

U.S. Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives and the Comptroller General of the General Accounting Office; however, in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 808(2), this rule is effective on May 1, 1998. This rule is not a "major rule" as defined in 5 U.S.C. 804(2).

This final rule only amends the effective date of the underlying rule; it does not amend any substantive requirements contained in the rule. Accordingly, to the extent it is available, judicial review is limited to the amended effective date.

Dated: April 22, 1998.

**Carol Browner,**  
Administrator.

[FR Doc. 98-11551 Filed 4-30-98; 8:45 am]  
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## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

### 40 CFR Part 721

[FRL-5982-9]

#### Technical Amendments to Significant New Uses of Certain Chemical Substances Correction; Correction of Effective Date Under Congressional Review Act (CRA)

**AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

**ACTION:** Final rule; correction of effective date under CRA.

**SUMMARY:** On May 21, 1997 (62 FR 27694), the Environmental Protection Agency published in the **Federal Register** a final rule concerning the correction of two cross-references in a significant new use rule issued pursuant to section 5 of the Toxic Substances Control Act, 15 U.S.C. 604, on December 2, 1996 (61 FR 63726, codified at 40 CFR 721.4484). The correction rule established an effective date of January 31, 1997. This document corrects the effective date of the correction rule to May 1, 1998, to be consistent with sections 801 and 808 of the Congressional Review Act (CRA), enacted as part of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act, 5 U.S.C. 801 and 808.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** This rule is effective on May 1, 1998.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Angela Hofmann, Office of Pesticides Prevention and Toxic Substance, at (202) 260-2922.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Background

Section 801 of the CRA precludes a rule from taking effect until the agency

promulgating the rule submits a rule report, which includes a copy of the rule, to each House of Congress and to the Comptroller General of the General Accounting Office (GAO). EPA recently discovered that it had inadvertently failed to submit the above rule as required; thus, although the rule was promulgated on the date stated in the May 21, 1997, **Federal Register** document, by operation of law, the rule did not take effect on January 31, 1997, as stated therein. Now that EPA has discovered its error, the rule has been submitted to both Houses of Congress and the GAO. This document amends the effective date of the rule consistent with the provisions of the CRA.

Because the delay in the effective date was caused by EPA's inadvertent failure to submit the rule under the CRA, EPA does not believe that affected entities that acted in good faith relying upon the effective date stated in the May 21, 1997, **Federal Register** should be penalized if they were complying with the rule as promulgated.

##### II. Administrative Requirements

Under Executive Order 12866 (58 FR 51735, October 4, 1993), this action is not a "significant regulatory action" and is therefore not subject to review by the Office of Management and Budget. In addition, this action does not impose any enforceable duty or contain any unfunded mandate as described in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-4), or require prior consultation with State officials as specified by Executive Order 12875 (58 FR 58093, October 28, 1993), or involve special consideration of environmental justice related issues as required by Executive Order 12898 (59 FR 76229, February 16, 1994). Because this action is not subject to notice-and-comment requirements under the Administrative Procedure Act or any other statute, it is not subject to the regulatory flexibility provisions of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*).

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A), as added by the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996, EPA will submit a report containing this rule and other required information to the U.S. Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives and the Comptroller General of the General Accounting Office; however, in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 808(2), this rule is effective on May 1, 1998. This rule is not a "major rule" as defined in 5 U.S.C. 804(2).

This final rule only amends the effective date of the underlying rule; it does not amend any substantive requirements contained in the rule. Accordingly, to the extent it is available,

judicial review is limited to the amended effective date.

Dated: April 22, 1998.

**Carol Browner,**  
Administrator.

[FR Doc. 98-11552 Filed 4-30-98; 8:45 am]  
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## FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

### 47 CFR Parts 43, 63, and 64

[IB Docket Nos. 97-142 and 95-22, FCC 97-398]

#### Foreign Participation in the U.S. Telecommunications Market

**AGENCY:** Federal Communications Commission.

**ACTION:** Final rule; petitions for reconsideration; corrections.

**SUMMARY:** The Federal Communications Commission published in the **Federal Register** of December 9, 1997, a summary of a Report and Order that it adopted on November 25, 1997, that created a new regulatory framework for international telecommunications. The Commission inadvertently omitted one sentence from a revised section of the rules. This document corrects that omission. This document also amends the December 9 publication to make clear that the Commission's order disposed of petitions for reconsideration in a related docket.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** February 9, 1998.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Douglas A. Klein or Susan O'Connell, International Bureau, (202) 418-1460.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. In FR Doc. No. 97-32013, published in the **Federal Register** of December 9, 1997 (62 FR 64741), the Commission inadvertently omitted a sentence from the revised § 63.18(e)(4)(ii)(A). This correction adds the necessary sentence. The Commission included this correction in an Errata released on January 12, 1998.
2. The Commission also now wishes to clarify that FR Doc. No. 97-32013 was also an action disposing of petitions for reconsideration filed in IB Docket No. 95-22, Market Entry and Regulation of Foreign-Affiliated Entities.

#### Corrections

In FR Doc. 97-32013, published on December 9, 1997 (62 FR 64741), make the following corrections.

1. On page 64741, in column 2, line 4 of the document is corrected to read "IB Docket Nos. 97-142 and 95-22, FCC 97-398."

