FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Strategic Plan 2014-2018

Message from the Chairman

It is my great pleasure to introduce the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC's) Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2014 to 2018.

Prior to this millennium three network-related technological developments -- the printing press, the railroads, and the telegraph -- revolutionized the world's commerce and culture. This millennium has seen the advent of a fourth, and arguably the most transformative, technological development, the marriage of computing and connectivity known as the Internet. High-speed broadband networks have revolutionized our access to the world around us. The virtually limitless sources of information, education, and entertainment these broadband networks carry can erase the disadvantages of geographic isolation and economic and educational disparities. In combination with the broadcast, cable and DBS video services that have for decades and continue today to contribute so much to our society, they will have incalculable influence on the future of America.

All these revolutions have produced fundamental changes in the way people lived their lives. What sets the broadband network revolution apart, however, is how quickly it was deployed and the unabated speed with which it continues to evolve.

It is from the history of these network revolutions – their struggles, their successes and their lessons – that we derive three overriding principles that I believe should guide our work at the FCC:

- **Promoting Economic Growth and National Leadership** – Telecommunications networks are a vital component of technological innovation and economic growth, helping to ensure that our nation remains a leader in providing its citizens opportunities for economic and educational development. Competition drives these networks to develop improved transmission technologies and to offer new services at competitive prices, and consumers can benefit from these fruits of competition. The FCC has a responsibility to promote the expansion of these networks and to ensure they have the incentive and the ability to compete fairly with one another in providing broadband services.

- **Guaranteeing the Network Compact** – A change in technology may require us to review and revise our rules, but it does not change the rights of users or the responsibilities of network providers. This civil bond between network providers and users has always had four components: universal accessibility, reliable interconnection, consumer protection, and public safety and national security. The FCC's fundamental objective must be to protect and promote this Network Compact.

- **Making Networks Work for Everyone** – Because broadband networks are essential to our national well being, it is not enough for the FCC to simply promote their development; we must also ensure that all Americans can take advantage of the services they provide. How these networks contribute to a 21st century educational system, provide all consumers with 21st century health care, offer 21st century communication capabilities to our first responders, provide 21st century accessibility for Americans with disabilities and assure innovation without artificial impediments are basic underpinnings of our responsibility.

The connective technology of broadband networks defines the 21st century, and it is the job of the FCC to ensure that it will overcome current challenges in the provision of education, health care, and safety of life and property. That is why I believe that the 21st century economy begins here. And that is why it is

vitally important for us to clearly state our goals and objectives to ensure that we consistently and energetically pursue them.

I look forward to working closely with Congress and with other federal, state, and local agencies as well as external stakeholders, both commercial and non-profit, as the FCC implements its strategic plan. I believe the strategies outlined in this plan will allow the FCC to address the challenges we face now and those we will face in the years to come.

Tom Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission

Table of Contents

Message from the Chairman..... i

Mission..... 1

Vision Statement..... 1

About the Federal Communications Commission…..... 1

Stakeholder Engagement……..... 3

Strategic Goals..... 4

Strategic Goal 1: Connect America..... 5
Strategic Goal 2: Maximize Benefits of Spectrum..... 7
Strategic Goal 3: Protect and Empower Consumers..... 9
Strategic Goal 4: Promote Innovation, Investment, and America's Global Competitiveness 11
Strategic Goal 5: Promote Competition …..... 13
Strategic Goal 6: Public Safety and Homeland Security..... 15
Strategic Goal 7: Advance Key National Purposes..... 18
Strategic Goal 8: Operational Excellence..... 20

Planning and Performance at the FCC..... 23

Program Evaluations……. …..... 23

Mission

Section One of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended states that the mission of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is to "regulat[e] interstate and foreign commerce in communications by wire and radio so as to make available, so far as possible, to all the people of the United States, without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex, a rapid, efficient, Nation-wide and world-wide wire and radio communication service with adequate facilities at reasonable charges, for the purpose of the national defense, for the purpose of promoting safety of life and property…" [1]

Vision Statement

The FCC's vision is to promote innovation, investment, competition, and consumer empowerment in and on top of the communications platforms of today and the future – maximizing the power of communications technology to grow our economy, create jobs, enhance U.S. competitiveness, and unleash broad opportunity and a higher quality of life for all Americans.

About the Federal Communications Commission

The FCC is an independent regulatory agency of the United States (U.S.) Government. The FCC is charged with regulating interstate and international communications by radio, television, wire, satellite, and cable. The FCC also regulates telecommunications services for hearing-impaired and speech-impaired individuals, as set forth in Title IV of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The FCC is directed by five Commissioners appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate for five-year terms, except when filling the unexpired term of a previous Commissioner. Only three Commissioners can be from the same political party at any given time. The President designates one of the Commissioners to serve as Chairman.

The FCC is organized by function. There are seven Bureaus and ten Offices. The Bureaus and the Office of Engineering and Technology process applications for licenses to operate facilities and provide communications services, analyze complaints from consumers and other licensees, conduct investigations, develop and implement regulatory programs, and organize and participate in hearings and workshops. Generally, the Offices provide specialized support services. The Bureaus and Offices are:

- **The Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau** develops and implements consumer policies, including disability access and policies affecting tribal nations. The Bureau serves as the public face of the FCC through outreach and education, as well as responding to consumer inquiries and complaints. The Bureau also maintains collaborative partnerships with state, local, and Tribal governments in such critical areas as emergency preparedness and implementation of new technologies.

- **The Enforcement Bureau** enforces the Communications Act and the FCC's rules. It protects consumers, ensures efficient use of spectrum, furthers public safety, and promotes competition.

