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ALERT

# NTIA Seeks Comments on the Development of a National Spectrum Strategy

December 21, 2018

On December 20, 2018, the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) issued a Request for Comments (RFC) on the development of a comprehensive, long-term National Spectrum Strategy. Specifically, NTIA is seeking forward-looking recommendations on how to balance and address issues related to 5G technology use, spectrum sharing, global competitiveness, and space-related technologies.

**Background**

The RFC, entitled, *Developing a Sustainable Spectrum Strategy for America's Future*, builds upon recent calls for the development of a National Spectrum Strategy. In October, the President issued a memorandum calling for the development of U.S. spectrum policy that is a "balanced, forward-looking, flexible, and sustainable approach to spectrum management." That memorandum further emphasized that "it is imperative that America be first in fifth-generation (5G) wireless technologies — wireless technologies capable of meeting the high-capacity, low-latency, and high-speed requirements that can unleash innovation broadly across diverse sectors of the economy and the public sector."

As part of the development of such a policy, in November, NTIA issued a memorandum and guidance, asking executive branch agencies to outline and report anticipated spectrum requirement needs over the next 15 years. NTIA defines "future spectrum requirements" as any additional spectrum access required when planned systems become operationally fielded. Final reports are due in April 2019.

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## Practice Areas

Telecom, Media & Technology

**Request for Comments**

Through this RFC, NTIA solicits recommended actions and information to improve its understanding in areas including: "expanding spectrum access, improving spectrum sharing, enhancing spectrum management, utilizing ongoing research and development activities, fostering global competitiveness, protecting U.S. space assets from radio frequency interference, and augmenting the mission capability of Federal entities."

David Redl, NTIA's Administrator and Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information, has stated that, "America is experiencing a new age of spectrum-dependent technological innovation, including fifth-generation wireless networks, a vast Internet of Things, and an expanding commercial space industry . . . As President Trump has made clear, meeting demand for spectrum and unlocking the promise of these technologies requires thoughtful planning and a long-term outlook."

The RFC also notes that a National Spectrum Strategy should complement Space Policy Directive-3 (SPD-3), and NTIA seeks recommendations "to help improve the competitiveness of both our terrestrial and space-related technology industries."

While seeking comment on a full range of issues raised in the RFC, NTIA also asks the following specific questions:

1. In what ways could the predictability of spectrum access for all users be improved?
2. To what extent would the introduction of automation facilitate assessments of spectrum use and expedite the coordination of shared access, especially among Federal and non-Federal spectrum stakeholders?
3. What is the practical extent of applying standards, incentives, and enforcement mechanisms to promote efficient and effective spectrum use?
4. How might investment in research, development, testing, and evaluation improve spectrum-utilization methods, and spectrum-sharing tools and techniques?
5. What are the risks, if any, to the global competitiveness of U.S. industries associated with spectrum management and policy actions?
6. How could a spectrum management paradigm be structured such that it satisfies the needs of commercial interests while preserving the spectrum access necessary to satisfy the mission requirements and operations of Federal entities?
7. What are the likely future needs of spectrum users, both terrestrially and for space-based applications, within the next 15 years? In particular, are present allocations of spectrum sufficient to provide next generation services like Fifth Generation (5G) cellular services and emerging space-based applications? For commenters who assert that existing allocations are insufficient, NTIA is interested in understanding better the amount of spectrum presently available to provide particular services (or similar services) and estimates of the amount of additional spectrum in each frequency band that the commenter believes is needed.

## Deadline

Comments should be submitted via email to spectrum-strategy-comments@ntia.doc.gov by January 22, 2019.