

1169. EPA's policy is that all comments received will be included in the public docket without change, and may be made available online at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), including any personal information provided, unless the comment includes information claimed to be Confidential Business Information (CBI) or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute. Do not submit information that you consider to be CBI or otherwise protected through [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) or e-mail. The [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) Web site is an "anonymous access" system, which means EPA will not know your identity or contact information unless you provide it in the body of your comment. If you send an e-mail comment directly to EPA without going through [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), your e-mail address will be automatically captured and included as part of the comment that is placed in the public docket and made available on the Internet. If you submit an electronic comment, EPA recommends that you include your name and other contact information in the body of your comment and with any disk or CD-ROM you submit. If EPA cannot read your comment due to technical difficulties and cannot contact you for clarification, EPA may not be able to consider your comment. Electronic files should avoid the use of special characters, any form of encryption, and be free of any defects or viruses.

**Docket:** All documents in the electronic docket are listed in the [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) index. Although listed in the index, some information is not publicly available, i.e., CBI or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute. Certain other material, such as copyrighted material, is not placed on the Internet and will be publicly available only in hard copy form. Publicly available docket materials are available either electronically in [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) or in hard copy during normal business hours at the Air Protection Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region III, 1650 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103. Copies of the State submittal are available at Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, 629 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Gregory Becoat, (215) 814-2036, or by e-mail at [becoat.gregory@epa.gov](mailto:becoat.gregory@epa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** For further information, please see the information provided in the direct final action, Approval of Virginia's Amendments to Existing Regulation

Provisions Concerning Reasonably Available Control Technology, that is located in the "Rules and Regulations" section of this **Federal Register** publication. Please note that if EPA receives adverse comment on an amendment, paragraph, or section of this rule and if that provision may be severed from the remainder of the rule, EPA may adopt as final those provisions of the rule that are not the subject of an adverse comment.

Dated: February 12, 2008.

**Donald S. Welsh,**

*Regional Administrator, Region III.*

[FR Doc. E8-3389 Filed 2-27-08; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6560-50-P**

## FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

### 47 CFR Part 76

[MB Docket No. 07-42; FCC 07-208]

#### Leased Commercial Access

**AGENCY:** Federal Communications Commission.

**ACTION:** Proposed rule.

**SUMMARY:** In this document, the Commission seeks comment on the application of the Commission's revised leased access rate methodology and maximum allowable leased access rate to programmers that predominantly transmit sales presentations or program length commercials.

**DATES:** Comments for this proceeding are due on or before March 31, 2008; reply comments are due on or before April 14, 2008.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments, identified by MB Docket No. 07-42, by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- *Federal Communications Commission's Web site:* <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- *People with Disabilities:* Contact the FCC to request reasonable accommodations (accessible format documents, sign language interpreters, CART, etc.) by e-mail: [FCC504@fcc.gov](mailto:FCC504@fcc.gov) or phone: 202-418-0530 or TTY: 202-418-0432.

For detailed instructions for submitting comments and additional information on the rulemaking process, see the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this document.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For additional information on this

proceeding, contact Steven Broecker, [Steven.Broeckaert@fcc.gov](mailto:Steven.Broeckaert@fcc.gov); or Katie Costello, [Katie.Costello@fcc.gov](mailto:Katie.Costello@fcc.gov); of the Media Bureau, Policy Division, 202-418-2120.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This is a summary of the Commission's *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM)*, contained in MB Docket No. 07-42, FCC 07-208, adopted on November 27, 2007, and released on February 1, 2008. The full text of this document is available for public inspection and copying during regular business hours in the FCC Reference Center, Federal Communications Commission, 445 12th Street, SW., CY-A257, Washington, DC 20554. This document will also be available via ECFS (<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/>). (Documents will be available electronically in ASCII, Word 97, and/or Adobe Acrobat.) The complete text may be purchased from the Commission's copy contractor, 445 12th Street, SW., Room CY-B402, Washington, DC 20554. To request this document in accessible formats (computer diskettes, large print, audio recording, and Braille), send an e-mail to [fcc504@fcc.gov](mailto:fcc504@fcc.gov) or call the Commission's Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau at 202-418-0530 (voice), 202-418-0432 (TTY).

#### Initial Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 Analysis

This document has been analyzed with respect to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 ("PRA"), Public Law No. 104-13, 109 Stat 163 (1995) (codified in Chapter 35 of title 44 U.S.C.), and contains no proposed new or modified information collection requirements. In addition, therefore, it does not contain any new or modified "information collection burden for small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees," pursuant to the Small Business Paperwork Relief Act of 2002 ("SBPRA"), Public Law No. 107-198, 116 Stat 729 (2002) (codified in Chapter 35 of title 44 U.S.C.); see 44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(4).

