



PUBLIC NOTICE

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FCC ANNOUNCES OPENING OF FIRST AUCTION FILING WINDOW FOR AM BROADCASTERS SEEKING NEW FM TRANSLATORS

The First of Two New FM Cross-Service Translator Auction Filing Windows Opens July 26, 2017

Since the adoption and release of the Notice of Proposed Rule Making in the AM Revitalization proceeding in October 2013,¹ we have acted to assist AM broadcasters in providing their communities and listeners with news, information, and other local and national programming. To that end, in 2016 the Commission opened two FM translator modification filing windows, allowing AM broadcasters to relocate FM translator stations in order to enhance their local service. This past February, we relaxed the rule prescribing where such “cross-service” FM translators could be located.² Over a thousand AM broadcasters took advantage of these opportunities, and Commission staff has worked diligently to grant these applications, where appropriate.

Today, we announce the next step in the AM revitalization efforts that began in the Commission’s 2015 *First Report and Order*.³ Starting on July 26, 2017, we will open an auction filing window to allow the licensees of Class C and D AM stations—those having the least power and/or the most limited (or nonexistent) nighttime service, and which did not participate in either of the 2016 modification windows—to file applications to establish new FM translator stations to re-transmit their signals on a full time basis. After the first window applicants have had an opportunity to resolve their mutual exclusivities through settlement or technical amendment, we will announce the dates of the second new FM translator auction filing window, which will be open to any AM station licensee that did not participate in either of the 2016 translator modification windows or the first new FM translator auction filing window. This filing window also will be followed by a settlement/technical resolution period. As required by the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, we will use competitive bidding to resolve any remaining mutually exclusive application groups from these auction windows.⁴

¹ *Revitalization of the AM Radio Service*, Notice of Proposed Rule Making, Docket No. 13-249, 28 FCC Rcd 15221 (2013)

² *Revitalization of the AM Radio Service*, Second Report and Order, 32 FCC Rcd 1724 (2017).

³ *Revitalization of the AM Radio Service*, First Report and Order, Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making, and Notice of Inquiry, 30 FCC Rcd 12145 (2015) (*AMR First R&O*).

⁴ See 47 U.S.C. § 309(j). We recognize that, in the *AMR First R&O*, the Commission directed that the new FM translator auction filing window was to take place only after completion of both Auction 1000, the Broadcast Incentive Auction, and the auction of the remaining FM translator applications filed during the Auction 83 filing window. See *AMR First R&O*, 30 FCC Rcd 12145, 12153 n.39. Given the enormous success of the 2016 cross-service FM translator modification windows and the likelihood that the upcoming windows will similarly provide immediate and dramatic coverage relief to additional hundreds, or perhaps thousands, of AM stations, we have elected to open the first new FM cross-service translator auction filing window before, rather than after, completing non-reserved band FM translator Auction 83. Opening the cross-service translator window at this time will provide

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The Media Bureau and Wireless Telecommunications Bureau will jointly release a Public Notice shortly, containing instructions and detailed information regarding application filing and processing procedures. Future Public Notices will seek comment on auction procedures and provide additional information for auction filing window applicants.

We look forward to the opening of the new FM translator auction filing windows for cross-service translators rebroadcasting AM stations, as we continue to consider and implement further means by which to improve and preserve the vitally important AM broadcast service.

For press inquiries, contact Neil Grace of the Office of Media Relations at (202) 418-0506.

Action by the Commission on May 31, 2017: by Chairman Pai and Commissioners Clyburn and O’Rielly.

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the applicants the opportunity, that Auction 83 applicants have already enjoyed, to resolve any mutual exclusivity between themselves, thus expediting the public interest benefits that the operation of the cross-service translators will bring. FM translator applications filed during the 2003 Auction 83 filing window will remain protected from interference from later-filed FM translator applications, including those filed in the upcoming new FM translator auction filing windows. We anticipate that the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau and the Media Bureau will conduct Auction 83 as expeditiously as practicable, taking into account the new FM cross-service translator auction filing windows.