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FCC RELEASES THIRD “MEASURING BROADBAND AMERICA” REPORT; NATIONWIDE TEST OF WIRELINE BROADBAND SERVICE REVEALS IMPROVED BROADBAND PERFORMANCE, MIGRATION TO HIGHER SPEED TIERS

Report includes results of satellite-based broadband performance for first time

Washington, D.C. – The Federal Communications Commission today released the results of its ongoing, nationwide performance study of residential broadband service in its third “Measuring Broadband America” report. The report continues the Commission’s efforts towards bringing greater clarity and competition to the home broadband services marketplace. This year’s report reveals that most broadband providers continue to improve service performance by delivering actual speeds that meet - or exceed - advertised speeds during the past year and that consumers are subscribing to faster speed tiers and receiving faster speeds than ever before.

FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski said, “Faster broadband has brought untold benefits to millions of Americans - from distance learning to distance healthcare. This is good news for consumers and the economy, but we can’t be satisfied. To unleash innovation and realize broadband’s full potential, we must continue to see increases in broadband speed and capacity.”

The FCC released the first Measuring Broadband America Report in August 2011. That report covered data collected in March 2011 and found that most broadband providers who participated in the study were providing over 80 percent of advertised speeds during peak usage periods. The FCC’s second report, released July 2012, included data collected from participating broadband providers in April 2012, and found that ISPs on average delivered 96 percent of advertised download speed during peak usage period.

Specifically, this year’s report indicates three key areas of improvement.

First, most broadband providers continue to closely meet or exceed the speeds they advertise. In the time period measured for the August 2011 report, the average broadband provider delivered 87 percent of advertised download speed during times when bandwidth demand was at its peak. During the time period measured for the July 2012 report, that number rose to 96 percent. In this year’s report, ISPs maintained their performance levels, delivering 97 percent of advertised speeds during peak periods. One provider significantly improved actual performance speeds by 13 percent from the previous report. FCC analysis indicates that the improvements of Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in meeting their advertised speeds were largely driven by improvements in network performance, and not downward adjustments to the speed tiers offered.

Second, consumers of broadband providers covered by the report are continuing to migrate to faster speed tiers and receiving faster speeds than ever before. The FCC found that the average speed tier subscribed to by consumers increased from 14.3 Megabits per second (Mbps) to 15.6 Mbps. Nearly half of consumers who subscribed to speeds of less than 1 Mbps six months ago have adopted higher speeds, and nearly a

quarter of the users who subscribed to speeds between 1 Mbps and 3 Mbps have upgraded to faster speed tiers.

Third, significant improvements have been made to satellite broadband technology service quality. For the first time, the report includes results on satellite technology based on test results from ViaSat, a major satellite services provider. Although satellite technology has the highest overall latency, test results indicate that during peak periods, 90 percent of satellite consumers received 140 percent or better of the advertised speed of 12 Mbps. In addition, there was very little difference between peak and non-peak performance.

The FCC began focused attention on this issue in the National Broadband Plan. Since then, by continuing to shine a spotlight on actual versus advertised speeds, the FCC is ensuring accountability, increasing transparency and enhancing competition in the marketplace. The report is part of a comprehensive series of initiatives that draw upon cooperation between the Commission, industry, and other stakeholders to promote transparency and ensure that consumers get the information they need to make informed marketplace decisions.

The increase in the availability and adoption of faster speed tiers is a positive indicator that the U.S. market is moving toward the goal, set out in the NBP, that at least 100 million homes should have affordable access to actual download speeds of at least 50 Mbps by 2015, and 100 Mbps by 2020.

Expansion in high speed networks across the country will provide economic opportunities, increase civic engagement, deliver on the promise of better access to healthcare and online learning, and help fuel the development of a smart power grid and a more highly interactive and responsive public safety network. Infrastructure empowers innovation and innovation drives demand for infrastructure. Broader access to fast broadband will encourage the expansion and adoption of cloud computing, more productive telecommuting, online education, telemedicine, and more.

To read the complete February 2013 Measuring Broadband America report, visit www.fcc.gov/measuring-broadband-america.

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