2. On page 64741, in column 2, line 9 of the document is corrected to read; Final rule; petitions for reconsideration.

3. On page 64756, in column 2, add the following sentence before the final sentence of § 63.18(e)(4)(ii)(A):

**§ 63.18 Contents of applications for international common carriers.**

\* \* \* \* \*

(e) \* \* \*

(4) \* \* \*

(ii) \* \* \*

(A) \* \* \* Except as provided in paragraph (e)(4)(ii)(B) of this section, any carrier that seeks to provide international switched basic services over its authorized private line facilities between the United States and a non-WTO Member country for which the Commission has not previously authorized the provision of switched services over private lines shall demonstrate that settlement rates for at least 50 percent of the settled U.S.-billed traffic between the United States and the country at the foreign end of the private line are at or below the benchmark settlement rate adopted for that country in IB Docket No. 96-261 and that the country affords resale opportunities equivalent to those available under U.S. law. \* \* \*

Federal Communications Commission.

**Magalie Roman Salas,**

Secretary

[FR Doc. 98-11615 Filed 4-30-98; 8:45 am]

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## FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

### 47 CFR Parts 0 and 1

[GC Docket No. 97-113; FCC 98-56]

### Electronic Filing of Documents in Rulemaking Proceedings

**AGENCY:** Federal Communications Commission.

**ACTION:** Final rule.

**SUMMARY:** In order to implement the changes mandated by the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to serve the public more quickly and efficiently, the Commission is expanding the use of electronic filing in FCC proceedings. The Commission is amending its rules to permit the filing of pleadings and comments in rulemaking proceedings (except broadcast allotment proceedings), petitions for rulemaking (except in broadcast allotment proceedings), pleadings in Notice of Inquiry proceedings, and petitions for reconsideration and all responsive

pleadings in these proceedings, including ex parte presentations and summaries or oral ex parte presentations in these proceedings, over the Internet. This proceeding will make it easier for the public to participate in FCC rulemaking proceedings and is an important step not only in the Commission's ongoing efforts to streamline and improve the Commission's decision making processes.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** June 30, 1998.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

*Legal information:* Laurence H. Schecker, Office of General Counsel, 202-418-1720; *Technical information:* Sheryl Segal, Office of Public Affairs, 202-418-0265.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

1. In this Order, we amend parts 0 and 1 of our Rules to allow parties to file comments and other pleadings electronically via the Internet in FCC informal notice and comment rulemaking proceedings conducted under section 553 of the Administrative Procedure Act, 5 U.S.C. 553, except for broadcast allotment proceedings. We will also permit the electronic filing of all pleadings and comments in proceedings involving petitions for rulemaking (except in broadcast allotment proceedings) and Notice of Inquiry proceedings (NOIs). We will evaluate the new rules and assess the operation of the system as we gain experience to determine whether there is any need to make modifications, and whether it is feasible to expand further the applicability of the system beyond rulemaking-related proceedings and possibly ultimately to require electronic filing. The electronic comment filing system (ECFS) is now operational and can be used to file comments electronically in individual proceedings designated by the Commission. When the rule changes adopted in this order go into effect, the ECFS may be used for electronic filing of comments as specified in this order. It is anticipated that the transition to the ECFS as the official system of record will be completed by July 1998. A Public Notice will be issued at that time.

2. *Formal Status of Electronically Filed Comments.* Every commenting party supported the concept of electronic filing of comments in rulemaking proceedings. We believe that the electronic transmission of comments to the Commission will make it easier for the public to participate in our proceedings, encouraging greater and more diverse public input. This procedure may well reduce the cost of filing comments, because parties will no

longer have to file multiple paper copies and arrange for mailing or messenger delivery if the party to be served agrees to be served electronically. The ECFS will automatically catalogue all of the comments, making it easier to review comments. Electronic comment filing will also make it easier for people with disabilities to participate in our proceedings. As the National Association of the Deaf observed, the deaf and hard of hearing community relies on the Internet as an important form of communication, and the various costs and complications of filing comments on paper has often prevented these individuals from sharing their views with the Commission.

Furthermore, this procedure will allow for the on-line review of comments filed with the Commission by the staff and by the public. We believe that increased public participation in our decision making process will allow us to consider a broader range of opinions and input, improving our decision making process. For all these reasons, we strongly encourage the public to use the ECFS system.

3. We note that for now electronic filing procedures will be used in general rulemaking proceedings. The procedure will not be available for rules of "particular applicability" (e.g., tariff investigations) unless the Commission has specifically permitted such filings in those types of proceedings. Further, electronic filing may be used in general rulemaking proceedings even when the Commission has dispensed with the use of notice and comment procedures under the Administrative Procedure Act's exceptions. In such rulemaking proceedings, electronic filing could be used for petitions for reconsideration, for example.

4. The choice of the Internet as the filing mechanism generally was supported by the commenting parties, although some commenters questioned whether bandwidth limitations might affect the use of the Internet. Bandwidth is not an issue here because documents will be transmitted to us electronically and even large documents will not be of a size to hamper downloading. Our technical staff is working to ensure that the public easily be able to gain access to and use the ECFS. Some commenters made specific suggestions for the electronic filing interface and recommended that changes to the "quickstart" interface be made available for public testing. We are reviewing these suggestions and the final ECFS instructions will explain the Commission's interface choices. Input from the public and FCC staff on the ECFS interface is important, and we will