



NEWS

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20554

News media Information 202 / 418-0500
Fax-On-Demand 202 / 418-2830
TTY 202/418-2555
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>
<ftp.fcc.gov>

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NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Linda L. Haller at (202) 418-1408

COMMISSION ADOPTS PROPOSALS FOR BROADBAND BY SATELLITE ON VESSELS

Washington, D.C.— The Federal Communications Commission has initiated a proceeding proposing rules for satellite services on vessels, including broadband services. The proposals implement the results of the 2003 World Radiocommunications Conference and seek to establish a new framework for the licensing of earth stations on vessels (ESVs) in the United States. This initiative advances the Commission's goals for market-driven deployment of broadband technologies, innovation, efficient use of spectrum and regulatory certainty.

ESVs offer consumers the benefits of broadband services while on vessels, including cruise ships and government, cargo and other vessels. To date, in the United States, ESVs have been operating under special temporary authority. The Commission's proposals seek to provide regulatory certainty to both terrestrial fixed service and fixed satellite service operators in the Ku-band and C-band. Specifically, the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) requests comment on rules and procedures to license ESV networks for operation over fixed satellite service satellites in those bands. These networks can deliver Internet services, data transmissions, video, and voice connections to ships at sea and in port for both passengers and ship operators. The proposals aim to ensure protection from harmful interference to incumbent fixed services, and include measures for prompt resolution of any interference complaints that may arise.

Comments on the NPRM are due 30 days after the item appears for publication in the Federal Register, and reply comments are due 45 days after publication in the Federal Register. Action by the Commission, November 12, 2003, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 03-286). Chairman Powell, Commissioners Abernathy, Copps, Martin, and Adelstein.

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International Bureau Contact: Belinda Nixon, Belinda.Nixon@fcc.gov, (202) 418-1460.