



Preparing for Mexican Border Region Reconfiguration

This fact sheet provides guidance for Mexican border licensees about 800 MHz band reconfiguration and how to prepare for it.

On April 1, 2013, the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC's) Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau (PSHSB) released a Fifth Report and Order (Fifth R&O) adopting a reconfigured channel plan for the 800 MHz band along the U.S.-Mexico border based on an agreement signed between the United States and Mexico on June 8, 2012. The PSHSB established a 30-month transition period for licensees to complete rebanding in the NPSPAC regions bordering Mexico. The transition period begins on August 23, 2013.

There are a number of licensees with locations in or near the international border area with Mexico, as that is defined by the FCC that are subject to, or affected by, the new 800 MHz band plan. This includes U.S. licensees within 110 kilometers of the U.S.-Mexico border (the Sharing Zone) and licensees operating outside of the Sharing Zone in the NPSPAC regions bordering Mexico (collectively, Mexican border licensees).

Mexican border licensees who are affected by reconfiguration generally fall into the following categories:

- **In the Sharing Zone** – Licensees in the Sharing Zone have licensed repeater locations within 110 km (68.35 miles) of the U.S.-Mexico border.
- **Outside the Sharing Zone in NPSPAC Regions Along U.S.-Mexico Border** – These licensees do not have licensed repeater locations within the Sharing Zone, but are affected by the Mexican border band plan due to proximity to the Sharing Zone or because they interoperate with licensees that are in the Sharing Zone. In general, call signs with locations within approximately 113 km (70 miles) of the Sharing Zone may be considered in this category. In congested areas such as southern California where there are also certain locations given 169 km (105 miles) co-channel protection, the affected area may extend farther from the border.

What Mexican Border Licensees Should Do

In the Fifth R&O, the PSHSB encouraged Mexican border licensees to begin preparing for reconfiguration *prior to* the start of the 30-month transition period. Licensees should undertake the following activities to facilitate the rebanding process:

- Submit a Point of Contact (POC) Form (available on the TA's website) to the TA to ensure that the TA has the correct address for mailing frequency proposals and other communications.
- Identify and contact vendors and/or consultants that can assist with the reconfiguration of the radio system.
- Review the license information in the FCC's Universal Licensing System (ULS) database for accuracy, correct any errors, and update contact information.

The reconfiguration process consists of the following activities: (1) planning for reconfiguration, (2) negotiating and signing a Frequency Reconfiguration Agreement (FRA) with Sprint, (3) implementing the reconfiguration of the licensee's radio system, and (4) closing the FRA. Pursuant to the Fifth R&O, a licensee is required to complete reconfiguration by the end of the 30-month transition period.

Planning

During the planning process, a licensee and its vendors plan for reconfiguration and prepare a Cost Estimate – an estimate of the costs associated with the reconfiguration of the licensee's radio system. If funding is needed for planning

activities, then the licensee should prepare and submit a Request for Planning Funding (RFPF) form on or before August 23, 2013 and negotiate a Planning Funding Agreement (PFA). The RFPF Form and Instructions are available on the TA's website at <http://www.800TA.org/content/resources/forms.asp>. Licensees that already have a PFA and need to amend it to complete the planning process must submit a Change Notice on or before August 23, 2013. After submitting an RFPF or a Change Notice, the licensee and Sprint will have 30 days to negotiate a PFA or a PFA Amendment.

After the TA approves a PFA or PFA Amendment, the licensee must complete planning and submit a Cost Estimate to Sprint within 90 to 110 days. Licensees with up to 5,000 units will have 90 days to complete planning and submit a Cost Estimate. Licensees with 5,001-10,000 units will have 100 days, and licensees with more than 10,000 units will have 110 days. If a licensee has not received its proposed replacement frequencies by the date the TA approves its PFA or PFA Amendment, the planning period will run from the date the licensee receives its proposed replacement frequencies.

What To Do Before Receiving A Frequency Proposal Report

The TA will provide each reconfiguring licensee with a Frequency Proposal Report (FPR) for each call sign subject to reconfiguration. An FPR identifies the licensee's frequencies designated for reconfiguration and contains the proposed replacement frequencies and other relevant information to assist the licensee in the reconfiguration process.

The FCC has encouraged licensees to engage in planning and negotiation activities prior to receiving FPRs to the extent that the activities are not frequency-dependent and would not result in unnecessary duplication of costs.

Licensees may be able to perform certain planning activities prior to the receipt of an FPR. Licensees that need funding for planning activities should submit an RFPF on or before August 23, 2013 and then negotiate a PFA with Sprint. All reconfiguration costs, including those related to planning must be negotiated with and approved by Sprint as part of either a PFA or an FRA and approved by the TA. Among other items, the TA has approved reasonable and prudent costs for licensees to conduct the following planning activities:

- Conduct subscriber unit inventory.
- Conduct infrastructure inventory.
- Determine whether any of the equipment requires special considerations for reconfiguration. Examples include Vehicular Repeater Systems (VRS), irrigation systems, sirens, and equipment in nuclear power plants.
- Conduct non-frequency-specific engineering and implementation planning.
- Define the interoperability environment.

Individuals at the TA are available to assist in determining appropriate activities. Additional information about these activities is available in the Reconfiguration Handbook, which is available on the TA's website.

What To Do Upon Receipt of A Frequency Proposal Report

Once a licensee receives FPRs for its reconfiguring call signs, it must complete the remaining planning activities and prepare and submit to Sprint a Cost Estimate for its reconfiguration implementation activities. Following submittal of a Cost Estimate, the licensee and Sprint will negotiate an FRA for the reconfiguration of the licensee's system.

Staying Engaged

The experiences of licensees who have already completed reconfiguration have shown that there is significant value in starting the reconfiguration process early and staying engaged. The following are tips for how best to remain actively engaged in the reconfiguration process.

- Regularly review the TA's website for up-to-date information about reconfiguration in the Mexican border region at <http://www.800TA.org/content/resources/mexicoborder.asp>.
- Respond rapidly to requests for information from the TA.
- Attend any relevant TA sponsored workshops or educational sessions.
- Inform the TA as soon as an issue or challenge is identified that may prevent successful planning or negotiations. You may contact the TA with your questions by phone at 888-800-8220 or via email at comments@800TA.org.

For additional reconfiguration information, please visit the TA's website at www.800TA.org.



About the 800 MHz Transition Administrator

800 MHz Transition Administrator, LLC ("TA LLC") is the Transition Administrator ("TA") for the reconfiguration of the 800 MHz band mandated by the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC"). TA LLC has contracted with Deloitte Consulting LLP, Squire Sanders (US) LLP, and Baseline Wireless Services, LLC to perform the duties of the TA. Among its duties, the TA establishes reconfiguration guidelines, specifies replacement channels, reviews reconfiguration cost estimates, monitors payment of reconfiguration costs, manages the relocation schedule, facilitates issue resolution and administers the alternative dispute resolution process. TA LLC uses information it receives solely for the purposes of administering the 800 MHz reconfiguration process and may disclose such information to the FCC or other authorized parties pursuant to the requirements of the 800 MHz Order or other applicable laws.