## Before the FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION Washington, DC 20554

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Unmanned Aircraft Systems	)	RM-11798
Use of the 5 GHz Band	)	

## REPLY COMMENTS OF THE NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), in support of the National Science Foundation, hereby submits these reply comments in response to the *Public Notice* in the above-captioned rulemaking docket to refresh the Commission's record on possible Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) use of the 5 GHz Band.<sup>1</sup>

NTIA stated in its initial comments that the Commission both should ensure protection of radio astronomy operations through coordination of UAS usage within the National Radio Quiet Zone (NRQZ) and should remind UAS users that applicants for airborne assignments are to take all practicable steps to protect radio astronomy observations in adjacent bands.<sup>2</sup> To supplement this point, NTIA notes that footnote US211, applicable to the 5000-5250 MHz band that contains the frequencies that are the subject of interest in the *Public Notice*, provides this caution that applicants are urged to protect radio astronomy.<sup>3</sup> Airborne operation can be a particular challenge to radio astronomy observations, so we request that footnote US211 continue to apply to any regulatory measures that might emerge in this proceeding.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Seeks to Refresh the Record on Unmanned Aircraft Systems Use of the 5 GHz Band, Public Notice, DA 21-1025, RM-11798 (rel. Aug. 20, 2021) (Public Notice).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Comments of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA Comments) at 2, available at <a href="https://www.ntia.doc.gov/files/ntia/publications/ntia\_comments\_re\_licensing\_uas\_operations\_at\_5">https://www.ntia.doc.gov/files/ntia/publications/ntia\_comments\_re\_licensing\_uas\_operations\_at\_5</a> ghz- rm-11798.pdf.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See 47 C.F.R. § 2.106, footnote US211.

NTIA also stated in its initial comments that the scope of services in the contemplated 5030-5091 MHz band should be limited to the relevant allocation of aeronautical mobile (route) service (AM(R)S) communications.<sup>4</sup> Even with this limitation, however, the additional communications traffic may present further challenges to radio astronomy services at defined locations. We accordingly would recommend that additional criteria be developed, should this proceeding continue, to minimize UAS impact to particular radio astronomy sites, especially from low-altitude operations.

Lastly, in its initial comments, NTIA recommended that the Commission require parties seeking a 5030-5091 MHz band spectrum license to certify they have the requisite FAA remote pilot certification.<sup>5</sup> To further protect sensitive radio astronomy operations, we also recommend that the process for such certification include a test or similar effort to promote awareness of radio astronomy sites, where low-altitude line-of-sight operation should not be permitted without coordination.

Respectfully submitted,

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<sup>4</sup> NTIA Comments at 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Id*.

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