

August 20, 2003

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STATEMENT ON CHAIRMAN POWELL'S LOW POWER FM INITIATIVES

- We welcome the Chairman's commitment to low power radio, and look forward to working with him to identify the most significant roadblocks to fast and successful low power radio deployment.
- We look forward to strong and clear efforts by the FCC to educate Congress and the public about the benefits of LPFM, the solid technical foundation upon which it is based, and the opportunity to expand LPFM through more efficient spectrum use.
- Low power radio is an unsung success story. Over two hundred low power radio stations are on the air around the country and many more are awaiting their turn. Low power radio is about community radio. It is about broadcasting children's story hour at 3pm, the local town council meeting at 7pm, and local music and art at 9pm.
- Three years ago, low power radio was the story of big media interests clouding an important debate with misleading facts and fear-mongering. Today, in this new environment, low power radio is a small bright spot in a congested and consolidated media landscape. The American people are aching to hear something local and real and meaningful on the airwaves, even if they have to run their own radio stations to get it.
- We anxiously await action on a number of pro-localism LPFM proposals that have been pending before the agency for more than three years, including proposals that would limit the number of LPFM stations a single entity can control, and that would require all LPFM stations to originate at least some local programming.
- Three years ago, low power radio was many American's first exposure to the important role media policy plays in their lives. Today, we are reaping the fruits of low power radio activism as many citizens have sought to weigh in at the FCC in the recent media ownership debate.

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Ten Things the FCC Could Do to Improve LPFM deployment:

1. Notify LPFM applicants in writing of the status of their application, when the application is received, when major events occur, and keep them apprised if more than 6 months go by without any action. Develop an easy means to check on the status of their application.
2. Act on the pending reconsideration petitions in the docket. A number of pro-localism proposals are awaiting action, including prohibiting ownership of multiple stations by a single entity, and requiring all LPFM stations to carry some locally-originated programming. One very important reconsideration issue would provide incentives for multiple applicants competing for one station to work together to share a station.
3. Process the LPFM applications more quickly. Some applicants have been waiting since May 2000, over three years.
4. Give LPFM stations adequate information and time to work out agreements to share stations (create universal settlements and share points) so that we can maximize the number of applicants on the air.
5. Adopt new rules addressing the reality of changes in personnel on non-profit boards.
6. Provide extensions for low power radio stations that cannot construct stations within 18 months for good cause.
7. Reevaluate radio translators policies to eliminate noncommercial translators that do not originate locally broadcast programming. These satellite-fed translators chains are the anti-thesis of localism and are harming both noncommercial radio and low power noncommercial radio.
8. Evaluate IBOC (terrestrial digital radio) and adopt policies that will promote the carriage of LPFM stations to be transmitted among digital radio bitstreams. Create policies that will allow carriage and preserve the independence of LPFM stations as we move to a digital future are critical.
9. Alter EAS obligations so that they are easier for LPFM stations to comply with. The less-expensive equipment that the FCC anticipated would appear has not materialized. Lower cost options are available that will protect public safety and will be affordable to LPFM stations.
10. Address concerns that the FCC has issued mutually contradictory statements and rules about type-certified equipment for low power radio transmitters. Allow low power radio stations to use the same equipment full power radio stations use.

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