[1] 47 U.S.C. § 151.

- **The International Bureau** administers the FCC's international telecommunications and satellite programs and policies, including licensing and regulatory functions. The Bureau promotes pro-competitive policies abroad, coordinating the FCC's global spectrum activities and advocating U.S. interests in international communications and competition. The Bureau works to promote a high-quality, reliable, globally interconnected, and interoperable communications infrastructure.

- **The Media Bureau** recommends, develops, and administers policy and licensing programs relating to electronic media, including radio and broadcast, cable, and satellite television in the United States and its territories.

- **The Public Safety & Homeland Security Bureau** supports initiatives that strengthen public safety and emergency response capabilities to better enable the FCC to assist the public, law enforcement, hospitals, the communications industry, and all levels of government in the event of a natural disaster, pandemic, or terrorist attack.

- **The Wireless Telecommunications Bureau** is responsible for wireless telecommunications policy and licensing programs in the United States and its territories. Wireless communications services include cellular, paging, personal communications, and other radio services used by businesses and private citizens. The Bureau also conducts auctions of spectrum licenses.

- **The Wireline Competition Bureau** develops and recommends policy and licensing programs for wireline telecommunications, including telephone landlines, and fixed (as opposed to mobile) broadband, striving to ensure choice, opportunity, and fairness in promoting the development and availability of these services. The Bureau has particular responsibility for the Universal Service Fund, a public-private partnership that helps connect all Americans to communications networks.

- **The Office of Administrative Law Judges** is composed of one judge (and associated staff) who presides over hearings and issue decisions on matters referred to him by the FCC.

- **The Office of Communications Business Opportunities** promotes competition and innovation in the provision and ownership of telecommunications services by supporting opportunities for small businesses as well as women and minority-owned communications businesses.

- **The Office of Engineering and Technology** advises the FCC on technical and engineering matters. This Office develops and administers FCC decisions regarding spectrum allocations and grants equipment authorizations and experimental licenses.

- **The Office of the General Counsel** serves as the FCC's chief legal advisor.

- **The Office of the Inspector General** conducts and supervises audits and investigations relating to FCC programs and operations.

- T**he Office of Legislative Affairs** serves as the liaison between the FCC and Congress, as well as other Federal agencies.

- **The Office of the Managing Director** administers and manages the FCC.

- **The Office of Media Relations** informs the media of FCC decisions and serves as the FCC's main point of contact with the media.

- **The Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Analysis** works with the Chairman, Commissioners, Bureaus, and Offices in strategic planning and policy development for the agency. It also provides research, advice, and analysis of complex, novel, and non-traditional economic and technological communications issues.

- **The Office of Workplace Diversity** ensures that the FCC provides employment opportunities for all persons regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability, or sexual preference.

Stakeholder Engagement

As an independent rulemaking agency, the FCC regularly solicits comments on issues and conducts workshops, forums, and meetings with outside parties. The FCC receives thousands of comments from the public each year on its proceedings, and the FCC welcomes public feedback and input on its strategic goals as well.

Strategic Goals

The FCC is responsible to Congress and the American people for ensuring an orderly policy framework within which communications products and services can be efficiently and effectively provided to consumers and businesses. Equally important, the FCC must also address the communications needs of public safety, health, and emergency operations; ensure the universal availability of basic telecommunications service; make communications services accessible to all people; and protect and empower consumers in the communications marketplace. The FCC, in accordance with its statutory authority and in support of its mission, has established eight strategic goals. They are:

Strategic Goal 1: Connect America
Maximize Americans' access to and use of affordable fixed and mobile broadband where they live, learn, work, and travel.

Strategic Goal 2: Maximize Benefits of Spectrum
Maximize the availability of spectrum in order to provide diverse and affordable communications services to consumers.

Strategic Goal 3: Protect and Empower Consumers
Empower consumers by ensuring that they have the tools and information they need to make informed choices in their use of communications services; protect consumers from harm in the communications market.

Strategic Goal 4: Promote Innovation, Investment, and America's Global Competitiveness
Ensure that all lawful content can be provided, and accessed, without artificial barriers; promote innovation in a manner that improves the nation's ability to compete in the global economy, creating a virtuous circle that results in more investment and in turn enables additional innovation.

Strategic Goal 5: Promote Competition
Ensure a competitive market for communications and media services to foster innovation, investment, and job creation, and to ensure consumers have meaningful choice in affordable services.

Strategic Goal 6: Public Safety and Homeland Security
Promote the availability of reliable, interoperable, redundant, rapidly restorable critical communications infrastructures that are supportive of all required services.

Strategic Goal 7: Advance Key National Purposes
Through international and national interagency efforts, advance the use of broadband for key national purposes.

Strategic Goal 8: Operational Excellence
Make the FCC a model for excellence in government by effectively managing the FCC's human, information, and financial resources; by basing decisions on sound data and analyses; and by maintaining a commitment to transparent and responsive processes that encourage public involvement and best serve the public interest.

Strategic Goal 1: Connect America

Vision*: *Maximize Americans' access to and use of affordable fixed and mobile broadband where they live, learn, work, and travel.

***Strategic Objective 1.1*: Maximize broadband adoption by promoting affordability and removing other barriers to adoption by all Americans, including those with low incomes and disabilities.**

Performance Goal 1.1.1: Support and facilitate the development, deployment, and adoption of broadband services across multiple platforms.

