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For Immediate Release**FCC PROPOSES TO STREAMLINE THE APPLICATION
PROCESS FOR SMALL SATELLITES**

WASHINGTON, April 17, 2018—The Federal Communications Commission today began taking steps to streamline the application process for a category of satellites known as “small satellites”. This action proposes a more accessible and flexible authorization process for this fast-growing segment of the commercial satellite communications market.

Many small satellites are launched not as large constellations, but as part of small-scale operations consisting of a single satellite or only a few satellites. Small satellite systems have been used for scientific and research missions, and they are now increasingly used for commercial endeavors.

Given recent innovation in the small satellite sector and the increasing number of proposals for commercial operation, the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking adopted today proposes a new authorization process within Part 25 of the Commission’s rules to govern satellite licensing that is tailored to small satellite operations. This new process will address current needs in this evolving industry sector, as existing Commission licensing rules and processes were not developed with these types of systems in mind.

Specifically, the proposal would allow the new process to be used by satellites with certain characteristics, such as having a short on-orbit lifetime, being able to readily share spectrum with other operations, and having a mission profile that demonstrates a low risk of orbital debris.

Today’s action also looks at the spectrum needs of short duration small satellites, including inviting comment on operations of small satellites in certain frequency bands currently allocated for satellite services. The NPRM also considers revising the application fee for small satellites applying under the new streamlined process.

Action by the Commission April 17, 2018 by Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 18-44). Chairman Pai, Commissioners Clyburn, O’Rielly, Carr, and Rosenworcel approving and issuing separate statements.

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