



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

[OMB 3060-1013; FR ID 207046]

Information Collection Being Reviewed by the Federal Communications Commission under Delegated Authority

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, and as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collections. Comments are requested concerning: whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information shall have practical utility; the accuracy of the Commission's burden estimate; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and ways to further reduce the information collection burden on small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees. The FCC may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. No person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information subject to the PRA that does not display a valid OMB control number.

DATES: Written PRA comments should be submitted on or before **[INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**. If you anticipate that you will be submitting comments but find it difficult to do so within the period of time allowed by this notice, you should advise the contact listed below as soon as possible.

ADDRESSES: Direct all PRA comments to Cathy Williams, FCC, via email to PRA@fcc.gov and to Cathy.Williams@fcc.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For additional information about the information collection, contact Cathy Williams at (202) 418-2918.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

OMB Control Number: 3060-1013.

Title: Mitigation of Orbital Debris.

Form Number: N/A.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Respondents: Business or other for-profit entities, not-for-profit institutions.

Number of Respondents: 46 respondents; 46 responses

Estimated Time per Response: 8 hours.

Frequency of Response: On occasion reporting requirement.

Obligation to Respond: Required to obtain or retain benefits. The Commission has statutory authority for the information collection requirements under 47 U.S.C. 151, 154(i), 301, 303, 307, 308, 309, and 310.

Total Annual Burden: 368 hours.

Annual Cost Burden: \$88,550,

Needs and Uses: The Federal Communications Commission requests that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approve an extension of a currently approved collection titled “Mitigation of Orbital Debris” under OMB Control No. 3060-1013. In the past four years, the Commission adopted three orders related to orbital debris mitigation: (1) the Commission’s Report and Order, FCC 20-54, IB Docket No. 18-313, titled “Mitigation of Orbital Debris in the New Space Age” (*Orbital Debris Report and Order*), and released on April 24, 2020; (2) the Commission’s Second Report and Order, FCC 22-74, IB Docket No. 18-313, titled “Mitigation of Orbital Debris in the New Space Age” (*Orbital Debris Second Report and Order*); and (3) the Commission’s Order on Reconsideration, FCC 24-6, IB Docket No. 18-313, titled “Mitigation of Orbital Debris in the New Space Age” (*Orbital Debris Reconsideration Order*).

In the *Orbital Debris Report and Order*, the Commission updated its rules related to orbital debris mitigation, including application requirements. The rules are designed to ensure that (1) the Commission’s actions concerning radio communications, including licensing U.S. spacecraft and granting access to the U.S. market for non-U.S. spacecraft, mitigate the growth of orbital debris, while at the same time not creating undue regulatory obstacles to new satellite ventures; and (2) Commission decisions are consistent with the public interest in space remaining viable for future satellites and systems and the many

services that those systems provide to the public. The rules adopted by the *Orbital Debris Report and Order* also provided additional detail to applicants on what information is expected under the Commission's rules, which can help to increase certainty in the application filing process. The information collection serves the public interest by ensuring that the Commission and public have necessary information about satellite applicants' plans for mitigation of orbital debris.

Specifically, the *Orbital Debris Report and Order* contained new or modified information collection requirements listed below, applicable to applicants seeking experimental licenses for satellite operations under part 5 of the Commission's rules, as well as to license grantees under part 97 submitting notifications to the Commission prior to launch of a satellite amateur station:¹

- (1) Existing disclosure requirements have been revised to include specific metrics in several areas, including: probability that the space stations will become a source of debris by collision with small debris and meteoroids that would cause loss of control and prevent disposal; probability of collision between any non-geostationary orbit (NGSO) space station and other large objects; and casualty risk associated with any individual spacecraft that will be disposed by atmospheric re-entry.
- (2) Where relevant, the disclosures must also include the following: use of separate deployment devices, distinct from the space station launch vehicle, that may become a source of orbital debris; potential release of liquids that will persist in droplet form; and any planned proximity operations and debris generation that will or may result from the proposed operations, including any planned release of debris, the risk of accidental explosions, the risk of accidental collision, and measures taken to mitigate those risks.
- (3) The existing disclosure requirement to analyze potential collision risk associated with space station(s) orbits has been modified to specify that the disclosure identify characteristics of the space station(s)' orbits that may present a collision risk, including any planned and/or operational space stations in those orbits, and indicate what steps, if any, have been taken to coordinate with the other spacecraft or system, or what other measures the operator plans to use to avoid collision.

¹ The *Orbital Debris Report and Order* also added new and modified information collection requirements for satellite applicants under part 25 of the Commission's rules, which the Commission is in the process of seeking OMB approval separately.

(4) For NGSO space stations that will transit through the orbits used by any inhabitable spacecraft, including the International Space Station, the disclosure must include the design and operational strategies, if any, that will be used to minimize the risk of collision and avoid posing any operational constraints to the inhabitable spacecraft.

(5) The disclosure must include a certification that upon receipt of a space situational awareness conjunction warning, the operator will review and take all possible steps to assess the collision risk, and will mitigate the collision risk if necessary. As appropriate, steps to assess and mitigate the collision risk should include, but are not limited to: contacting the operator of any active spacecraft involved in such a warning; sharing ephemeris data and other appropriate operational information with any such operator; and modifying space station attitude and/or operations.

(6) For NGSO space stations the disclosure must describe the extent of satellite maneuverability.

(7) The disclosure must address trackability of the space station(s). For NGSO space stations, the disclosure must also include: (a) how the operator plans to identify the space station(s) following deployment and whether the space station tracking will be active or passive; (b) whether, prior to deployment the space station(s) will be registered with the 18th Space Control Squadron or successor entity; and (c) the extent to which the space station operator plans to share information regarding initial deployment, ephemeris, and/or planned maneuvers with the 18th Space Control Squadron or successor entity, other entities that engage in space situational awareness or space traffic management functions, and/or other operators.

(8) For NGSO space stations, additional disclosures must be provided regarding spacecraft disposal, including, for some space stations, a demonstration that the probability of success of the chosen disposal method is 0.9 or greater for any individual space station, and for multi-satellite systems, a demonstration including additional information regarding efforts to achieve a higher probability of success.

The information collection requirements are contained in 47 CFR 5.64 and 47 CFR 97.207.

In the 2022 *Orbital Debris Second Report and Order*, the Commission required all space stations ending their mission in, or passing through, the low earth orbit (LEO) region, and planning disposal through uncontrolled atmospheric re-entry following the completion of the mission, to complete disposal as soon

as practicable, and no later than five years after the end of the mission. The *Orbital Debris Second Report and Order* did not modify information collected under 47 CFR 5.64 and 47 CFR 97.207.

In the 2024 *Orbital Debris Reconsideration Order*, the Commission upheld the current regulatory environment for orbital debris mitigation, and provided additional clarity and guidance for satellite operators while reinforcing the Commission's commitment to space safety. The *Orbital Debris Reconsideration Order* did not modify information collected under 47 CFR 5.64 and 47 CFR 97.207.

Federal Communications Commission.

Marlene Dortch,

Secretary,

Office of the Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2024-05000 Filed: 3/7/2024 8:45 am; Publication Date: 3/8/2024]