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MRFAC Newsletter
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COORDINATORS CORNER

As a reminder the FCC increased its regulatory fees. New 10 year licenses will now be required to pay $260.00. Modifications to existing licenses will continue to pay the $60.00 filing fee.

Mandatory Narrowbanding

As a reminder to all of our members, the mandatory narrowbanding drop dead date is slowly but surely approaching. That date is January 1, 2013 where UHF and VHF licensees must adhere to 12.5 kilohertz of bandwidth efficiency standard (4800 bits per sec. per 6.25 kHz for data). Applicants may longer submit applications for 25 kHz channels as the January 1, 2011 deadline has come and gone, unless they demonstrate 12.5 kHz efficiency. Incumbent licensees may modify their existing 25 kHz license as long as their service contours remain the same; otherwise, they must meet the new efficiency standards. Applicants may file directly with the FCC if they are converting from wideband to narrowband as long as they are just adding the narrowband emission designator. (i.e. 20K0F3E to 11K2F3E). All other parameter changes to licenses require coordination.

Washington Report

MRFAC has long teamed with the National Association of Manufacturers ("NAM") to protect U.S. manufacturers' wireless interests before the FCC. A recent example of this is the FCC's important proceeding involving potential changes in the agency's rules for RF signal boosters.

Signal boosters provide essential communications coverage for many manufacturers in hard-to-reach areas such as deep basements, tunnels, and "canyons" formed by buildings on a manufacturing premises.

Among the FCC's proposals are ones that look to prohibit booster use in "unconfined," remote areas. In addition, some of the proposals under consideration would ban the use of wideband (so-called "Class B") boosters in manufacturing settings, in favor of channelized ("Class A") boosters.

NAM/MRFAC has opposed both of these proposals, while at the same time supporting carefully-crafted rules to reduce the risk of interference.

Specifically, NAM/MRFAC have noted that the use of boosters to serve remote, "unconfined" areas, such as far corners of railroad marshaling yards located at a manufacturing plant, should be allowed to continue, subject to frequency coordination.

Likewise, NAM/MRFAC has pointed out the important cost-efficiencies which Class B boosters can provide, by relieving manufacturers of the need to purchase a booster for each channel.

The booster rulemaking is a complicated proceeding. NAM/MRFAC will continue to actively monitor the proceeding and will remain vigilant in the protection of their Members' radio spectrum interests.