In today's information economy, economic growth is built on the availability of high-speed Internet services provided by broadband telecommunications networks.The FCC must maximize the availability of broadband services on all networks, whether wired or wireless, and ensure that our rules allow broadband service providers to compete in the provision of these services regardless of whether they are offered on fixed or mobile platforms, or on a licensed or unlicensed basis.

***Strategic Objective 1.2*: Maximize availability of broadband to all Americans and community anchor institutions, including in rural areas and tribal lands, while ensuring that universal service programs are efficient, effective, and impose no greater burden on consumers and businesses than necessary.**

Performance Goal 1.2.1: Work in partnership with state, local, and tribal governments, consumer groups and industry to promote broadband availability to all Americans, including consumers in rural and high cost areas and individuals with disabilities.

Performance Goal 1.2.2: Continue reform of the universal service program to reflect technological developments and changes in the market.

Broadband access has gone from being a luxury to a necessity for full participation in our economy and society. Broadband empowers people by providing access to information and applications, and increasingly affordable means to communicate within communities and around the world. The FCC's universal service programs, established in 1997, predated the development of broadband and have been used primarily to subsidize traditional telephone service provided over non-broadband networks. Moreover, because the cost of subsidizing telephone service has grown significantly over the years, consumers' increased USF contributions are subsidizing non-broadband telephone networks. For these reasons, the FCC is implementing comprehensive USF reforms in order to repurpose the use of universal service funding and accelerate broadband build-out to Americans who currently have no access to robust broadband infrastructure.

***Strategic Objective 1.3*: Enable the private sector to accelerate the deployment and expansion of broadband networks by minimizing regulatory and other barriers to broadband build out.**

Performance Goal 1.3.1: Employ strategies to encourage investment in networks and services by existing providers, while encouraging participation in broadband markets by new and non-traditional participants.

The FCC is removing regulatory barriers to broadband infrastructure deployment, revising its rules to speed build-out and reduce costs.

***Strategic Objective 1.4*: Measure and monitor the country's progress on broadband.**

Performance Goal 1.4.1: Measure and report on progress towards the goal of ensuring that broadband is being deployed to all Americans in a reasonable and timely fashion.

Section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 requires the FCC to encourage deployment of advanced telecommunications capability. To implement this requirement, the FCC has undertaken regular inquiries to determine whether such capability is being deployed to all Americans on a reasonable and timely basis and to take action, if necessary, to accelerate broadband deployment. By focusing resources and improving its capability to collect meaningful data, the FCC is better able to assess the state of broadband deployment in the U.S. With more accurate data, the FCC will target its programs and initiatives to communities and regions where efforts will be most effective in increasing broadband deployment and adoption.

***Strategies*:**

- The FCC will employ rigorous and effective policy analysis as well as sound data-driven decision making in addressing policies regarding broadband deployment and adoption.
- The FCC will establish improved oversight and internal controls for its universal service programs to improve management of those programs and reduce waste, fraud, and abuse.
- The FCC will create and establish innovative, targeted outreach programs to overcome barriers to broadband adoption.

***External Factors Affecting Achievement of This Goal*:**

- Despite significant recent development, broadband infrastructure is not yet universally deployed, particularly in rural areas. As broadband infrastructure continues to develop, cost effective solutions must be sought to deploy high speed broadband to all Americans regardless of where they reside.
- From the perspective of many consumers, the price of a personal computer and broadband service can inhibit their choice to adopt broadband. Of particular concern are consumers in groups that have significantly lower broadband adoption rates than the national average, including people with low incomes, people with disabilities, and Native Americans.
- Significant and necessary changes in the regulatory environment will often be litigated. Decisions on pending court cases addressing broadband regulation may ultimately affect such regulations.

Strategic Goal 2: Maximize Benefits of Spectrum

Vision: *Maximize the availability of spectrum in order to provide diverse and affordable communications services to consumers.*

***Strategic Objective 2.1*: Develop and implement flexible, market-oriented spectrum allocation and assignment policies that promote innovation, investment, jobs and consumer benefits, including ensuring meaningful availability of unlicensed spectrum.**

Performance Goal 2.1.1: Pursue spectrum allocation and license assignment policies to achieve the effective and efficient use of spectrum.

Performance Goal 2.1.2: Conduct an incentive auction of broadcast television spectrum that repurposes a large swath of spectrum to more flexible uses, including mobile.

Performance Goal 2.1.3: Conduct effective and timely spectrum licensing and equipment authorization activities.

The FCC's allocation and assignment of spectrum must continue to evolve towards more flexible, market-oriented approaches to increase the opportunity for technologically innovative and efficient spectrum use and to ensure adequate spectrum is available for broadband and other purposes. Rulemaking proceedings will be conducted to allow more flexible ways to allocate and assign spectrum. The FCC will also evaluate and refine, where necessary, its spectrum assignment policies and procedures, including but not limited to its auction processes.

By rulemaking and other proceedings, as appropriate, the FCC will delineate the rights and responsibilities of spectrum users so that the potential for harmful interference can be minimized and opportunities for new spectrum uses, including both licensed and unlicensed uses, can be explored. The FCC will work closely with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), as well as regulators in Mexico, Canada, and other countries, to identify and resolve instances of harmful interference on an international basis and to avoid harmful interference in the future.

***Strategic Objective 2.2*: Develop and implement policies that support highly efficient use of spectrum.**

Performance Goal 2.2.1: Facilitate the deployment of new or existing services and devices that use spectrum efficiently and effectively now and for the future.

The FCC, by rulemaking proceedings, will take steps to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of spectrum use. These steps may include, for example, (1) exploring new and innovative means of fostering secondary markets for spectrum that reduce entry barriers; (2) minimizing harmful interference; and (3) encouraging the development of new technologies that allow for shared spectrum use.

