

Questions for the Record

Subcommittee on Communications and Technology

Hearing on

“Liftoff: Unleashing Innovation in Satellite Communications Technologies”

February 8, 2023

Mr. Charles Glass, Chief, International Spectrum Policy Division, Office of Spectrum Management, National Telecommunications and Information Administration

The Honorable Russ Fulcher (R-ID)

1. Are there on the ground permitting challenges particular to satellite, particularly with Low- Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite services? If so, can you address those challenges?

RESPONSE: The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) is not in a position to speak authoritatively regarding specific commercial satellite Earth station permitting challenges. However, where spectrum bands are shared between the federal government and commercial satellite interests there are existing coordination procedures that provide a clear process for permitting commercial Earth stations according to the particular bands being utilized.

2. Can you discuss reforms raised by industry to open more spectrum to commercial users, particularly in rural and interior areas of the country, while ensuring national security and public safety needs are being met?

RESPONSE: We very much appreciate the desire of commercial providers to respond to ever increasing consumer demand and to deliver innovative spectrum-based services. This is an exciting time for the satellite industry, and we can understand the interest in reforms. Given the nature of some of these proposals, this is primarily an issue for the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) consideration, as NTIA coordinates and authorizes federal satellite operations. NTIA understands the urgent needs of the satellite industry and tries to pre-coordinate use of federal spectrum to help facilitate the process. NTIA looks forward to continuing to work with the FCC and satellite industry to streamline access where possible.

The Honorable August Pfluger (R-TX)

1. As space is shared jurisdiction with a host of other countries, how should Congress be thinking about developing sustainable rules and international collaborations, especially with malign actors like China and Russia who pose a threat to our national security, including in space?

RESPONSE: Consistent with the President’s 2024 budget and pursuant to the United States Space Priorities Framework, the Biden-Harris Administration is advancing a policy and regulatory environment that enables a competitive and burgeoning U.S. commercial space sector. To create free and fair market competition internationally, the United States is working with allies and partners to update and harmonize space policies, regulations and other measures that

govern commercial activities worldwide. Even as we continue to champion U.S. technologies and businesses, the United States must cooperate with other countries and encourage an enabling environment for the sustainable and peaceful use of outer space. The United States must, therefore, continue to lead in important international fora, including the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and UN Committee on the Peaceful Use of Outer Space (COPUOS), among others, to increase international collaboration and coordination on space issues including through transparent, expert-led dialogue. The United States must also continue to invest in research and development to ensure U.S. technologies and innovations continue to lead the world. Finally, the U.S. private sector should continue to innovate technologies and business models that conform to applicable laws and regulations and support sustainable economic development.

2. Do you have specific concerns over international cybersecurity coordination for satellite technology given the immense amount of data satellites collect?

RESPONSE: Cybersecurity is an important issue for communications networks. Currently, there is no established international body for considering cybersecurity coordination specifically for satellite technology. Therefore, satellite cybersecurity issues must be addressed through existing overall cybersecurity coordination within the United States and with our allies. For example, the Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency formed the Space Systems Critical Infrastructure Working Group, which includes a mix of government and industry members, to identify and develop strategies to minimize risk to space systems, including satellites.