

**STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER**

**MICHAEL J. COPPS**

March 14, 2002

*RE: Improving Public Safety Communications in the 800 MHz Band; Consolidating the 900 MHz Industrial/Land Transportation and Business Pool Channels (adopted March 14, 2002).*

I strongly support finding a way to reduce interference to public safety users in the 800 MHz band. We are all paying far more attention to public safety this year, and rightfully so. Here we have already assigned spectrum to our critical public safety users. The spectrum is saving lives in the hands of policemen, firemen, and public safety workers across the country. Now we also must take the next step and make sure that we allow the public safety community to rely on using the 800 MHz spectrum with an acceptable amount of interference. I look forward to commenters helping us discover the right path.

I'm also glad that we're asking the question of how the Commission is progressing in meeting public safety spectrum needs more generally. Promoting public safety is one of the primary duties of the Commission. In order to do our job well we need to know how much spectrum public safety needs to protect our citizens. We have, in addition to the 800 MHz band, acted in the unquestionably complicated 700 MHz band and recently in the 4.9 GHz band. Is this the right amount of spectrum? I hope that commenters will help us with this inquiry as well.