

§ 332. Mobile services

(a) Factors which Commission must consider

In taking actions to manage the spectrum to be made available for use by the private mobile services, the Commission shall consider, consistent with section 151 of this title, whether such actions will—

(1) promote the safety of life and property;

(2) improve the efficiency of spectrum use and reduce the regulatory burden upon spectrum users, based upon sound engineering principles, user operational requirements, and marketplace demands;

(3) encourage competition and provide services to the largest feasible number of users; or

(4) increase interservice sharing opportunities between private mobile services and other services.

(b) Advisory coordinating committees

(1) The Commission, in coordinating the assignment of frequencies to stations in the private mobile services and in the fixed services (as defined by the Commission by rule), shall have authority to utilize assistance furnished by advisory coordinating committees consisting of individuals who are not officers or employees of the Federal Government.

(2) The authority of the Commission established in this subsection shall not be subject to or affected by the provisions of part III of title 5 or section 1342 of title 31.

(3) Any person who provides assistance to the Commission under this subsection shall not be considered, by reason of having provided such assistance, a Federal employee.

(4) Any advisory coordinating committee which furnishes assistance to the Commission under this subsection shall not be subject to the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

(c) Regulatory treatment of mobile services

(1) Common carrier treatment of commercial mobile services

(A) A person engaged in the provision of a service that is a commercial mobile service shall, insofar as such person is so engaged, be treated as a common carrier for purposes of this chapter, except for such provisions of subchapter II as the Commission may specify by regulation as inapplicable to that service or person. In prescribing or amending any such regulation, the Commission may not specify any provision of section 201, 202, or 208 of this title, and may specify any other provision only if the Commission determines that—

(i) enforcement of such provision is not necessary in order to ensure that the charges, practices, classifications, or regulations for or in connection with that service are just and reasonable and are not unjustly or unreasonably discriminatory;

(ii) enforcement of such provision is not necessary for the protection of consumers; and

(iii) specifying such provision is consistent with the public interest.

(B) Upon reasonable request of any person providing commercial mobile service, the Commission shall order a common carrier to establish physical connections with such service pursuant to the provisions of section 201 of this title. Except to the extent that the Commission is required to respond to such a request, this subparagraph shall not be construed as a limitation or expansion of the Commission’s authority to order interconnection pursuant to this chapter.

(C) As a part of making a determination with respect to the public interest under subparagraph (A)(iii), the Commission shall consider whether the proposed regulation (or amendment thereof) will promote competitive market conditions, including the extent to which such regulation (or amendment) will enhance competition among providers of commercial mobile services. If the Commission determines that such regulation (or amendment) will promote competition among providers of commercial mobile services, such determination may be the basis for a Commission finding that such regulation (or amendment) is in the public interest.

(D) The Commission shall, not later than 180 days after August 10, 1993, complete a rulemaking required to implement this paragraph with respect to the licensing of personal communications services, including making any determinations required by subparagraph (C).

(2) Non-common carrier treatment of private mobile services

A person engaged in the provision of a service that is a private mobile service shall not, insofar as such person is so engaged, be treated as a common carrier for any purpose under this chapter. A common carrier (other than a person that was treated as a provider of a private land mobile service prior to August 10, 1993) shall not provide any dispatch service on any frequency allocated for common carrier service, except to the extent such dispatch service is provided on stations licensed in the domestic public land mobile radio service before January 1, 1982. The Commission may by regulation terminate, in whole or in part, the prohibition contained in the preceding sentence if the Commission determines that such termination will serve the public interest.

(3) State preemption

(A) Notwithstanding sections 152(b) and 221(b) of this title, no State or local govern-
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The Commission shall have any authority to regulate the entry of or the rates charged by any commercial mobile service or any private mobile service, except that this paragraph shall not prohibit a State from regulating the other terms and conditions of commercial mobile services. Nothing in this subparagraph shall exempt providers of commercial mobile services (where such services are a substitute for land line telephone exchange service for a substantial portion of the communications within such State) from requirements imposed by a State commission on all providers of telecommunications services necessary to ensure the universal availability of telecommunications service at affordable rates. Notwithstanding the first sentence of this subparagraph, a State may petition the Commission for authority to regulate the rates for any commercial mobile service and the Commission shall grant such petition if such State demonstrates that—

(i) market conditions with respect to such services fail to protect subscribers adequately from unjust and unreasonable rates or rates that are unjustly or unreasonably discriminatory; or

(ii) such market conditions exist and such service is a replacement for land line telephone exchange service for a substantial portion of the telephone land line exchange service within such State.