Strategies:

- The FCC will use incentive auctions to help meet the nation's spectrum needs. Incentive auctions are a voluntary, market-based means of repurposing spectrum by encouraging licensees to voluntarily relinquish spectrum usage rights in exchange for a share of the proceeds from an auction of new licenses to use the repurposed spectrum. Congress authorized the FCC to conduct incentive auctions and directed that the FCC use this innovative tool for an incentive auction of broadcast television spectrum. The broadcast spectrum (600 MHz) incentive auction is planned for mid-2015.

- The FCC will employ rigorous and effective technical and economic analysis in developing policies that enhance research and development and spectrum access, management and use.

- The FCC will implement ongoing initiatives that will assist in spectrum policy planning and decision making, promote a robust secondary market in spectrum, and improve communications services in all areas of the United States, including rural, underserved and tribal areas.

External Factors Affecting Achievement of This Goal:

- Increasing demand for spectrum requires new and innovative management techniques to allocate, assign, and use spectrum more efficiently and effectively. Methods for avoiding and mitigating harmful interference, and increasing opportunities for flexible use, require continued study.

- Where spectrum reallocation is desirable, crafting economic incentives for incumbent spectrum users to relocate continues to be challenging.

- Differences among international and domestic spectrum allocation policies may lead to disparity and inconsistency among U.S. and foreign licensing processes. Decisions in pending court cases may also affect FCC action in this area.

Strategic Goal 3: Protect and Empower Consumers

Vision: *Empower consumers by ensuring that they have the tools and information they need to make informed choices in their use of communications services; protect consumers from harm in the communications market.*

Strategic Objective 3.1: **Promote transparency and disclosure.**

Performance Goal 3.1.1: Ensure that FCC policy, rulemaking, and enforcement documents clearly explain the basis for decisions to affected parties, Congress, key constituencies, and the public.

Performance Goal 3.1.2: Support and encourage policies and regulations to ensure that consumers receive consistent treatment and protections across technologies and platforms, and across FCC bureaus and offices.

The FCC is pursuing initiatives to inform and empower consumers, harnessing technology and transparency to provide consumers with the information they need to make smart decisions in their use of communications services. For example, mobile devices are increasingly an essential part of Americans' everyday lives. But as Americans increase their use of voice, text, and data capabilities, avoiding a sudden, unexpected increase in their monthly wireless bills can be a challenge. The FCC is working to ensure that providers warn customers when they are about to exceed their wireless plan allocations, and to provide clear and simple disclosures of fees. Similarly, consumers may not be aware of competitive alternatives to the services they are currently using, and the FCC provides consumers with information about the choices available to them.

Strategic Objective 3.2: **Act swiftly and consistently in the use of enforcement authority to protect consumers.**

Performance Goal 3.2.1: Enforce and defend against legal challenges the FCC's policies that promote the competitive provisions of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, and the FCC's rules.

Performance Goal 3.2.2: Ensure, through enforcement action and litigation where necessary, that consumers are protected from anticompetitive practices and other practices that are harmful to consumers.

Performance Goal 3.2.3: Engage persons with disabilities through outreach and education initiatives to facilitate informed choice in the telecommunications and media marketplace.

Among the FCC's most important public interest responsibilities is ensuring that the benefits of telecommunications services are available to all consumers. The FCC has a particular obligation to ensure that consumers with disabilities are not foreclosed from using communications services. Protecting all consumers from marketplace abuses and empowering them to address and resolve any problems they encounter are necessary elements of the FCC's responsibilities. As communications networks and technologies become increasingly complex and essential to Americans' everyday lives, the FCC must be a vigilant consumer watchdog. The FCC will continue its vigorous enforcement of communications statutes and regulations, taking appropriate actions against those who seek to deceive consumers or otherwise violate the FCC's rules. The FCC will ensure that its proceedings recognize consumer interests, and that consumer protection and empowerment policies apply consistently and reasonably to all

consumers, including people with disabilities, and across all technologies and bureaus at the FCC. The FCC will continue to provide all consumers with up-to-date, user-friendly advisories concerning their rights, responsibilities, service options, and information to make informed decisions.

Strategic Objective 3.3: **Develop and maintain policies that encourage variety in media programming sources and services for consumers.**

Performance Goal 3.3.1: Support the development of and defend against legal challenges to media rules and policies that comply with judicial directives and statutory requirements

Performance Goal 3.3.2: Ensure that broadcasters comply with requirements of statutes and the FCC's rules regarding media ownership and public interest obligations.

Increased competition, changing ownership patterns, converging markets and industries, and deployment of new technologies have challenged both the legal and economic foundations of the FCC's media regulation. The needs of an increasingly diverse American citizenry are served when all consumers have access to a variety of sources for news, public service, and other media programming. The FCC will continue to examine its current rules and make changes as required to accommodate the policy goals of competition, diversity, and localism within the evolving media landscape.

Strategies:

- The FCC will take appropriate enforcement action to ensure compliance with consumer provisions of the Communications Act and the FCC's rules.
- Invest in technology and technical staff to investigate reports of interference and violations of the FCC's rules, and take swift and appropriate actions to remedy them.
- Even as technology changes, the FCC will continue to serve as a clearinghouse for information and tools that give consumers the knowledge they need to make effective choices among communications offerings.
- In addition to the initiatives discussed previously, the FCC will work to promote the rights of consumers with disabilities by monitoring the performance of the Telecommunications Relay Service, which provides funding for telephone services that allow persons with hearing or speech disabilities to place and receive telephone calls.

