 309(j)(3) directs the Commission to promote the rapid deployment of new spectrum based technologies for the benefit of rural residents.

Maintaining the 1910-1930 MHz spectrum unlicensed and designated for such uses as low-power, in-building, cordless branch exchange, wide area networks and other

local wireless applications would be in the public interest. While this spectrum has been under-utilized, new technologies to take advantage of this available spectrum are emerging. In addition, this spectrum band has limited usefulness for advanced (3G) services. In its comments, the Cellular Telecommunications & Internet Association (CTIA) noted the limited usefulness of the 1910-1930 MHz band for most advanced mobile wireless services due to guard band requirements necessary to protect existing PCS services from interference.³

CONCLUSION

NTCA supports the position of its member companies, filed in initial comments, that the FCC should keep the 1910-1930 MHz band unlicensed, relax the spectrum etiquette, and allow modest increases in the power levels. Doing so would allow for a wider use of this under-utilized spectrum, including the “Community Wireless Network” mentioned in initial comments filed by NTCA member companies.

Respectfully submitted,

NATIONAL TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE
ASSOCIATION

By: /s/ Brian M. O’Hara
Brian M. O’Hara
Regulatory Analyst
(703) 351-2012

By: /s/ L. Marie Guillory
L. Marie Guillory
(703) 351-2021

Its Attorney

4121 Wilson Blvd., Tenth Floor
Arlington, VA 22203-1801

³ Initial comments of CTIA at 3.

November 8, 2001

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Gail C. Malloy, certify that a copy of the foregoing Reply Comments of the National Telephone Cooperative Association in ET Docket No. 00-258, FCC 01-224, was served on this 8th day of November 2001 by first-class, U.S. Mail, postage prepaid, to the following persons

/s/ Gail C. Malloy

Gail C. Malloy

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW, Room 8B201
Washington, D.C. 20554

Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW, Room 8-A204
Washington D.C. 20554

Commissioner Kevin J. Martin
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W., Room 8-C302
Washington, D.C. 20554

Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W., Room 8-A302
Washington, D.C. 20554

Qualex International
Portals II
445 12th Street, S.W.
Room CY-B402
Washington, D.C. 20554

Magalie Roman Salas, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW, TW-A325
Washington, D.C. 20554

National Telephone Cooperative Association
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John A. Prendergast, Esq.
D. Cary Mitchell, Esq.
Blooston, Mordkofsky, Dickens, Duffy &
Prendergast
2120 L. Street, N.W., Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20037

Michael F. Altschul
Senior Vice President, General Counsel
Cellular Telecommunications & Internet
Association
1250 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20036

Caressa D. Bennet, Esq.
Brent H. Weingardt, Regulatory Counsel
Rebecca Murphy
Rural Telecommunications Group
1000 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Tenth Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Howard J Symons, Esq.
Sara F. Leibman, Esq.
RC. Taylor, III
Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky
And Popeo, P.C.
701 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20004

Douglas I. Brandon
Vice President- External Affairs
David P. Wye
Director, Spectrum Policy
1150 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036