#### Summary of Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

##### I. Application of Leased Access Rules to Certain Programmers

1. The commercial leased access requirements are set forth in Section 612 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended. The statute and corresponding leased access rules require a cable operator to set aside channel capacity for commercial use by unaffiliated video programmers. The purposes of Section 612 are "to promote competition in the delivery of diverse

sources of video programming and to assure that the widest possible diversity of information sources are made available to the public from cable systems in a manner consistent with growth and development of cable systems." In Report and Order, FCC 07-208, the Commission modified the leased access rate methodology but did not apply the changes to rates charged to programmers that predominantly transmit sales presentations or program length commercials. These direct sales programmers often "pay" for carriage—either directly or through some form of revenue sharing with the cable operator. In this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), the Commission seeks comment on whether the new methodology should be applied to the rates charged to programmers that predominantly transmit sales presentations or program length commercials.

2. In the Report and Order, the Commission modified the method for determining the leased access rate for full-time carriage on a tier and harmonized the rate methodology for carriage on tiers with more than 50% subscriber penetration and carriage on tiers with lower levels of penetration by calculating the leased access rate based upon the characteristics of the tier on which the leased access programming will be placed. Cable operators will calculate a leased access rate for each cable system on a tier-by-tier basis which will adequately compensate the operator for the net revenue that is lost when a leased access programmer displaces an existing program channel on the cable system. The Report and Order adopted a methodology to determine the "marginal implicit fee" rather than the "average implicit fee" in calculating leased access rates. The "average implicit fee" is calculated based on the average value of all of the channels in a tier instead of the value of the channels most likely to be replaced. The revised methodology eliminates this excess recovery. In addition, the Report and Order set a maximum allowable leased access rate of \$0.10 per subscriber per month to ensure that leased access remains a viable outlet for programmers.

3. The Commission concluded not to apply the new rate methodology to programmers that predominantly transmit sales presentations or program length commercials. These programmers often "pay" for carriage—either directly or through some form of revenue sharing with the cable operator. Previously to the Report and Order, the Commission set the leased access rate for a la carte programmers at the

"highest implicit fee" partly out of a concern that lower rates would simply lead these programmers to migrate to leased access if it were less expensive than what they are currently "paying" for carriage. Such a migration would not add to the diversity of voices and would potentially financially harm the cable system. The a la carte rate remains unchanged. Similarly, the Commission does not wish to set the leased access rates at a point at which programmers that predominantly transmit sales presentations or program length commercials simply migrate to leased access because it is less expensive than their current commercial arrangements. The Commission seeks on whether leased access is affordable at current rates to programmers that predominantly transmit sales presentations or program length commercials and whether reduced rates would simply cause migration of existing services to leased access.

4. The Commission is concerned about setting the leased access rates at a point at which programmers that predominantly transmit sales presentations or program length commercials simply migrate to leased access because it is less expensive than their current commercial arrangements. Accordingly, the Commission seeks comment regarding the use of leased access by programmers that predominantly transmit sales presentations and program length commercials. Specifically, is leased access affordable to these programmers at current rates? Will applying the modified rate formula discussed previously in this Report and Order cause migration of existing services to leased access? What would be the effect of such a migration? Is a separate category for direct sales programmers appropriate?

## II. Procedural Matters

### A. Ex Parte Rules

5. *Permit-But-Disclose*. The NPRM in this proceeding will be treated as "permit-but-disclose" subject to the "permit-but-disclose" requirements under § 1.1206(b) of the Commission's rules. *Ex parte* presentations are permissible if disclosed in accordance with Commission rules, except during the Sunshine Agenda period when presentations, *ex parte* or otherwise, are generally prohibited. Persons making oral *ex parte* presentations are reminded that a memorandum summarizing a presentation must contain a summary of the substance of the presentation and not merely a listing of the subjects discussed. More than a one- or two-

sentence description of the views and arguments presented is generally required. Additional rules pertaining to oral and written presentations are set forth in § 1.1206(b).

### B. Filing Requirements

6. *Information*. For additional information on this proceeding, contact Katie Costello, [Katie.Costello@fcc.gov](mailto:Katie.Costello@fcc.gov) of the Media Bureau, Policy Division, (202) 418-2120.

7. *Comment Information*. Pursuant to §§ 1.415 and 1.419 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR 1.415, 1.419, interested parties may file comments and reply comments on or before the dates indicated on the first page of this document. Comments may be filed using: (1) The Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS), (2) the Federal Government's eRulemaking Portal, or (3) by filing paper copies. See *Electronic Filing of Documents in Rulemaking Proceedings*, 63 FR 24121, May 1, 1998.