External Factors Affecting Achievement of This Goal:

- Advances in technology, while increasing benefits for consumers, also increase the number and complexity of choices facing those consumers. The more devices they buy and the more services they subscribe to, the more confusing the communications marketplace can be for consumers.

Strategic Goal 4: Promote Innovation, Investment, and America's Global Competitiveness

Vision: *Ensure that all lawful content can be provided, and accessed, without artificial barriers; promote innovation in a manner that improves the nation's ability to compete in the global economy, creating a virtuous circle that results in more investment and in turn enables additional innovation.*

Strategic Objective 4.1: **Preserve and expand networks as a platform for economic growth, innovation, job-creation, and global competitiveness.**

Performance Goal 4.1.1: Adopt, enforce and defend policies and rules that protect Internet freedom and openness and promote robust innovation and investment throughout the broadband ecosystem.

Performance Goal 4.1.2: Eliminate outdated rules and take action to promote the transition from circuit-switched networks to internet protocol (IP) networks.

One of the most important features of the Internet is its openness. It uses free, publicly available standards that anyone can access and build to, and it treats all traffic that flows across the network in roughly the same way. This design has made it possible for anyone, anywhere to easily launch innovative applications and services, revolutionizing the way people communicate, participate, create, and do business. The FCC will take steps to ensure that the Internet remains a powerful platform for innovation and job creation; to empower consumers and entrepreneurs; to protect free expression; to promote competition; to increase certainty in the marketplace by providing greater predictability for all stakeholders regarding federal policy; and to spur investment in our nation's broadband networks.

Our communications are rapidly transitioning to IP networks. We are witnessing the move from the circuit-switched networks of Alexander Graham Bell to the new broadband networks of the Internet: fiber, wireless, and bonded copper and coaxial cable. The FCC will ensure that these transitions serve the public interest.

Strategic Objective 4.2: **Advocate U.S. spectrum interests in the international arena**

Performance Goal 4.2.1: Secure international spectrum allocations that allow for new services and protect incumbent services from interference.

Performance Goal 4.2.2: Secure and enforce bilateral spectrum treaties and agreements working with appropriate U.S. and international government agencies.

The FCC will work to secure international spectrum allocations that accommodate new services and protect incumbent services from interference. We will prepare and coordinate proposals for negotiations in the international arena with the public and with other federal government agencies in preparation for participation in the 2015 World Radiocommunication Conference.

Strategies:

- The FCC will meet its responsibility to ensure that broadband networks operate in the public interest. We will address the possibility that exercises of economic power or of ideological preference by dominant network firms will diminish the value of the Internet to some or all segments of our society.

- The FCC will use innovative thinking in order to identify ways to encourage the best use of spectrum while maintaining appropriate protections for U.S. spectrum interests.

- The FCC will exercise effective negotiation skills in international relations utilizing its knowledge of communications law both domestically and internationally.

External Factors Affecting Achievement of This Goal:

- The development of new technologies and product offerings challenges existing regulatory structures both domestically and internationally.

- Mobility and personalization are also major trends in communications technology today. Both are dependent on wireless growth and innovation, as well as ease of interconnection with traditional networks. As the demand for mobile technology continues to grow and the data needs of users increase, the need for available spectrum increases as well.

- The global marketplace is a competitive arena in which the U.S. must work effectively to negotiate international agreements and promote policies that attract investment in the U.S. The FCC can help negotiate agreements with its expertise in communications policy; however, other international relations issues outside of communications policy may impact our international negotiations.

Strategic Goal 5: Promote Competition

Vision: *Ensure a competitive market for communications and media services to foster investment and job creation, and to ensure consumers have meaningful choice in affordable services.*

Strategic Objective 5.1: **Ensure effective policies are in place to promote and protect competition for the benefit of consumers, including appropriate interconnection policies for communications networks.**

Performance Goal 5.1.1: Promote competitive choices for wireless, satellite, and wireline voice and data service providers, and for multichannel video programming.

Performance Goal 5.1.2: Evaluate and report on the competitive environment for communications services.

The FCC will implement rules and policies that promote open and competitive entry by communications service providers to ensure that U.S. consumers benefit from competition. When substantial competition exists, regulation can be minimal; where there is little or no competition, we will be willing to act in the public interest. In conformance with existing laws and policies, we will identify and eliminate market entry barriers for small entities.

The FCC will seek to establish a consistent and transparent regulatory framework across all communications platforms to encourage competition, and will improve the data it collects to ensure it can effectively evaluate the effect of its competition policies. The FCC will continue to engage consumers through its outreach and education initiatives to facilitate informed choice in the competitive communications marketplace

Strategic Objective 5.2: **Ensure expeditious and thorough review of proposed transactions to ensure they serve the public interest.**

Performance Goal 5.2.1: Adhere to policies and processes for transaction review that are transparent and uniform across the FCC's Bureaus and Offices.

The FCC will continue to expeditiously and thoroughly review applications for the transfer of control and assignment of licenses and authorizations that are included in proposed transactions and mergers between entities in the media and communications industries. The FCC's goal is a faster and more consistent review and analysis of applications while ensuring that the public interest would be served by approving the transaction. The FCC will ensure that its procedures and analysis of transactions are transparent and consistent across its various bureaus and offices.

Strategic Objective 5.3: **Promote pro-competitive and universal access policies worldwide.**

Performance Goal 5.3.1: Actively participate in bilateral and multilateral global discussions and debate on issues related to communications policy in coordination with other U.S. government agencies.

