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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

47 CFR Part 27

[GN Docket Nos. 18–122 and 25–59; FCC 26–46; FR ID 374445]

Upper C-Band (3.98–4.2 GHz); Expanding Flexible Use of the 3.7 to 4.2 GHz Band

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Final rule; announcement of effective date.

SUMMARY: The Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) announces that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved the information collection requirements under OMB Control Number 3060–1272, as adopted in the Commission's Report and Order, Order of Proposed Modification, and Order on Reconsideration, FCC 26–46.

DATES: This rule is effective [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Andrew McArdell of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, at Andrew.McArdell@fcc.gov or 202-418-1576.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This document announces that OMB approved the information collection requirements in 47 CFR 27.1412(e) on September 21, 2026. The Commission publishes this document as an announcement of the effective date for the amended rule. This document sets the addition of paragraph (e) to § 27.1412, which was included in amendatory instruction 26 of the final rule published at 91 FR 48700 (July 31, 2026), out as a separate instruction so the amendment can be incorporated into the CFR. When the FCC publishes a document announcing OMB approval of the information collection requirements in 47 CFR 27.1412(b), (c), and (g), it will include a correction to amendatory instruction 26 to remove the addition of paragraph (e).

Synopsis

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3507), the Commission is notifying the public that it received final OMB approval on September 21, 2026, for the information collection requirements contained in 47 CFR 27.1412(e). Under 5 CFR part 1320, an agency may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless it displays a current, valid OMB Control Number.

No person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act that does not display a current, valid OMB Control Number. The OMB Control Number for this information collection is 3060-1272. The foregoing notice is required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13, October 1, 1995, and 44 U.S.C. 3507.

The total annual reporting burdens and costs for the respondents are as follows:

OMB Control Number: 3060-1272.

Title: 3.7 GHz Band Space Station Operator Transition Plans; 3.7 GHz Band Incumbent Earth Station Lump Sum Payment Elections.

OMB Approval Date: September 21, 2026.

OMB Expiration Date: March 31, 2027.

Form Number: N/A.

Respondents: Business or other for-profit entities.

Estimated Number of Respondents and Responses: 3,003 respondents and 3,003 responses.

Estimated Hours per Response: 2,720 hours per eligible space station transition plan; 32 hours per incumbent earth station lump sum payment election.

Frequency of Response: One-time reporting requirement.

Obligation to Respond: Required to obtain or retain benefits. Statutory authority for this information collection is contained in sections 1, 2, 4(i), 4(j), 5(c), 201, 302, 303, 304, 307(e), and 309 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 151, 152, 154(i), 154(j), 155(c), 201, 302, 303, 304, 307(e), and 309.

Total Annual Burden: 104,160 hours.

Total Annual Cost: $540,000.

Needs and Uses:

On July 22, 2026, in furtherance of the goal of releasing more mid-band spectrum into the market to support and enable next-generation wireless networks, the Federal Communications Commission (Commission) adopted a Report and Order, FCC 26-46, 91 FR 48700 (*Upper C-band R&O*), in which it reformed the use of the 4.0–4.2 GHz portion of the C-Band. The 4.0–4.2 GHz band currently is allocated in the United States exclusively for non-Federal use on a primary basis for Fixed Satellite Service (FSS) and Fixed Service.

Domestically, space station operators use the 4.0–4.2 GHz band to provide downlink signals of various bandwidths to licensed transmit-receive, registered receive-only, and unregistered receive-only earth stations throughout the United States. The *Upper C-band R&O* calls for the relocation of existing FSS operations in the C-band, making 160 megahertz (3.98–4.14 GHz) available for flexible-use terrestrial wireless service throughout the contiguous United States through a Commission-administered public auction of licenses that must be completed by July 4, 2027, pursuant to a statutory mandate in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, Pub. L. No. 119-21, section 40002(b)(2).