- *Electronic Filers*: Comments may be filed electronically using the Internet by accessing the ECFS: <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/> or the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Filers should follow the instructions provided on the website for submitting comments.

- For ECFS filers, if multiple docket or rulemaking numbers appear in the caption of this proceeding, filers must transmit one electronic copy of the comments for each docket or rulemaking number referenced in the caption. In completing the transmittal screen, filers should include their full name, U.S. Postal Service mailing address, and the applicable docket or rulemaking number. Parties may also submit an electronic comment by Internet e-mail. To get filing instructions, filers should send an e-mail to [ecfs@fcc.gov](mailto:ecfs@fcc.gov), and include the following words in the body of the message, "get form." A sample form and directions will be sent in response.

- *Paper Filers*: Parties who choose to file by paper must file an original and four copies of each filing. If more than one docket or rulemaking number appears in the caption of this proceeding, filers must submit two additional copies for each additional docket or rulemaking number.

Filings can be sent by hand or messenger delivery, by commercial overnight courier, or by first-class or overnight U.S. Postal Service mail (although we continue to experience delays in receiving U.S. Postal Service mail). All filings must be addressed to the Commission's Secretary, Office of

the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission.

- The Commission's contractor will receive hand-delivered or messenger-delivered paper filings for the Commission's Secretary at 236 Massachusetts Avenue, NE., Suite 110, Washington, DC 20002. The filing hours at this location are 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. All hand deliveries must be held together with rubber bands or fasteners. Any envelopes must be disposed of *before* entering the building.

- Commercial overnight mail (other than U.S. Postal Service Express Mail and Priority Mail) must be sent to 9300 East Hampton Drive, Capitol Heights, MD 20743.

- U.S. Postal Service first-class, Express, and Priority mail must be addressed to 445 12th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20554.

- *People With Disabilities*: To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), send an e-mail to [fcc504@fcc.gov](mailto:fcc504@fcc.gov) or call the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau at 202-418-0530 (voice), 202-418-0432 (tty).

#### 8. *Availability of Documents.*

Comments, reply comments, and *ex parte* submissions will be available for public inspection during regular business hours in the FCC Reference Center, Federal Communications Commission, 445 12th Street, SW., CY-A257, Washington, DC 20554. Persons with disabilities who need assistance in the FCC Reference Center may contact Bill Cline at (202) 418-0267 (voice), (202) 418-7365 (TTY), or [bill.cline@fcc.gov](mailto:bill.cline@fcc.gov). These documents also will be available from the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System. Documents are available electronically in ASCII, Word 97, and Adobe Acrobat. Copies of filings in this proceeding may be obtained from Best Copy and Printing, Inc., Portals II, 445 12th Street, SW., Room CY-B402, Washington, DC 20554; they can also be reached by telephone, at (202) 488-5300 or (800) 378-3160; by e-mail at [fcc@bcpiweb.com](mailto:fcc@bcpiweb.com); or via their Web site at <http://www.bcpiweb.com>. To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (Braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), send an e-mail to [fcc504@fcc.gov](mailto:fcc504@fcc.gov) or call the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau at (202) 418-0531 (voice), (202) 418-7365 (TTY).

#### C. Initial Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 Analysis

9. The FNPRM has been analyzed with respect to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 ("PRA"), Public

Law No. 104-13, 109 Stat 163 (1995) (codified in Chapter 35 of title 44 U.S.C.) and contains no proposed new or modified information collection requirements. In addition, therefore, it does not contain any new or modified "information collection burden for small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees," pursuant to the Small Business Paperwork Relief Act of 2002 ("SBPRA"), Public Law No. 107-198, 116 Stat 729 (2002) (codified in Chapter 35 of title 44 U.S.C.); *see* 44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(4).

#### III. *Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis*

10. The Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980, as amended ("RFA"), requires that a regulatory flexibility analysis be prepared for notice and comment rule making proceedings, unless the agency certifies that "the rule will not, if promulgated, have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities." The RFA generally defines the term "small entity" as having the same meaning as the terms "small business," "small organization," and "small governmental jurisdiction." In addition, the term "small business" has the same meaning as the term "small business concern" under the Small Business Act. A "small business concern" is one which: (1) is independently owned and operated; (2) is not dominant in its field of operation; and (3) satisfies any additional criteria established by the Small Business Administration (SBA). As required by the RFA, the Commission has prepared an Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis ("IRFA") of the possible significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities of the proposals addressed in the FNPRM Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis.

