



NEWS

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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).

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FCC CHANGES RULES TO PROMOTE USE OF UNLICENSED BROADBAND SERVICE IN RURAL AREAS

Washington, DC – The Federal Communications Commission today adopted several changes to its rules for unlicensed devices to facilitate deployment of advanced technologies and provide operators greater flexibility in deploying their systems. These rule changes will benefit manufacturers, businesses, and consumers, and will be particularly beneficial to wireless internet service providers (WISPs) that are offering broadband service to rural and underserved areas.

In its Report and Order, the Commission adopts rules to foster introduction of smart antenna technology that can operate at higher power levels without causing increased interference. Smart antennas will allow service to be offered over larger areas with reduced infrastructure costs. Smart antennas also permit a greater number of users to be served within the same spectrum by reusing frequencies in several directions simultaneously.

The Report and Order also makes modifications to rules that will facilitate deployment of next-generation Bluetooth devices, which operate at data rates up to three times faster than current devices. The new devices will be backward compatible with existing devices and will not present an interference risk to these devices.

The rule changes will also enable manufacturers and system operators to mix various antennas and radio transmitters without the need to obtain a separate equipment authorization for every combination. This will allow systems to be customized to meet the specific needs of each particular installation, without added costs or delays for additional equipment authorization.

The Report and Order makes a number of other changes to provide manufacturers greater flexibility in testing and authorizing their products, such as allowing for use of consistent testing methods for certain unlicensed devices operating in the 2.4 and 5.8 GHz unlicensed frequency bands.

Action by the Commission July 8, 2004, by *Report and Order* in (FCC 04-XXX).

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