

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

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| In the Matter of |) | |
| |) | |
| Amendment of Part 74, Subpart D of the Commission's Rules |) | ET Docket 01-75 |
| |) | |
| Petition for Rulemaking of Society of Broadcast Engineers, Inc. |) | RM-11648 |
| |) | |
| Petition for Rulemaking of Engineers for the Integrity of Broadcast Auxiliary Services Spectrum |) | RM-11649 |

**COMMENTS OF THE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS**

Pursuant to Section 1.4(b)(1) of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. § 1.4(b)(1), the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB)¹ hereby comments on the above-captioned Petitions for Rulemaking.² NAB supports the goal of both Petitioners to facilitate the use of digital technologies by Broadcast Auxiliary Services (BAS) Remote Pickup (RPU) stations, and respectfully urges the Commission to promptly initiate a rulemaking proceeding to explore their requests. In addition, NAB asks the Commission, in the interim, to consider SBE's request to waive portions of Section 74.462 of the

¹ NAB is a nonprofit trade association that advocates on behalf of free, local radio and television stations and also broadcast networks before Congress, the Commission and the Courts.

² Petition for Rulemaking, Society of Broadcast Engineers, Inc., RM-11648 (filed Nov. 7, 2011) (SBE Petition); Petition for Rulemaking, Engineers for the Integrity of Broadcast Auxiliary Services Spectrum, RM-11649 (filed Oct. 4, 2011) (EIBASS Petition).

rules, which prohibit the use of certain digital voice and data emissions for RPU in the BAS service.³

As SBE suggested, the conversion of RPU stations from analog to narrowband digital channels should be encouraged by the Commission. However, the current rules governing other BAS systems, including RPU stations, do not allow the use of narrowband digital technologies. Both SBE and EIBASS ask the Commission to harmonize the current channelization plans to allow the operation of narrowband digital channels for RPU stations using existing digital narrowband equipment authorized under Part 90.⁴ NAB agrees. Doing so will provide RPU licensees the flexibility to choose from the wide variety of digital radios that are already available in the market and comply with Part 90, consistent with the Commission's long-standing aim in this proceeding.⁵ In turn, the ability to use off-the-shelf digital equipment will create incentives for RPU licensees to convert to digital systems, thereby increasing spectrum efficiency.

In 2002, the Commission adopted a channelization plan that enabled RPU stations to "stack" narrowband channels where needed to transmit wider bandwidth program material. 47 C.F.R. § 74.402. The plan allows the stacking of 7.5 kHz channels in the 150-160 MHz band and 6.25 kHz channels in the 450 MHz band. However, the Commission-specified center frequencies for channels in these bands

³ Request for Temporary Waiver, Society of Broadcast Engineers, Inc. (filed Nov. 7, 2011).

⁴ SBE Petition at 2-3; EIBASS Petition at 2-4.

⁵ Revisions to Broadcast Auxiliary Service Rules in Part 74 and Conforming Technical Rules for Broadcast Auxiliary Service, Cable Television Relay Service and Fixed Services in Part 74, 78 and 101 of the Commission's Rules, *Report and Order*, 17 FCC Rcd 22979, 23022 (2002) (2002 BAS RPU Order).

make it difficult and spectrally inefficient to operate both digital and analog RPU systems on the existing channel plan. As a result, RPU stations typically must license additional bandwidth leading to less than optimal use of the BAS spectrum. SBE Petition at 4-5; EIBASS Petition at 3-5.

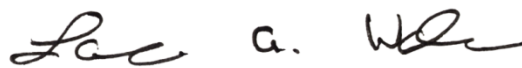
Both Petitioners suggest mechanisms to rectify this problem. EIBASS proposes that broadcasters be allowed to use whatever channel center frequencies are needed in order to stack 6.25 kHz wide channels into whatever bandwidth is needed, and to split 25 kHz wide channels into either 6.25 kHz or 12.5 kHz wide channels as necessary. EIBASS Petition at 12. SBE proposes that broadcasters be allowed to stack channels in 3.125 kHz segments in the frequency ranges already specified in the Commission's rules. SBE Petition at 5. Although either method would be acceptable, NAB may prefer SBE's approach because it appears simpler and more straight-forward to implement. The SBE method would allow the Commission to retain the existing channel frequency centers already specified in the rules, rather than creating a new table of channel frequency centers with varying bandwidths.

Accordingly, NAB supports the Petitions for Rulemaking submitted by SBE and EIBASS, respectfully. Specifically, we urge the Commission to initiate a rulemaking proceeding to consider their requests, and to consider, in the interim, SBE's request to

waive parts of Section 74.462 that prohibit the use of certain digital voice and data emissions for RPU in the BAS service.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lawrence A. Walke".

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Dated: January 20, 2012