



NEWS FROM THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

FCC Looks to Unleash More than 20,000 Megahertz for Satellite Spectrum Abundance

WASHINGTON, May 22, 2025—The Federal Communications Commission is aggressively pursuing spectrum abundance as part of its Final Frontiers agenda to secure U.S. leadership in space and supercharge the possibilities of satellite broadband.

Today, the Commission voted to kickstart a proceeding that could unlock more than 20,000 megahertz of spectrum for high-speed internet delivered from space. That amount is more than the sum total of all spectrum available for satellite broadband today.

Specifically, in a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, the Commission will seek comment on expanding satellite connectivity across four spectrum bands: 12.7-13.25 GHz, 42.0-42.5 GHz, 51.4-52.4 GHz, and the so-called “W-band” at 92.0-94.0 GHz, 94.1-100 GHz, 102.0-109.5 GHz, and 111.8-114.25 GHz.

These underused bands—located in “spectrum neighborhoods” ideal for satellite broadband—are prime candidates for modernization. For many years, outdated regulations restricted satellite operations in the 12.7 GHz band. The 42 GHz band is one of the rare bands that still remains greenfield. The 52 GHz band has no licensed commercial users. And the W-band presents exciting opportunities for gigabit capacity over a massive, but mostly empty, swath of spectrum long considered outside the practical realm of physics.

The Commission intends to make good on its years-long efforts to unleash these bands for next-generation services. The 12.7 and 42 GHz bands, which the Commission previously considered for terrestrial use, are adjacent to workhorse satellite frequencies in the Ku- and V- bands. Meanwhile, there has been growing and intense support to open up the 52 GHz band domestically after international decisions at WRC-19. And by seeking comment on the W-band, the Commission continues recent initiatives to push the limits of high-band spectrum and provide a “first-mover advantage” for U.S.-licensed operators.

Action by the Commission May 22, 2025 by Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 25-29). Chairman Carr, Commissioners Starks, Simington, and Gomez approving. Chairman Carr and Commissioner Starks issuing separate statements.

GN Docket Nos. 22-352, 14-177; WT Docket No. 23-158

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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. Cir. 1974).*