

FCC Report DC 96-112

Report No. DC 96-112

ACTION IN DOCKET CASE

December 23, 1996

FCC EXTENDS TRANSITION PERIOD FOR DETERMINING COMPLIANCE WITH NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR EVALUATING THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF RF ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELDS FROM FCC-REGULATED TRANSMITTERS (ET DOCKET NO. 93-62)

The Commission has amended its rules to extend the transition period for applicants and station licensees to determine compliance with the new requirements for evaluating the environmental effects of radiofrequency (RF) electromagnetic fields from FCC-regulated transmitters.

In 1985, the Commission adopted rules for evaluating the environmental effects of RF electromagnetic fields produced by FCC-regulated transmitters. In August 1996, the Commission amended those rules by provided for the use of new guidelines and methods, and established a transition period, until January 1, 1997, for applicants and stations to come into compliance with the new requirements.

The American Radio Relay League, Inc., Ameritech Mobile Communications, Inc., AT&T Wireless Services, Inc., BellSouth Corporation, Paging Network, Inc., the Personal Communications Industry Association and U S West filed petitions asking the Commission to extend the transition period beyond January 1, 1997, arguing that the existing transition period failed to provide adequate time for affected parties to achieve compliance with the new rules.

The Commission stated that, based on the petitions and comments, it is clear that most station applicants will need additional time to determine that they comply with the new requirements. The Commission noted that an extension of the transition period would: 1) eliminate the need for the filing and granting of individual waiver requests; 2) allow time for applicants and licensees to review the results of the decisions that will be taken in the near future addressing other issues raised in petitions; and 3) permit applicants to review a revised information bulletin and make the necessary measurements or calculations to determine that they are in compliance.

The Commission indicated that it did not concur with petitioners who suggest that granting any extension of the transition period will have significant adverse effects on public health.

Therefore, the Commission has extended the transition period to September 1, 1997, for most radio services. For the Amateur Radio Service, the transition period has been extended to January 1, 1998. Additionally, the Commission will allow changes to amateur radio operator license examinations to be made as the examinations are routinely revised between now and July 1, 1998. The Commission believes that these extensions are necessary so that applicants and licensees will have adequate time to understand the new requirements and to ensure that their facilities are in compliance with them.

Action by the Commission December 23, 1996, by First Memorandum Opinion and Order (FCC 96-487). Chairman Hundt, Commissioners Quello, Ness, and Chong.

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News Media contact: Patricia A. Chew at (202) 418-0500. Office of Engineering and Technology contact: Rick Engelman at (202) 418-2445 and Robert Cleveland (202) 418-2422.