Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of
Comprehensive Review of Licensing and Operating Rules for Satellite Services
IB Docket No. 12-267

REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION

The Satellite Industry Association (“SIA”) hereby requests that the Commission clarify the wording of a new rule promulgated in the above-captioned proceeding¹ that requires applicants for space station licenses to make a specified showing if they will use steerable beams that are not shapeable.

SIA is a U.S.-based trade association providing worldwide representation of the leading satellite operators, service providers, manufacturers, launch services providers, and ground equipment suppliers.² Since its creation nearly two decades ago, SIA has become the unified voice of the U.S. satellite industry on policy, regulatory, and

² SIA Executive Members include: The Boeing Company; The DIRECTV Group; EchoStar Corporation; Harris CapRock Communications; Intelsat S.A.; Iridium Communications Inc.; Kratos Defense & Security Solutions; LightSquared; Lockheed Martin Corporation; Northrop Grumman Corporation; Rockwell Collins Government Systems; SES Americom, Inc.; and SSL. SIA Associate Members include: Artel, LLC; Astrium Services Government, Inc.; ATK Inc.; Cisco; Cobham SATCOM Land Systems; Comtech EF Data Corp.; DigitalGlobe, Inc.; DRS Technologies, Inc.; Encompass Government Solutions; Eutelsat America Corp.; Globecomm Systems, Inc.; Glowlink Communications Technology, Inc.; iDirect Government Technologies; Inmarsat, Inc.; Exelis, Inc.; Marshall Communications Corporation; MTN Government; NewSat America, Inc.; O3b Networks; Orbital Sciences Corporation; Panasonic Avionics Corporation; Raytheon Space and Airborne Systems; Row 44, Inc.; Spacecom, Ltd.; Spacenet Inc.; TeleCommunication Systems, Inc.; Telesat Canada; The SI Organization, Inc.; TrustComm, Inc.; Ultisat, Inc.; ViaSat, Inc., and XTAR, LLC.
legislative issues affecting the satellite business. As the primary organization voicing
the interests of the U.S.-based satellite industry, SIA has a significant interest in the
successful outcome of this proceeding.

The rule in question, Section 25.114(c)(4)(vi)(D), was adopted by the Commission
at the request of SIA.\textsuperscript{3} It states that “For space stations with steerable beams that are not
shapeable, [the applicant must] specify the applicable contours, as defined in paragraph
(A) or (B) above, with a description of the area that the steerable beam(s) is expected to
serve, or provide the contour information described in paragraph (C) above.”\textsuperscript{4}

Upon further reflection, SIA believes it would be more in keeping with the
purpose underlying the new rule if the phrase “expected to serve” were replaced with
the phrase “proposed to cover.” SIA is requesting this clarification because an applicant
seeking to operate satellites that have steerable beams will not necessarily know, when
its application is filed, the areas that the steerable beams are expected to serve. Indeed,
a motivating factor for incorporating a steerable beam on a spacecraft could be this
flexibility. Non-geostationary orbit satellites, for example, can have “sticky” steerable
beams that will be dedicated to serving specific gateways, and the number and location
of the gateways may not be completely known when the application is filed. It would
be clearer, therefore, if the rule asked applicants to identify the area a steerable beam is
\textit{proposed to cover} instead of the area the steerable beam is \textit{expected to serve}. The steerable
beam would then be authorized to be repointed anywhere within the proposed

\textsuperscript{3} Part 25 Review Order at ¶ 99.
\textsuperscript{4} 47 C.F.R. Section 25.114(c)(4)(vi)(D).

coverage area, consistent with current Commission practice with respect to steerable beams. Deployment of earth stations that communicate with the spacecraft’s steerable beam would remain subject to coordination of actual earth station locations.5

SIA appreciates the Commission’s consideration of its proposals in this proceeding. In light of recent discussions, SIA has come to the realization that its originally-proposed language did not capture as precisely as SIA would like the intended scope of the provision. Accordingly, SIA requests the Commission make the clarification herein requested.

Respectfully submitted,

SATELLITE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

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