The Commission shall provide reasonable opportunity for public comment in response to such petition, and shall, within 9 months after the date of its submission, grant or deny such petition. If the Commission grants such petition, and shall, within 9 months after the date of its submission, grant or deny such petition in

(4) Regulatory treatment of communications satellite corporation

Nothing in this subparagraph shall exempt a State from regulating the rates for commercial mobile services are just and reasonable and not unjustly or unreasonably discriminatory. The Commission shall provide reasonable opportunity for public comment in response to such petition, and shall, within 9 months after the date of its submission, grant or deny such petition in whole or in part.

(5) Space segment capacity

Nothing in this section shall prohibit the Commission from continuing to determine the provision of space segment capacity by satellite systems to providers of commercial mobile services shall be treated as common carriage.

(6) Foreign ownership

The Commission, upon a petition for waiver filed within 6 months after August 10, 1993, may waive the application of section 310(b) of this title to any foreign ownership that lawfully existed before May 24, 1993, of any provider of a private land mobile service that will be treated as a common carrier as a result of the enactment of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993, but only upon the following conditions:

(A) The extent of foreign ownership interest shall not be increased above the extent which existed on May 24, 1993.

(B) Such waiver shall not permit the subsequent transfer of ownership to any other person in violation of section 310(b) of this title.

(7) Preservation of local zoning authority

(A) General authority

Except as provided in this paragraph, no thing in this chapter shall limit or affect the authority of a State or local government or instrumentality thereof over decisions regarding the placement, construction, and modification of personal wireless service facilities.

(B) Limitations

(i) The regulation of the placement, construction, and modification of personal wireless service facilities by any State or local government or instrumentality thereof—

(I) shall not unreasonably discriminate among providers of functionally equivalent services; and

(II) shall not prohibit or have the effect of prohibiting the provision of personal wireless services.

(ii) A State or local government or instrumentality thereof shall act on any request
(d) Definitions

For purposes of this section—

(1) the term “commercial mobile service” means any mobile service (as defined in section 153 of this title) that is provided for profit and makes interconnected service available (A) to the public or (B) to such classes of eligible users as to be effectively available to a substantial portion of the public, as specified by regulation by the Commission;

(2) the term “interconnected service” means service that is interconnected with the public switched network (as such terms are defined by regulation by the Commission) or service for which a request for interconnection is pending pursuant to subsection (c)(1)(B); and

(3) the term “private mobile service” means any mobile service (as defined in section 153 of this title) that is not a commercial mobile service or the functional equivalent of a commercial mobile service, as specified by regulation by the Commission.


Editorial Notes

References in Text

Provisions of part III of title 5, referred to in subsec. (b)(2), are classified to section 2101 et seq. of Title 5, Government Organization and Employees.


This chapter, referred to in subsec. (c), was in the original “this Act”, meaning act June 19, 1934, ch. 652, 48 Stat. 1064, known as the Communications Act of 1934, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see section 609 of this title and Tables.


Amendments

2018—Subsec. (c)(1)(C). Pub. L. 115–141 struck out first and second sentences which read as follows: “The Commission shall review competitive market conditions with respect to commercial mobile services and shall include in its annual report an analysis of those condi-
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tions. Such analysis shall include an identification of the number of competitors in various commercial mobile services, an analysis of whether or not there is effective competition, an analysis of whether any of such competitors have a dominant share of the market for such services, and a statement of whether additional providers or classes of providers in those services would be likely to enhance competition.

Subsec. (d)(1). (3). Pub. L. 104–104, § 3(d)(2), substituted “section 153” for “section 153(n)”.