11. As required by the Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980, as amended (the "RFA") the Commission has prepared this Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis ("IRFA") of the possible significant economic impact on small entities by the policies and rules proposed in the Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking ("FNPRM"). Written public comments are requested on this IRFA. Comments must be identified as responses to the IRFA and must be filed by the deadlines for comments provided on the first page of the document. The Commission will send a copy of the FNPRM, including this IRFA, to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration ("SBA"). In addition, the FNPRM and IRFA (or summaries thereof) will be published in the **Federal Register**.

A. Need for, and Objectives of, the Proposed Rules

12. *Overview.* The commercial leased access requirements set forth in Section 612 of the Communications Act of 1934 require a cable operator to set aside channel capacity for commercial use by video programmers unaffiliated with the cable operator. The purposes of Section 612 are "to promote competition in the delivery of diverse sources of video programming and to assure that the widest possible diversity of information sources are made available to the public from cable systems in a manner consistent with growth and development of cable systems."

13. In the Report and Order in MB Docket No. 07-42, the Commission modified its formula used to calculate commercial leased access rates, which will result in making leased access channels a more viable outlet for leased access programming. The Order also provides that the maximum leased access rate will not exceed \$0.10 per subscriber per month for any cable system. The Order, however, did not apply the modified rate formula or the maximum allowable leased access rate to programmers that predominantly transmit sales presentations or program length commercials. These direct sales programmers often "pay" for carriage—either directly or through some form of revenue sharing with the cable operator.

14. In the FNPRM, the Commission notes its concern about setting the leased access rates at a point at which programmers that predominantly transmit sales presentations or program length commercials simply migrate to leased access because it is less expensive than their current commercial arrangements. Accordingly, the FNPRM considers whether leased access at current rates is affordable to programmers that predominantly transmit sales presentations and program length commercials. The FNPRM considers whether applying the modified leased access rate formula to programmers that predominantly transmit sales presentations or program length commercials will cause migration of these services to leased access. If these services do migrate to leased access, the FNPRM considers the effect of such a migration. The FNPRM also considers whether a separate category for direct sales programmers is appropriate.

15. In the FNPRM, the Commission seeks comment on the foregoing issues. In particular, the FNPRM invites comment on issues that may impact small entities, including cable operators and leased access programmers.

## B. Legal Basis

16. The authority for the action proposed in the rulemaking is contained in Section 4(i), 303, and 612 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 154(i), 303, and 532.

## C. Description and Estimate of the Number of Small Entities to Which the Proposed Rules Will Apply

17. The RFA directs agencies to provide a description of, and where feasible, an estimate of the number of small entities that may be affected by the proposed rules, if adopted. The RFA generally defines the term "small entity" as having the same meaning as the terms "small business," "small organization," and "small governmental jurisdiction." In addition, the term "small business" has the same meaning as the term "small business concern" under the Small Business Act. A "small business concern" is one which: (1) Is independently owned and operated; (2) is not dominant in its field of operation; and (3) satisfies any additional criteria established by the Small Business Administration ("SBA").

18. *Wired Telecommunications Carriers*. The 2007 North American Industry Classification System ("NAICS") defines "Wired Telecommunications Carriers" (2002 NAISC code 517110) to include the following three classifications which were listed separately in the 2002 NAICS: Wired Telecommunications Carriers (2002 NAISC code 517110), Cable and Other Program Distribution (2002 NAISC code 517510), and Internet Service Providers (2002 NAISC code 518111). The 2007 NAISC defines this category as follows: "This industry comprises establishments primarily engaged in operating and/or providing access to transmission facilities and infrastructure that they own and/or lease for the transmission of voice, data, text, sound, and video using wired telecommunications networks. Transmission facilities may be based on a single technology or a combination of technologies. Establishments in this industry use the wired telecommunications network facilities that they operate to provide a variety of services, such as wired telephony services, including VoIP services; wired (cable) audio and video programming distribution; and wired broadband Internet services. By exception, establishments providing satellite television distribution services using facilities and infrastructure that they operate are included in this industry." The SBA has developed a small

business size standard for Wired Telecommunications Carriers, which is all firms having 1,500 employees or less. According to Census Bureau data for 2002, there were a total of 27,148 firms in the Wired Telecommunications Carriers category (2002 NAISC code 517110) that operated for the entire year; 6,021 firms in the Cable and Other Program Distribution category (2002 NAISC code 517510) that operated for the entire year; and 3,408 firms in the Internet Service Providers category (2002 NAISC code 518111) that operated for the entire year. Of these totals, 25,374 of 27,148 firms in the Wired Telecommunications Carriers category (2002 NAISC code 517110) had less than 100 employees; 5,496 of 6,021 firms in the Cable and Other Program Distribution category (2002 NAISC code 517510) had less than 100 employees; and 3,303 of the 3,408 firms in the Internet Service Providers category (2002 NAISC code 518111) had less than 100 employees. Thus, under this size standard, the majority of firms can be considered small.