Performance Goal 5.3.2: Support and facilitate the deployment of satellite systems.

In coordination with other U.S. governmental agencies, the FCC will actively participate in bilateral and multilateral global discussions and debates on issues related to competition and universal access, including access for people with disabilities. In addition, the FCC will participate in meetings and conferences with foreign regulators to foster competition in foreign markets and promote universal service policies.

Strategies:

- The FCC will continue to collect and evaluate information on competition in the communications markets.

- FCC staff will continually review the FCC's rules to determine what rules need to be implemented, revised, or eliminated to achieve competition objectives effectively and efficiently.

- The FCC will take appropriate enforcement action to ensure compliance with the pro-competition provisions of the Communications Act and the FCC's rules.

- The FCC will continue to monitor trends in consumer complaints and coordinate with state and other federal agencies in an effort to identify marketplace practices that negatively affect competition.

- The FCC will work with regulators from other countries to promote pro-competitive policies and safeguard U.S. consumers from anti-competitive practices.

External Factors Affecting Achievement of This Goal:

- New technologies are challenging existing regulatory structures domestically and internationally, while enabling consumers to have access to more services than ever before. Mobility and personalization are major trends in communications technology today. Both are dependent on growth and innovation in wireless service, as well as ease of interconnection with traditional networks. Although technological advances are making it possible to share spectrum more intensively, explosive growth in new technologies, particularly handheld and wireless devices, has increased demand for new spectrum.

- The FCC must conduct effective policy and technical analyses, have access to current and relevant data in developing competition policies and rules, and take enforcement action where necessary. The FCC must consult with industry and maintain ongoing relationships with regulators across the country and throughout the world. The FCC must provide expert guidance to other U.S. government agencies regarding communications policy and technology.

- Legislation as well as litigation may affect FCC action in this area. FCC decisions are subject to appeal and judicial review.

Strategic Goal 6: Public Safety and Homeland Security

Vision: *Promote the availability of reliable, interoperable, redundant, rapidly restorable critical communications infrastructures that are supportive of all required services.*

Strategic Objective 6.1: **Promote access to effective communications services, including next generation services, in emergency situations across a range of platforms by public safety, health, defense, and other emergency personnel, as well as all consumers in need.**

Performance Goal 6.1.1: Enhance communications and media network reliability, including emergency preparedness and disaster management practices.

Performance Goal 6.1.2: Ensure that the public has access to text-to-911 service from their mobile devices, including from interconnected over-the-top messaging apps.

In times of emergency, consumers expect to be able to reach 911 emergency services using whatever means of communications are most familiar to them. Increasingly, that means text messaging. In certain circumstances, such as domestic violence or kidnapping situations, or when faced with network congestion, texting 911 may be the only practical way to get help. In almost all circumstances for people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, texting is the primary means for reaching out for emergency assistance. The FCC continues to facilitate the deployment of 911 services and technologies and to pave the way for greater capabilities. These efforts include helping to define the system architecture and develop a transition plan to establish a digital, Internet Protocol (IP)-based foundation for the delivery of multimedia 911 calls.

Strategic Objective 6.2: **Evaluate and strengthen measures for protecting the nation's critical communications infrastructure and facilitate rapid restoration of the U.S. communications infrastructure and facilities after disruption by any cause, including cyberattacks.**

Performance Goal 6.2.1: Promote construction of nationwide, interoperable broadband public safety capabilities.

Performance Goal 6.2.2: Take appropriate enforcement action for non-compliance with 911 and E911 requirements, including defending the FCC's rules in litigation.

Performance Goal 6.2.3: Improve the effectiveness of the Emergency Alert System (EAS).

The FCC is committed to ensuring the public's safety through the reliability of our nation's communications networks at all times, and especially during natural and manmade disasters. The FCC's leadership in the protection of the nation's critical communications infrastructure includes working with public safety and other stakeholders to maximize the availability, interoperability, and reliability of communications. For example, the FCC has adopted rules to improve 911 communications networks nationwide by requiring 911 service providers to take reasonable measures to provide reliable and resilient 911 service.

Communications providers also face threats to critical Internet infrastructures. The FCC will determine what safeguards may be needed to protect our nation's commercial communications infrastructure from

cyberattack, and we will work with all levels of government and with industry to develop and implement solutions that promote confidence in the safety and reliability of IP-based communications.

The FCC will also take steps to ensure that all segments of the communications industry can provide effective and technologically up-to-date public alerts and warnings to the American public, including through the Emergency Alert System (EAS). The FCC will facilitate participation in the EAS by the full range of communications providers.

Strategic Objective 6.3: **Act swiftly in matters affecting public safety, homeland security, and disaster management, and implement, maintain and conduct exercises for the FCC's Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP) and Emergency Preparedness Plans.**

Performance Goal 6.3.1: Preserve the integrity of the communications infrastructure by taking action on 100% of complaints of interference to public safety communications within one day.

Performance Goal 6.3.2: Ensure that communications are available during emergencies and crises by conducting cable signal leakage inspections to minimize harmful interference to aviation and public safety frequencies.

Performance Goal 6.3.3: During crises, work closely with our federal partners such as FEMA and the National Communications System to provide situational awareness data from the Disaster Information Reporting System (DIRS) or data derived from the operation of Project Roll Call equipment.

Performance Goal 6.3.4: Establish and maintain FCC COOP and emergency preparedness procedures to ensure accuracy, improve effectiveness, and create a better state of readiness.

