



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

[OMB 3060-XXXX; FR ID 221498]

Information Collection Being Submitted for Review and Approval to Office of Management and Budget

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or the Commission) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collection. Pursuant to the Small Business Paperwork Relief Act of 2002, the FCC seeks specific comment on how it might “further reduce the information collection burden for small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees.”

DATES: Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be submitted on or before **[INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be sent to www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain. Find this particular information collection by selecting "Currently under 30-day Review - Open for Public Comments" or by using the search function. Your comment must be submitted into www.reginfo.gov per the above instructions for it to be considered. In addition to submitting in www.reginfo.gov also send a copy of your comment on the proposed information collection to Cathy Williams, FCC, via email to PRA@fcc.gov and to Cathy.Williams@fcc.gov. Include in the comments the OMB control number as shown in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For additional information or copies of the information collection, contact Cathy Williams at (202) 418-2918. To view a copy of this information collection request (ICR) submitted to OMB: (1) go to the web page <http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain>, (2) look for the section of the Web page called

"Currently Under Review," (3) click on the downward-pointing arrow in the "Select Agency" box below the "Currently Under Review" heading, (4) select "Federal Communications Commission" from the list of agencies presented in the "Select Agency" box, (5) click the "Submit" button to the right of the "Select Agency" box, (6) when the list of FCC ICRs currently under review appears, look for the Title of this ICR and then click on the ICR Reference Number. A copy of the FCC submission to OMB will be displayed.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Commission 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.

As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520), the FCC invited the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collection.

Comments are requested concerning: (a) 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; (b) the accuracy of the Commission's burden estimates; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; and (d) 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. Pursuant to the Small Business Paperwork Relief Act of 2002, Public Law 107-198, see 44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(4), the FCC seeks specific comment on how it might "further reduce the information collection burden for small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees."

OMB Control Number: 3060-XXXX.

Title: Part 25 Rules Addressing the Mitigation of Orbital Debris.

Form Number: N/A.

Type of Review: New information collection.

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

Number of Respondents and Responses: 28 respondents and 28 responses.

Estimated Time per Response: 4-15 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: 341 hours.

Annual Cost Burden: \$53,900.

Needs and Uses: The Federal Communications Commission requests that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approve a new information collection titled “Part 25 Rules Addressing the Mitigation of Orbital Debris” under OMB Control No. 3060-XXXX, as a result of three Commission rulemaking decisions, as discussed below.

On April 24, 2020, the Commission released a 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). In Orbital Debris Report and Order, the Commission updated its rules related to orbital debris mitigation, including application requirements. The new rules are designed to ensure that 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. The action will help to ensure that 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 rule revisions also provide 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. While this information collection represents an overall increase in the burden hours, 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 Orbital Debris Report and Order contains the new or modified information collection requirements listed below.

(A) Non-streamlined space station applicants. The following are new or modified information collection requirements contained in Orbital Debris Report and Order and applicable to non-streamlined space station applicants submitting orbital debris mitigation plans under part 25 of the Commission's rules:

(1) Existing application 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, applicants must disclose 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 application 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.

(4) Applicants for NGSO space stations that will transit through the orbits used by any inhabitable spacecraft, including the International Space Station, must disclose as part of the application 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 application 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) Applicants for NGSO space stations must describe the extent of satellite maneuverability.

(7) Applicants must address trackability of the space station(s). NGSO space station applicants must also disclose: (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) NGSO space station applicants must provide additional disclosures regarding spacecraft disposal, including, for some applicants, 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.

(B) Space station applicants qualifying for small satellite streamlined processing. The following are new or modified information collection requirements contained in Orbital Debris Report and Order and applicable to those space station applicants qualifying for small satellite streamlined processing under part 25 of the Commission's rules:

(1) Applicants must certify that the probability that any individual space station will become a source of debris by collision with small debris or meteoroids that would cause loss of control and prevent disposal is 0.01 (1 in 100) or less.

(2) Applicants must certify that upon receipt of a space situational awareness conjunction warning, the licensee or 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.

(3) If at any time during the space station(s)' mission or de-orbit phase the space station(s) will transit through the orbits used by any inhabitable spacecraft, including the International Space Station, applicants must provide a description of 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 shall be furnished at the time of application.

(4) Applicants must provide a statement identifying 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 indicating what steps, if any, have been taken to coordinate with the other spacecraft or system, or what other measures the licensee plans to use to avoid collision. This requirement also applies to applicants for streamlined small spacecraft authorizations.

(5) Applicants must provide a statement disclosing how the licensee or operator plans to identify the space station(s) following deployment and whether space station tracking will be active or passive; whether the space station(s) will be registered with the 18th Space Control Squadron or successor entity prior to deployment; and the extent to which the space station licensee or 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.

(6) If the applicant's space station(s) will undertake any planned proximity operations, the applicant must provide a statement disclosing those planned operations, and addressing 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.

(7) Applicants must provide a demonstration that the probability of success of disposal is 0.9 or greater for any individual space station. Space stations deployed to orbits in which atmospheric

drag will, in the event of a space station failure, limit the lifetime of the space station to less than 25 years do not need to provide this additional demonstration.

(C) Geostationary orbit (GSO) space station applicants. The following new or modified information collection requirements contained in Orbital Debris Report and Order are applicable to applicants requesting a modification of an existing licensee for a GSO space station to extend the space station license term under part 25 of the Commission's rules: GSO space station licensees seeking a license term extension through a license modification application must provide a statement that includes the requested duration of the license extension; the estimated total remaining space station lifetime; a description of any single points of failure or other malfunctions, defects, or anomalies during the space station operation that could affect its ability to conduct end-of-life procedures as planned, and an assessment of the associated risk; a certification that remaining fuel reserves are adequate to complete de-orbit as planned; and a certification that telemetry, tracking, and command links are fully functional.

On September 30, 2022, the Commission released a 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). In 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.

On January 26, 2024, the Commission released an 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 Orbital Debris Reconsideration Order, the Commission dismissed three petitions for reconsideration, including a petition for reconsideration filed by The Boeing Company, Echostar Satellite Services, LLC, Hughes Network Services, LLC, Planet Labs Inc., Spire Global and Telesat Canada. The Orbital Debris Reconsideration Order 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.

These collections are used by the Commission's staff in carrying out its statutory duties to regulate satellite communications in the public interest, as generally provided under 47 U.S.C. 151, 154(i), 301, 303, 307, 308, 309, and 310. This collection is also used by staff in carrying out United States treaty obligations under the World Trade Organization (WTO) Basic Telecom Agreement. The information collected is used for the practical and necessary purposes of assessing the legal, technical, and other qualifications of applicants; determining compliance by applicants, licensees, and other grantees with Commission rules and the terms and conditions of their grants; and concluding whether, and under what conditions, grant of an authorization will serve the public interest, convenience, and necessity.

As technology advances and new spectrum is allocated for satellite use, applicants for satellite service will continue to submit the information required in 47 CFR part 25. Without such information, the Commission could not determine whether to permit respondents to provide telecommunications services in the United States. Therefore, the Commission would be unable to fulfill its statutory responsibilities in accordance with the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, and the obligations imposed on parties to the WTO Basic Telecom Agreement.

Federal Communications Commission.

Marlene Dortch,
Secretary,
Office of the Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2024-11442 Filed: 5/23/2024 8:45 am; Publication Date: 5/24/2024]