19. *Cable and Other Program Distribution*. The 2002 NAICS defines this category as follows: "This industry comprises establishments primarily engaged as third-party distribution systems for broadcast programming. The establishments of this industry deliver visual, aural, or textual programming received from cable networks, local television stations, or radio networks to consumers via cable or direct-to-home satellite systems on a subscription or fee basis. These establishments do not generally originate programming material." This category includes, among others, cable operators, direct broadcast satellite ("DBS") services, home satellite dish ("HSD") services, satellite master antenna television ("SMATV") systems, and open video systems ("OVS"). The SBA has developed a small business size standard for Cable and Other Program Distribution, which is all such firms having \$13.5 million or less in annual receipts. According to Census Bureau data for 2002, there were a total of 1,191 firms in this category that operated for the entire year. Of this total, 1,087 firms had annual receipts of under \$10 million, and 43 firms had receipts of \$10 million or more but less than \$25 million. Thus, under this size standard, the majority of firms can be considered small.

20. *Cable System Operators (Rate Regulation Standard)*. The Commission has also developed its own small business size standards for the purpose of cable rate regulation. Under the Commission's rules, a "small cable

company" is one serving 400,000 or fewer subscribers nationwide. As of 2006, 7,916 cable operators qualify as small cable companies under this standard. In addition, under the Commission's rules, a "small system" is a cable system serving 15,000 or fewer subscribers. Industry data indicate that 6,139 systems have under 10,000 subscribers, and an additional 379 systems have 10,000–19,999 subscribers. Thus, under this standard, most cable systems are small.

21. *Cable System Operators (Telecom Act Standard)*. The Communications Act of 1934, as amended, also contains a size standard for small cable system operators, which is "a cable operator that, directly or through an affiliate, serves in the aggregate fewer than 1 percent of all subscribers in the United States and is not affiliated with any entity or entities whose gross annual revenues in the aggregate exceed \$250,000,000." There are approximately 65.4 million cable subscribers in the United States today. Accordingly, an operator serving fewer than 654,000 subscribers shall be deemed a small operator, if its annual revenues, when combined with the total annual revenues of all its affiliates, do not exceed \$250 million in the aggregate. Based on available data, we find that the number of cable operators serving 654,000 subscribers or less totals approximately 7,916. We note that the Commission neither requests nor collects information on whether cable system operators are affiliated with entities whose gross annual revenues exceed \$250 million. Although it seems certain that some of these cable system operators are affiliated with entities whose gross annual revenues exceed \$250,000,000, we are unable at this time to estimate with greater precision the number of cable system operators that would qualify as small cable operators under the definition in the Communications Act.

22. *Direct Broadcast Satellite ("DBS") Service*. DBS service is a nationally distributed subscription service that delivers video and audio programming via satellite to a small parabolic "dish" antenna at the subscriber's location. Because DBS provides subscription services, DBS falls within the SBA-recognized definition of Cable and Other Program Distribution. This definition provides that a small entity is one with \$13.5 million or less in annual receipts. Currently, three operators provide DBS service, which requires a great investment of capital for operation: DIRECTV, EchoStar (marketed as the DISH Network), and Dominion Video Satellite, Inc. ("Dominion") (marketed

as Sky Angel). All three currently offer subscription services. Two of these three DBS operators, DIRECTV and EchoStar Communications Corporation ("EchoStar"), report annual revenues that are in excess of the threshold for a small business. The third DBS operator, Dominion's Sky Angel service, serves fewer than one million subscribers and provides 20 family and religion-oriented channels. Dominion does not report its annual revenues. The Commission does not know of any source which provides this information and, thus, we have no way of confirming whether Dominion qualifies as a small business. Because DBS service requires significant capital, we believe it is unlikely that a small entity as defined by the SBA would have the financial wherewithal to become a DBS licensee. Nevertheless, given the absence of specific data on this point, we recognize the possibility that there are entrants in this field that may not yet have generated \$13.5 million in annual receipts, and therefore may be categorized as a small business, if independently owned and operated.

23. *Private Cable Operators (PCOs) also known as Satellite Master Antenna Television (SMATV) Systems.* PCOs, also known as SMATV systems or private communication operators, are video distribution facilities that use closed transmission paths without using any public right-of-way. PCOs acquire video programming and distribute it via terrestrial wiring in urban and suburban multiple dwelling units such as apartments and condominiums, and commercial multiple tenant units such as hotels and office buildings. The SBA definition of small entities for Cable and Other Program Distribution Services includes PCOs and, thus, small entities are defined as all such companies generating \$13.5 million or less in annual receipts. Currently, there are approximately 150 members in the Independent Multi-Family Communications Council (IMCC), the trade association that represents PCOs. Individual PCOs often serve approximately 3,000–4,000 subscribers, but the larger operations serve as many as 15,000–55,000 subscribers. In total, PCOs currently serve approximately one million subscribers. Because these operators are not rate regulated, they are not required to file financial data with the Commission. Furthermore, we are not aware of any privately published financial information regarding these operators. Based on the estimated number of operators and the estimated number of units served by the largest ten PCOs, we believe that a substantial

number of PCOs may qualify as small entities.