The FCC works with the communications industry to develop and implement improvements that help ensure the reliability and redundancy of the nation's communications infrastructure, particularly during disasters when emergency communications are most needed. The FCC must also be prepared for incidents and disruptions to its own physical and network facilities. The FCC will continue to refine and enhance its COOP and Emergency Preparedness Plans, fully participating in annual exercises with other federal agencies, reviewing and updating documentation of emergency procedures, and improving the readiness and redundancy of the FCC's high priority information systems.

Strategies:

- Appropriate FCC personnel will utilize technical knowledge of public safety, homeland security, and disaster management issues, including the impact of new or evolving technologies and of existing and proposed best practices for communications providers.

- FCC staff will continually review the FCC's rules to determine any changes that should be implemented to provide effectively and efficiently for public safety and homeland security matters.

- Working in partnership with other federal agencies as well as state, local, and tribal governments, the FCC will facilitate discussions and share information among key constituencies to identify and establish best practices and coordinate efforts to protect America's safety and security.

External Factors Affecting Achievement of This Goal:

- Economic cycles may make it difficult for communications infrastructure providers to commit large sums of money to the wholesale improvement of network protection and redundancy in a challenging economy, and for state and local governments to fund next generation 911 services and public safety broadband capability.

- The FCC must continually update its understanding of national and international threats to communications technologies. The FCC must therefore maintain an experienced, educated, and knowledgeable technical and legal staff that stays abreast of technological and policy developments. The FCC must maintain ongoing, highly integrated relationships with the communications industries, other federal regulators, and state, tribal, and local regulators who are heavily involved in public safety matters.

Strategic Goal 7: Advance Key National Purposes

Vision: *Through international and national interagency efforts, advance the use of broadband for key national purposes.*

Strategic Objective 7.1: **Promote and facilitate the use of broadband to address key national challenges, including health care, education, energy, and e-government.**

Performance Goal 7.1.1: *Support and facilitate the increased use of broadband across key national purposes.*

Performance Goal 7.1.2: *By 2019, connect 99 percent of America's students to digital learning opportunities through high-speed broadband in their schools and libraries.*

Some sectors of American life, particularly health care, education, energy, and government, may not have the capability to take advantage of the modern broadband communications. This precludes the country from realizing the improvements broadband can bring to these key national priority areas. For example, every student in America should have access to state-of-the-art educational tools; however, these are increasingly interactive, individualized, and require considerable bandwidth. We will modernize our successful E-Rate program to invest in high-speed broadband connectivity for schools and libraries.

Strategic Objective 7.2: **Ensure that small businesses have the access to broadband and other communications tools needed to drive innovation and economic growth.**

Performance Goal 7.2.1: *Support and facilitate wired and wireless deployment and competition to ensure that small businesses have robust broadband connectivity and meaningful choice of broadband services.*

Broadband can provide significant benefits to the next generation of American entrepreneurs and small businesses, the engines of job creation and economic growth for the country. Broadband and broadband-dependent applications allow small businesses to increase efficiency, improve market access, reduce costs and increase the speed of both transactions and interactions. However, many small businesses lack information on how best to utilize broadband, leaving potential productivity gains unrealized. The FCC will continue to initiate programs that foster small business connection and utilization of broadband.

Strategies:

- Broadband networks allow regions and communities to compete globally, attracting new firms, investments and jobs thanks to a next-generation communications infrastructure. American communities without broadband will find themselves left out of the digital revolution. In partnership with state, local, and tribal governments, the FCC will work to put the deployment of high speed broadband networks at the forefront of regional development.

External Factors Affecting Achievement of This Goal:

- Domestic and global economic conditions will continue to have a major impact on the results of initiatives fulfilling these objectives. The availability of capital for investment in broadband is critical to provide the infrastructure needed to address key national priorities.

Strategic Goal 8: Operational Excellence

Vision: *Make the FCC a model for excellence in government by effectively managing the FCC's human, information, and financial resources; by basing decisions on sound data and analyses; and by maintaining a commitment to transparent and responsive processes that encourage public involvement and best serve the public interest.*

***Strategic Objective 8.1*: Efficiently and effectively manage the FCC's procedures for monitoring and processing applications, petitions, complaints and other matters in order to achieve timeliness in decision-making.**

Performance Goal 8.1.1: *Focus the accountability of the decision-making process at the FCC, shortening the timeline for FCC-level decisions on matters such as applications for review.*

Performance Goal 8.1.2: *Streamline the licensing process.*

Performance Goal 8.1.3: *Modernize the consumer complaint process.*

Performance Goal 8.1.4: *Reduce the backlog of matters pending at the FCC and take steps to ensure that backlogs don't build up in the future.*

Americans should have an expectation that their government will take timely action, and the FCC is working to do that. Information and communications technology is fast-moving and constantly evolving, and we are striving to be as nimble as the innovators and businesses we oversee. Even in the midst of tight budgets and infrastructure and process challenges, the FCC will reinvent itself to keep pace with the vibrant sector it regulates.

***Strategic Objective 8.2*: Continuously review and examine our regulatory processes and significant regulations to achieve statutory objectives while reducing burdens on industry and promoting innovation and job growth.**

Performance Goal 8.2.1: *Eliminate or streamline outdated regulations, and update our data collection capability so it is less burdensome and more focused for both stakeholders and FCC staff.*

The FCC is committed to being a responsive, efficient and effective agency that harnesses and promotes technological and economic opportunities. Our extensive efforts to eliminate outdated regulations are rooted in our commitment to ensure that FCC rules and policies promote a healthy climate for private investment and job creation. Each bureau at the FCC conducts regular reviews of rules within its areas with the goal of eliminating or revising rules that are outdated or place needless burdens on businesses. The FCC will continue on this regulatory reform track, thoughtfully and diligently conducting reviews of existing rules and taking other important steps to meet our statutory obligations and mission in a way that fosters economic growth and benefits all Americans.

