



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Telecommunications and
Information Administration
Washington, D.C. 20230

September 18, 2023

Mr. Ronald T. Repasi
Chief, Office of Engineering and Technology (OET)
Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street, NE
Washington, DC 20554

Mr. Joel Taubenblatt
Chief, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (WTB)
Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street, NE
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Request for the Creation of a Scheduling Portal Dynamic Protection Area in Hawaii;
Amendment of the Commission's Rules with Regard to Commercial Operations in
the 3550-3650 MHz Band (GN Docket Nos. 15-319 and 17-258)¹

Dear Messrs. Repasi and Taubenblatt:

By this letter, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) provides notice to the Federal Communications Commission (Commission) of a temporary arrangement with the Department of the Navy (Navy) that will allow Citizens Broadband Radio Service (CBRS) users—including Priority Access Licensees—to begin operating in Hawaii in the 3550-3650 MHz band before Environmental Sensing Capability (ESC) sensors are locally deployed. Under this arrangement, the Navy will retain continuous access to three 10-megahertz channels in the 3550-3650 MHz band in and around Hawaii,² leaving seven-10 megahertz channels available for CBRS use. The Navy will retain priority rights to the remainder of the 3550-3650 MHz band on an “as needed” basis consistent with Part 96 of the Commission's rules, and the Navy's spectrum use will be coordinated via the TARDyS3 scheduling portal.³

¹ Letter from Seth L. Williams *Counsel Hawaiian Electric Company*, to Ronald Repasi (Acting) Chief OET, and Joel Taubenblatt (Acting) Chief WTB (Aug. 29, 2022) (HEC Letter), <https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/search/search-filings/filing/108292012911004>

² The specific frequency ranges of the channels are 3550-3560 MHz, 3630-3640 MHz, and 3640-3650 MHz.

³ See *Wireless Telecommunications Bureau and Office of Engineering and Technology Announce Deployment of a New Federal Portal System*, FCC Public Notice, GN Docket Nos. 17-258 and 15-319, DA 23-733 (rel. Aug. 21, 2023); Letter from Charles Cooper, Associate Administrator, Office of Spectrum Management, NTIA to Ronald T. Repasi, Acting Chief, OET, FCC and Joel Taubenblatt, Acting Chief, WTB, FCC (Aug. 14, 2023).

On August 29, 2022, Hawaii Electric Company (HEC) submitted a letter to the Commission asking the FCC, NTIA, and the Department of Defense (DoD) to consider using a portal-based scheduling solution to protect federal operations near Hawaii until an Environmental Sensing Capability (ESC) could be deployed.⁴ According to HEC, ESC operators would be unable to deploy ESC sensors in Hawaii until at late 2023 at the earliest and, without an alternative arrangement, the 3550-3650 MHz band would be unavailable for CBRS until then.⁵ After review of HEC's request, DOD, FCC, and NTIA—working closely with the Department of the Navy—developed a temporary, portal-based solution that will allow CBRS users to access the 3550-3650 MHz portion of the band while the ESC operators continue their efforts to deploy ESC sensors in Hawaii.

We note that the operational radio frequency environment around Naval Station Pearl Harbor, Hawaii—and in nearby waters—is complex and constantly changing. As such, the Navy has a persistent need for access to spectrum in the band. After completing an assessment of its systems and operational need, the Department of Navy has agreed to temporarily utilize the TARDyS3 portal to schedule and protect its operations in and around Hawaii. Specifically, to ensure a stable and predictable spectral environment, the Navy has agreed to utilize three 10-megahertz channels in the 3550-3650 MHz band,⁶ making the remaining seven 10-megahertz channels available for CBRS. These channels will be registered with TARDyS3 and will be considered “in use” while the temporary portal-based solution is in place. In addition, consistent with Part 96 of the Commission's rules, the Navy retains the right to utilize any portion of the 3550-3650 MHz band in and around Hawaii and to pre-empt CBRS operations during such use. For example, there will be periods of time, including during major exercises, when the Department of the Navy would need to coordinate additional channels for use.⁷ Such operations will be coordinated through the TARDyS3 portal, and the Navy intends to use its best efforts to provide advance notice of any such use. Use of this portal-based arrangement in Hawaii as described herein is permitted through June 30, 2024.

* * *

NTIA looks forward to continuing its collaboration with the Commission and DoD to protect the federal 3550-3700 MHz band radar systems. Should you have any questions, please

⁴ See HEC Letter.

⁵ See HEC Letter.

⁶ Channels: 1 (3550-3560MHz), 9 (3630-3640MHz), and 10 (3640-3650MHz).

⁷ An example of a major exercise is the biennial Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC), in and around the Hawaiian Islands and Southern California, which includes twenty-six nations, 38 surface ships, four submarines, nine national land forces, more than 170 aircraft and approximately 25,000 personnel. This is the world's largest international maritime exercise, providing a unique training opportunity designed to foster and sustain cooperative relationships that are critical to ensuring the safety of sea lanes and security on the world's interconnected oceans.

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contact me or Edward Drocella, Chief, Spectrum Engineering and Analysis Division, Office of Spectrum Management, at edrocella@ntia.gov or (202) 482-2608.

Sincerely,

Charles Cooper
Associate Administrator
Office of Spectrum Management
National Telecommunications and Information
Administration