24. *Home Satellite Dish ("HSD") Service.* Because HSD provides subscription services, HSD falls within the SBA-recognized definition of Cable and Other Program Distribution, which includes all such companies generating \$13.5 million or less in revenue annually. HSD or the large dish segment of the satellite industry is the original satellite-to-home service offered to consumers, and involves the home reception of signals transmitted by satellites operating generally in the C-band frequency. Unlike DBS, which uses small dishes, HSD antennas are between four and eight feet in diameter and can receive a wide range of unscrambled (free) programming and scrambled programming purchased from program packagers that are licensed to facilitate subscribers' receipt of video programming. There are approximately 30 satellites operating in the C-band, which carry over 500 channels of programming combined; approximately 350 channels are available free of charge and 150 are scrambled and require a subscription. HSD is difficult to quantify in terms of annual revenue. HSD owners have access to program channels placed on C-band satellites by programmers for receipt and distribution by MVPDs. Commission data shows that, between June 2004 and June 2005, HSD subscribership fell from 335,766 subscribers to 206,358 subscribers, a decline of more than 38 percent. The Commission has no information regarding the annual revenue of the four C-Band distributors.

25. *Broadband Radio Service and Educational Broadband Service.* Broadband Radio Service comprises Multichannel Multipoint Distribution Service (MMDS) systems and Multipoint Distribution Service (MDS). MMDS systems, often referred to as "wireless cable," transmit video programming to subscribers using the microwave frequencies of MDS and Educational Broadband Service (EBS) (formerly known as Instructional Television Fixed Service (ITFS)). We estimate that the number of wireless cable subscribers is approximately 100,000, as of March 2005. The SBA definition of small entities for Cable and Other Program Distribution, which includes such companies generating \$13.5 million in annual receipts, appears applicable to MDS and ITFS.

26. The Commission has also defined small MDS (now BRS) entities in the context of Commission license auctions. For purposes of the 1996 MDS auction, the Commission defined a small business as an entity that had annual

average gross revenues of less than \$40 million in the previous three calendar years. This definition of a small entity in the context of MDS auctions has been approved by the SBA. In the MDS auction, 67 bidders won 493 licenses. Of the 67 auction winners, 61 claimed status as a small business. At this time, the Commission estimates that of the 61 small business MDS auction winners, 48 remain small business licensees. In addition to the 48 small businesses that hold BTA authorizations, there are approximately 392 incumbent MDS licensees that have gross revenues that are not more than \$40 million and are thus considered small entities. MDS licensees and wireless cable operators that did not receive their licenses as a result of the MDS auction fall under the SBA small business size standard for Cable and Other Program Distribution, which includes all such entities that do not generate revenue in excess of \$13.5 million annually. Information available to us indicates that there are approximately 850 of these licensees and operators that do not generate revenue in excess of \$13.5 million annually. Therefore, we estimate that there are approximately 850 small entity MDS (or BRS) providers, as defined by the SBA and the Commission's auction rules.

27. Educational institutions are included in this analysis as small entities; however, the Commission has not created a specific small business size standard for ITFS (now EBS). We estimate that there are currently 2,032 ITFS (or EBS) licensees, and all but 100 of the licenses are held by educational institutions. Thus, we estimate that at least 1,932 ITFS licensees are small entities.

28. *Local Multipoint Distribution Service.* Local Multipoint Distribution Service (LMDS) is a fixed broadband point-to-multipoint microwave service that provides for two-way video telecommunications. The SBA definition of small entities for Cable and Other Program Distribution, which includes such companies generating \$13.5 million in annual receipts, appears applicable to LMDS. The Commission has also defined small LMDS entities in the context of Commission license auctions. In the 1998 and 1999 LMDS auctions, the Commission defined a small business as an entity that had annual average gross revenues of less than \$40 million in the previous three calendar years. Moreover, the Commission added an additional classification for a "very small business," which was defined as an entity that had annual average gross revenues of less than \$15 million in the

previous three calendar years. These definitions of "small business" and "very small business" in the context of the LMDS auctions have been approved by the SBA. In the first LMDS auction, 104 bidders won 864 licenses. Of the 104 auction winners, 93 claimed status as small or very small businesses. In the LMDS re-auction, 40 bidders won 161 licenses. Based on this information, we believe that the number of small LMDS licenses will include the 93 winning bidders in the first auction and the 40 winning bidders in the re-auction, for a total of 133 small entity LMDS providers as defined by the SBA and the Commission's auction rules.