***Strategic Objective 8.3*: Effectively manage the FCC's information technology resources by maintaining secure systems that meet the needs of both the FCC and the system users.**

Performance Goal 8.3.1: Improve FCC systems to make information readily available to agency management for decision-making.

Performance Goal 8.3.2: Upgrade and enhance technology and tools used by FCC staff to carry out the agency's mission.

Information technologies change rapidly in today's world. This requires organizations to put processes in place that provide for timely introduction, upgrade, or replacement of technologies. The FCC will continue to implement and revise its long-term vision for the strategic use of technology, while appropriately balancing the flexible introduction of performance-enhancing technologies with transparent and accountable management of all resources. The FCC will also seek to leverage newer technologies, such as cloud computing, to enhance our services to stakeholders. This will be balanced with continued adherence to a high level of information security standards.

***Strategic Objective 8.4*: Effectively manage the human resources of the FCC in order to ensure sufficient resources and knowledge to handle the FCC's workload.**

Performance Goal 8.4.1: Develop targeted skills and competencies for FCC employees through appropriate career development aligned with the FCC's strategic goals.

Carrying out the mission of the FCC requires a highly trained, expert staff capable of assessing and understanding technological and industry trends and enforcing technical requirements. The FCC needs to make substantial investment in human capital to maintain an experienced, educated, and knowledgeable technical, legal, and economic staff that is able to keep pace with technological developments and trends, and promote the implementation of new initiatives and policies. The FCC will continue to recruit or appropriately redeploy and retain talented professionals, and will continue a robust training program to maintain proficiency among its professional staff.

***Strategic Objective 8.5*: Effectively manage the FCC's financial resources to best achieve the FCC's mission and to maintain internal controls that allow for sound financial management and accounting.**

Performance Goal 8.5.1: Conduct a program of continuous review and evaluation to assure that all financial operations are helping control or contain costs, providing high quality customer service, and improving the effectiveness and efficiency of FCC operations.

With greater demands for transparency and accountability of expenditures of taxpayer dollars, sound financial stewardship is more important than ever. For eight consecutive years the FCC has obtained an unqualified or "clean" audit opinion on its financial statements, and we will continue the practices that made this possible. The FCC will work closely with our reporting components for the Universal Service Fund, the Telecommunications Relay Service Fund, and the North American Numbering Plan in their efforts to modernize their financial systems. The FCC will routinely assess our financial internal controls and those of our reporting components, and develop and implement corrective action plans. We will also continue to make progress in eliminating and recovering improper payments.

Strategies:

- The FCC will develop and implement processes to recognize and reward effective, results-oriented management. It will also identify ways to leverage and integrate technology in order to eliminate unnecessary redundancy, promote efficiency and effectiveness, and improve stakeholder satisfaction.

- The FCC will continue to hire or redeploy, train, equip, and retain a diverse and expert staff essential to the FCC's critical functions.

- The FCC will maintain a robust internal controls program that is risk-based, identifies and remediates critical vulnerabilities, and significantly reduces the potential for waste, fraud and abuse. This includes not only all FCC programs, but components of the FCC such as the Universal Service Fund, the Telecommunications Relay Service Fund, and the North American Numbering Plan.

- The FCC will seek to remove burdens on industry and promote innovation and job growth through an ongoing process of identifying and eliminating or amending outmoded or counterproductive rules.

External Factors Affecting Achievement of Management Objectives:

- Funding for the FCC to carry out its mission is always a significant determinant in meeting our strategic goals and objectives as expressed in this plan. The FCC relies on its annual appropriations and its authorization from Congress to implement its initiatives for the American people, overhaul its data systems and processes, and modernize and reform the FCC with 21st century communications tools and expertise.

- The FCC has many opportunities to improve stakeholder and employee satisfaction and affect mission accomplishment through the introduction of new or enhanced systems and processes. Ensuring that the FCC has access to the human resources necessary to properly plan, implement, and evaluate the use of these technologies is a complementary factor affecting the achievement of the FCC's organizational excellence goal. Recruiting, hiring, redeploying, training, motivating, and retaining such a staff is a challenge.

Planning and Performance at the FCC

The FCC Strategic Plan is the pinnacle of the FCC's planning and performance process. It provides the framework around which the FCC determines its annual performance plan and budget requests. This performance budget, submitted to Congress, includes performance targets that stem from the FCC's strategic goals and objectives, and serves as the guide for implementing the Strategic Plan. After each fiscal year, an annual performance report is produced the compares the agency's actual performance to its targets. In addition, the FCC annually publishes a Summary of Performance and Financial Information to provide a citizen-focused summary of the FCC's progress in meeting its key challenges. Copies of these documents may be viewed at http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/fcc-strategic-plan.

Program Evaluations

The FCC uses a variety of methods to evaluate its programs including audits from the FCC's Office of Inspector General (OIG) and reports from the General Accountability Office (GAO). The OIG, an independent oversight organization within the FCC, conducts audits, investigations, and reviews relating to the FCC's programs and operations. Information on the OIG's work can be found at (http://www.fcc.gov/office-inspector-general). The GAO, an independent organization established by Congress, conducts evaluations and analyses and makes recommendations to improve practices of the programs it reviews. GAO reports concerning the FCC's activities can be found at (http://www.gao.gov/).