



PUBLIC NOTICE

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
445 TWELFTH STREET, S.W.; TW-A325
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554

News Media Information: (202) 418-0500
Fax-On-Demand: (202) 418-2830
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>
<ftp.fcc.gov>

DA 02-239

Released: February 1, 2002

Freeze Announced on the Filing of AM Expanded Band Major Change Applications

The Mass Media Bureau (the "Bureau") announces a freeze on the acceptance of applications for major changes in authorized AM expanded band stations. This action is effective on the date of this Public Notice. Major change applications currently on file will be processed in accordance with current technical and legal rules and policies. The Bureau anticipates issuing in the near future a public notice accepting for filing all pending AM expanded band major change applications determined to be in compliance with our technical rules. Minor change applications will continue to be accepted under established first-come, first-served filing procedures.

As part of a wide ranging rulemaking to revitalize the AM service, the Commission developed a national allotment plan to encourage the migration of certain AM stations to the AM expanded band, 1605 kHz – 1705 kHz. *See Review of the Technical Assignment Criteria for the AM Service*, 6 FCC Rcd 6273 (1991) ("Expanded Band R&O") (subsequent history omitted). The allotment plan was designed to favor stations receiving or causing extensive interference. The final version of the allotment plan identified eighty-eight stations eligible to apply for specified allotments. *See Implementation of the AM Band Allotment Plan*, 12 FCC Rcd 3361 (1997), *recon. denied* 13 FCC Rcd 21872 (1998). The Commission issued sixty-five permits for AM expanded band stations in 1997 and 1998.

In the *Expanded Band R&O* the Commission expressed its intention to manage the migration process to maximize the benefits to the AM service as a whole. *Expanded Band R&O*, 6 FCC Rcd at 6277. It also stated that one year after the initial allotment plan became final it would open a second filing window for additional applications for expanded band stations. *Id.* at 6318. The allotment plan became final on December 5, 2000. A freeze on the filing of major change applications will provide an opportunity to study novel and complex AM expanded band licensing issues, including protection standards, facility classes, and eligibility requirements. The Bureau is also concerned that the continued acceptance of AM expanded band applications that specify new communities of license and propose relocating facilities substantial distances may be limiting opportunities for additional expanded band stations. A freeze will preserve the rights of potential applicants for new AM expanded band stations and the opportunity to use competitive bidding procedures to award these authorizations.

For further information contact Peter Doyle or Edward De La Hunt, Audio Services Division, Mass Media Bureau at 418-2700.

Adopted by Chief, Mass Media Bureau