29. *Open Video Systems ("OVS")*. The OVS framework provides opportunities for the distribution of video programming other than through cable systems. Because OVS operators provide subscription services, OVS falls within the SBA-recognized definition of Cable and Other Program Distribution Services, which provides that a small entity is one with \$ 13.5 million or less in annual receipts. The Commission has approved approximately 120 OVS certifications with some OVS operators now providing service. Broadband service providers (BSPs) are currently the only significant holders of OVS certifications or local OVS franchises, even though OVS is one of four statutorily-recognized options for local exchange carriers (LECs) to offer video programming services. As of June 2005, BSPs served approximately 1.4 million subscribers, representing 1.49 percent of all MVPD households. Among BSPs, however, those operating under the OVS framework are in the minority. As of June 2005, RCN Corporation is the largest BSP and 14th largest MVPD, serving approximately 371,000 subscribers. RCN received approval to operate OVS systems in New York City, Boston, Washington, D.C. and other areas. The Commission does not have financial information regarding the entities authorized to provide OVS, some of which may not yet be operational. We thus believe that at least some of the OVS operators may qualify as small entities.

30. *Cable and Other Subscription Programming*. The Census Bureau defines this category as follows: "This industry comprises establishments primarily engaged in operating studios and facilities for the broadcasting of programs on a subscription or fee basis \* \*. These establishments produce programming in their own facilities or acquire programming from external sources. The programming material is usually delivered to a third party, such as cable systems or direct-to-home

satellite systems, for transmission to viewers." The SBA has developed a small business size standard for firms within this category, which is all firms with \$13.5 million or less in annual receipts. According to Census Bureau data for 2002, there were 270 firms in this category that operated for the entire year. Of this total, 217 firms had annual receipts of under \$10 million and 13 firms had annual receipts of \$10 million to \$24,999,999. Thus, under this category and associated small business size standard, the majority of firms can be considered small.

31. *Motion Picture and Video Production*. The Census Bureau defines this category as follows: "This industry comprises establishments primarily engaged in producing, or producing and distributing motion pictures, videos, television programs, or television commercials." The SBA has developed a small business size standard for firms within this category, which is all firms with \$27 million or less in annual receipts. According to Census Bureau data for 2002, there were 7,772 firms in this category that operated for the entire year. Of this total, 7,685 firms had annual receipts of under \$24,999,999 and 45 firms had annual receipts of between \$25,000,000 and \$49,999,999. Thus, under this category and associated small business size standard, the majority of firms can be considered small. Each of these NAICS categories is very broad and includes firms that may be engaged in various industries, including cable programming. Specific figures are not available regarding how many of these firms exclusively produce and/or distribute programming for cable television or how many are independently owned and operated.

32. *Motion Picture and Video Distribution*. The Census Bureau defines this category as follows: "This industry comprises establishments primarily engaged in acquiring distribution rights and distributing film and video productions to motion picture theaters, television networks and stations, and exhibitors." The SBA has developed a small business size standard for firms within this category, which is all firms with \$27 million or less in annual receipts. According to Census Bureau data for 2002, there were 377 firms in this category that operated for the entire year. Of this total, 365 firms had annual receipts of under \$24,999,999 and 7 firms had annual receipts of between \$25,000,000 and \$49,999,999. Thus, under this category and associated small business size standard, the majority of firms can be considered small. Each of these NAICS categories is very broad and includes firms that may be engaged

in various industries, including cable programming. Specific figures are not available regarding how many of these firms exclusively produce and/or distribute programming for cable television or how many are independently owned and operated.

33. *Small Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers*. We have included small incumbent local exchange carriers in this present RFA analysis. A "small business" under the RFA is one that, inter alia, meets the pertinent small business size standard (e.g., a telephone communications business having 1,500 or fewer employees), and "is not dominant in its field of operation." The SBA's Office of Advocacy contends that, for RFA purposes, small incumbent local exchange carriers are not dominant in their field of operation because any such dominance is not "national" in scope. We have therefore included small incumbent local exchange carriers in this RFA, although we emphasize that this RFA action has no effect on Commission analyses and determinations in other, non-RFA contexts.