1993—Pub. L. 103–66 struck out “Private land” before “mobile services” in section catchline, struck out “land” before “mobile services” wherever appearing in subsecs. (a) and (b), added subsecs. (c) and (d), and struck out former subsec. (c) which related to service provided by specialized mobile radio, multiple licensed radio dispatch systems, and other radio dispatch systems; common carriers; and rate or entry regulations.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

Effective Date of 1993 Amendment

Pub. L. 103–66, title VI, § 6002(c), Aug. 10, 1993, 107 Stat. 396, provided that:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the amendments made by this section [amending this section and sections 152, 153, and 309 of this title] are effective on the date of enactment of this Act [Aug. 10, 1993].

“(2) EFFECTIVE DATES OF MOBILE SERVICE AMENDMENTS.—The amendments made by subsection (b)(2) [amending this section and sections 152 and 153 of this title] shall be effective on the date of enactment of this Act [Aug. 10, 1993], except that—

“(A) section 332(c)(3)(A) of the Communications Act of 1934 [subsec. (c)(3)(A) of this section], as amended by such subsection, shall take effect 1 year after such date of enactment; and

“(B) any private land mobile service provided by any person before such date of enactment, and any paging service utilizing frequencies allocated as of January 1, 1993, for private land mobile services, shall, except for purposes of section 332(c)(6) of such Act [subsec. (c)(6) of this section], be treated as a private mobile service until 3 years after such date of enactment.

Availability of Property

Pub. L. 104–104, title VII, § 704(d), Feb. 8, 1996, 110 Stat. 152, provided that: “Within 180 days of the enactment of this Act [Feb. 8, 1996], the President or his designee shall prescribe procedures by which Federal departments and agencies may make available on a fair, reasonable, and nondiscriminatory basis, property, rights-of-way, and easements under their control for the placement of new telecommunications services that are dependent, in whole or in part, upon the utilization of Federal spectrum rights for the transmission or reception of such services. These procedures may establish a presumption that requests for the use of property, rights-of-way, and easements by duly authorized providers should be granted absent unavoidable direct conflict with the department or agency’s mission, or the current or planned use of the property, rights-of-way, and easements in question. Reasonable fees may be charged to providers of such telecommunications services for use of property, rights-of-way, and easements. The Commission shall provide technical support to States to encourage them to make property, rights-of-way, and easements under their jurisdiction available for such purposes.”

Transitional Rulemaking for Mobile Service Providers


“(A) shall issue such modifications or terminations of the regulations applicable (before the date of enactment of this Act) to private land mobile services as are necessary to implement the amendments made by subsection (b)(2) [amending this section and sections 152 and 153 of this title];

“(B) in the regulations that will, after such date of enactment, apply to a service that was a private land mobile service and that becomes a commercial mobile service (as a consequence of such amendments), shall make such other modifications or terminations as may be necessary and practical to assure that licensees in such service are subjected to technical requirements that are comparable to the technical requirements that apply to licensees that are providers of substantially similar common carrier services;

“(C) shall issue such other regulations as are necessary to implement the amendments made by subsection (b)(2); and

“(D) shall include, in such regulations, modifications, and terminations, such provisions as are necessary to provide for an orderly transition.”

§ 333. Willful or malicious interference

No person shall willfully or maliciously interfere with or cause interference to any radio communications of any station licensed or authorized by or under this chapter or operated by the United States Government.


Editorial Notes

References in Text

This chapter, referred to in text, was in the original “this Act”, meaning act June 19, 1934, ch. 652, 48 Stat. 1064, known as the Communications Act of 1934, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see section 609 of this title and Tables.

§ 334. Limitation on revision of equal employment opportunity regulations

(a) Limitation

Except as specifically provided in this section, the Commission shall not revise—

(1) the regulations concerning equal employment opportunity as in effect on September 1, 1992 (47 C.F.R. 73.2080) as such regulations apply to television broadcast station licensees and permittees; or

(2) the forms used by such licensees and permittees to report pertinent employment data to the Commission.

(b) Midterm review

The Commission shall revise the regulations described in subsection (a) to require a midterm review of television broadcast station licensees’ employment practices and to require the Commission to inform such licensees of necessary improvements in recruitment practices identified as a consequence of such review.

(c) Authority to make technical revisions

The Commission may revise the regulations described in subsection (a) to make nonsubstantive technical or clerical revisions in such regulations as necessary to reflect changes in technology, terminology, or Commission organization.