The Commission adopted a robust transition schedule to achieve an expeditious clearing and relocation of FSS operations and ensure that a significant amount of spectrum is made available quickly for next-generation wireless deployments, while also ensuring effective accommodation of relocated incumbent users. Pursuant to the *Upper C-band R&O*, all incumbent FSS operations in the contiguous United States must clear the 4.0–4.16 GHz portion of the C-band by December 30, 2030, or June 30, 2031, to ensure a timely transition process. The December 30 deadline applies to the top 75 Partial Economic Areas (PEAs) and aligns with the Federal Aviation Administration's first deadline to retrofit aircraft radio altimeters. The June 30 deadline applies to all other areas.

The Commission concluded in the *Upper C-band R&O* that, before the public auction of new licenses commences, it is appropriate for potential bidders to: (1) know when they will get access to the spectrum in the 3.98–4.14 GHz portion of the C-band that is currently occupied by incumbent FSS space station operators and earth stations; and (2) have an estimate of how much they may be required to pay for incumbent relocation costs and incentive payments should they become Upper C-band wireless licensees. New Upper C-band wireless licensees are required to pay for the reasonable and necessary relocation costs of incumbent space station and incumbent earth station operators that are required to clear the 4.0–4.16 GHz portion of the C-band.

To facilitate the provision of this information to potential auction bidders, the Commission is seeking approval for a modified information collection to permit it to collect the following information from incumbents as adopted in the *Upper C-band R&O*:

Transition Plans

The *Upper C-band R&O* requires each eligible space station operator to submit to the Commission by November 5, 2026, and make available for public review, a detailed transition plan describing the necessary steps and estimated costs for the eligible space station operator to clear its existing operations in the 4.0–4.16 GHz portion of the C-band in the contiguous United States and its individual timeline for doing so. An eligible space station operator may make changes to its transition plan to update certain information or cure any defects that may be identified by the Commission or by relevant stakeholders during a public comment window.

This information collection will serve as the starting point for planning and managing the process of efficiently and expeditiously clearing the 4.0–4.16 GHz portion of the C-band, so that this spectrum can be auctioned for flexible-use service licenses.

List of Subjects in 47 CFR Part 27

Communications common carriers, Communications requirements, Radio, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Telecommunications.

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Commission amends 47 CFR part 27 as follows:

PART 27—MISCELLANEOUS WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

1. The authority citation for part 27 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 47 U.S.C. 154, 301, 302a, 303, 307, 309, 332, 336, 337, 1403, 1404, 1451, and 1452, unless otherwise noted.

2. Amend § 27.1412 by adding paragraph (e) to read as follows:

§ 27.1412 Transition plan.

* * * * *

(e) *Transition Plan*. Eligible space station operators must publicly file with the Commission no later than November 5, 2026, a Transition Plan that describes the actions that must be taken to clear 4000–4160 MHz and to migrate associated earth stations. Eligible space station operators shall have an opportunity to make any necessary updates or resolve any deficiencies in their individual Transition Plans.

(1) The Transition Plan must detail the eligible space station operator's individual timeline and necessary actions for clearing 4000–4160 MHz, including:

(i) All existing space stations with operations that will need to be repacked;

(ii) The number of new satellites, if any, that the space station operator will need to launch to maintain sufficient capacity post-transition, including detailed descriptions of why such new satellites are necessary;

(iii) The specific grooming plan for migrating existing services into new spectrum, including the pre- and post-transition frequencies that each customer will occupy;

(iv) Any necessary technology upgrades or other solutions that the space station operator intends to implement;

(v) The number and location of incumbent earth station antennas currently receiving the eligible space station operator's transmissions that will need to be transitioned;

(vi) An estimate of the number of incumbent earth station antennas that will require retuning, repointing, or other modifications to receive content on new transponder frequencies post-transition; and

(vii) The specific timeline by which the space station operator will implement the actions described in its plan.

(2) To the extent that incumbent earth stations are not accounted for in eligible space station operators' Transition Plans, the Relocation Coordinator may assign responsibility for their transition to an eligible space station operator or ensure that migration steps and timelines are outlined in an individualized Earth Station Transition Plan as needed.

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Federal Communications Commission.

Marlene Dortch,
Secretary, Office of the Secretary.
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