34. *Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers ("LECs")*. Neither the Commission nor the SBA has developed a small business size standard specifically for incumbent local exchange services. The appropriate size standard under SBA rules is for the category Wired Telecommunications Carriers. Under that size standard, such a business is small if it has 1,500 or fewer employees. According to Commission data, 1,307 carriers have reported that they are engaged in the provision of incumbent local exchange services. Of these 1,307 carriers, an estimated 1,019 have 1,500 or fewer employees and 288 have more than 1,500 employees. Consequently, the Commission estimates that most providers of incumbent local exchange service are small businesses.

35. *Competitive Local Exchange Carriers, Competitive Access Providers (CAPs), Shared-Tenant Service Providers,* and *Other Local Service Providers*. Neither the Commission nor the SBA has developed a small business size standard specifically for these service providers. The appropriate size standard under SBA rules is for the category Wired Telecommunications Carriers. Under that size standard, such a business is small if it has 1,500 or fewer employees. According to Commission data, 859 carriers have reported that they are engaged in the provision of either competitive access provider services or competitive local exchange carrier services. Of these 859 carriers, an estimated 741 have 1,500 or

fewer employees and 118 have more than 1,500 employees. In addition, 16 carriers have reported that they are "Shared-Tenant Service Providers," and all 16 are estimated to have 1,500 or fewer employees. In addition, 44 carriers have reported that they are "Other Local Service Providers." Of the 44, an estimated 43 have 1,500 or fewer employees and one has more than 1,500 employees. Consequently, the Commission estimates that most providers of competitive local exchange service, competitive access providers, "Shared-Tenant Service Providers," and "Other Local Service Providers" are small entities.

36. *Electric Power Generation, Transmission and Distribution.* The Census Bureau defines this category as follows: "This industry group comprises establishments primarily engaged in generating, transmitting, and/or distributing electric power. Establishments in this industry group may perform one or more of the following activities: (1) Operate generation facilities that produce electric energy; (2) operate transmission systems that convey the electricity from the generation facility to the distribution system; and (3) operate distribution systems that convey electric power received from the generation facility or the transmission system to the final consumer." The SBA has developed a small business size standard for firms in this category: "A firm is small if, including its affiliates, it is primarily engaged in the generation, transmission, and/or distribution of electric energy for sale and its total electric output for the preceding fiscal year did not exceed 4 million megawatt hours." According to Census Bureau data for 2002, there were 1,644 firms in this category that operated for the entire year. Census data do not track electric output and we have

not determined how many of these firms fit the SBA size standard for small, with no more than 4 million megawatt hours of electric output. Consequently, we estimate that 1,644 or fewer firms may be considered small under the SBA small business size standard.

#### D. Description of Proposed Reporting, Recordkeeping and Other Compliance Requirements

37. The rules ultimately adopted as a result of this FNPRM may contain new or modified information collections. We anticipate that none of the changes would result in an increase to the reporting and recordkeeping requirements of small entities. We invite small entities to comment in response to the FNPRM.

#### E. Steps Taken To Minimize Significant Impact on Small Entities and Significant Alternatives Considered

38. The RFA requires an agency to describe any significant alternatives that it has considered in proposing regulatory approaches, which may include the following four alternatives (among others): (1) The establishment of differing compliance or reporting requirements or timetables that take into account the resources available to small entities; (2) the clarification, consolidation, or simplification of compliance or reporting requirements under the rule for small entities; (3) the use of performance, rather than design, standards; and (4) an exemption from coverage of the rule, or any part thereof, for small entities.

39. In response to the FNPRM, the Commission may choose to continue to apply its current leased access rates to programmers that predominantly transmit sales presentations or program length commercials; it may choose to apply the modified rate formula and the maximum allowable leased access rate

of \$0.10 per subscriber per month to these programmers; or it may adopt an alternative approach. We invite comment on the options the Commission is considering, or alternatives thereto as referenced above, and on any other alternatives commenters may wish to propose for the purpose of minimizing any significant economic impact on smaller entities.

#### F. Federal Rules Which Duplicate, Overlap, or Conflict With the Commission's Proposals

40. None.

#### IV. Additional Information

41. For additional information on this proceeding, contact Steven Broeckaert, [Steven.Broeckaert@fcc.gov](mailto:Steven.Broeckaert@fcc.gov); or Katie Costello, [Katie.Costello@fcc.gov](mailto:Katie.Costello@fcc.gov); of the Media Bureau, Policy Division, (202) 418-2120.

#### V. Ordering Clauses

42. Accordingly, *it is ordered*, pursuant to the authority found in sections 4(i), 303(r), and 628 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 154(i), 303(r), and 532, this *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking Is Adopted*.

43. *It is further ordered* that the Commission's Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Reference Information Center, shall send a copy of this *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, including the Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis, to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration.

Federal Communications Commission.

**Marlene H. Dortch,**  
*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 08-871 Filed 2-27-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712-01-P