

BROADCASTING

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FCC Extends FM Band for New England

Holding Channels, Nonduplication Ruled Out

HEEDING the warnings of industry that its proposed allocations of FM would not permit good service in New England, the FCC proposes to revamp its FM Rules & Regulations, extend the FM band in the northeastern states from 106 to 108 mc and permit more stations in that thickly populated area.

Rules & Regulations will not be released for another three weeks or month, but the FCC issued a report late Friday covering its intentions. Instructions on procedure will be issued shortly to all applicants. Developments are these:

(1) The northeastern section, to be known as Area I, will have 80 commercial FM channels instead of 70, as originally proposed, with addition of the 106-108 mc band. Area II, remainder of the country, will have 70 channels, with the 106-108 mc band assigned to facsimile. Proposal is compromise between high-powered stations (such as Yankee Network's 50 kw Mt. Washington outlet) and CBS single-market plan.

(2) Proposed rules governing metropolitan, rural and community stations revised, eliminating rural stations from Area I.

(3) FM stations will be licensed for unlimited time, with minimum of 6 hours daily required at outset.

(4) No rules or regulations concerning duplication of programs. Commissioner C. J. Durr dissented,

holding that absence of a rule will favor AM operators who have made "big profits" and work hardship on newcomers who will have to build from scratch.

(5) FCC will not reserve 20 channels for "newcomers" as proposed. Commissioner Durr again dissented, contending some reservation should be made for servicemen and women who may return to find all available channels taken by those who didn't fight.

(6) Multiple ownership rule (Sec. 3.35) to apply and FM ownership limited to 6 stations per owner. No rule regarding ownership of FM by AM operators.

(7) Network regulations will apply to FM.

(8) Sharing of antenna sites will be required under certain conditions.

(9) Booster station applications will be considered on merits.

(10) Transmission of simplex facsimile will be permitted during hours not required for FM aural broadcasting.

(11) Community stations will be allocated on upper end of band because of low power. Educational channels, 88-92 mc, not affected. Rules governing educational stations to come later.

Following is text of the Commission report:

This Report contains the Commission's decision with respect to the 10 suggested rules and regulations concerning FM broadcasting which were set forth in the Commission's order of June 27, 1945 and which were the subject of recent oral argument. The substance of the Rules and Regulations is discussed in this Report which is issued at this time in order that manufacturers, existing and prospective licensees, and applicants may have an immediate

opportunity to make specific plans for the postwar development of FM broadcasting. The final draft of regulations and standards based on the allocation plan contained in these proposals will be issued within the immediate future.

Part I

The allocation plan which was set forth as item 10 in the order of June 27 will be discussed first.

Any allocation plan for FM broadcasting is complicated by the fact that in the eastern part of the United States (hereinafter defined with more particularity as Area I) there is a heavy concentration of population. The demand for frequencies in this portion of the country is far greater than in the remainder of the country and testimony at the hearing clearly indicated that the 70 channels allocated to FM broadcasting would not meet the demands which can reasonably be expected in this part of the country. Accordingly, the Commission has concluded that the two megacycles between 106 and 108 megacycles, which had been initially reserved for facsimile but which the Commission indicated would eventually be used by FM should be immediately assigned to FM. The Commission is of the opinion that as between facsimile and FM there is much greater present need for the use of these frequencies by FM broadcasting than by facsimile.

This does not mean that no provision is being made for facsimile. In the first place the 10 megacycles between 470 and 480 mc remain available for facsimile broadcasting. Secondly, even as to the two megacycles between 106 and 108 mc the Commission intends for the present to utilize the frequencies in this band for FM broadcasting only in those cases where the use of these frequencies will not be assigned to FM at the present time and can be used for facsimile broadcasting. Finally, the rules which the Commission is adopting expressly permit simplex operation of facsimile on any FM channel during hours not required to be devoted to FM aural broadcasting (a minimum of six hours per day) and also permit present use for the use of these frequencies under certain conditions and on an experimental basis the multiplex transmission of facsimile and aural broadcast programs.

The 80 channels which are available for FM broadcasting in Area I will be apportioned as follows: 20 of them to Community stations and 60 to Metro-

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Two Kinds of FM

SOME broadcasters felt the FCC's new proposal for allocation of FM will be discriminatory. One spokesman, after studying the Commission's report, commented that it "sets up two kinds of broadcasting—one for the East and another for the rest of the country". Solution lies, he contended, not in limiting power in the East as planned by Commission, but in making more channels available. While Friday's report was not final, any protests from broadcasters likely will not be considered, since FCC statement was premised on Rules & Regulations now being formulated.

Plane Relays Planned In '35

A RADIO relay broadcasting system using planes flying in the stratosphere as transmitters was conceived by Nils E. Lindenblad, research engineer of RCA Labs., in 1935 and a patent on the invention has been pending since application was filed Jan. 7, 1942.

Westinghouse Electric Corp., in cooperation with Glenn L. Martin Co., early this month announced the development of Stratovision, an airborne transmitter system [BROADCASTING, Aug. 6, 1945].

A broad application has been filed at the Patent Office by Westinghouse in which its claims are stated generally. Research is continuing and may naturally disclose material affecting present claims, in which case they will be enlarged or amended as required. Westinghouse also has tested balloon transmitters for many years but found them unsatisfactory. The original concept of employing a balloon as a radio relaying device was patented in November 1905.

The proposal in the Lindenblad patent application would station planes 400 to 600 miles apart. A single transmitter on the ground would transmit the signals to the stratospheric stations which would then pass the signals from one to the other. Each airplane relay station would be provided with broadcasting equipment to radiate the signals earthward.

Seven Offers Are Received for WOW

SEVEN offers to sell or lease WOW Omaha were received and opened Thursday by Woodmen of the World Life Insurance Society. A committee named by D. E. Bradshaw, chairman of board, is considering the offers which were asked after the recent U. S. Supreme Court ruling [BROADCASTING, June 25] reversing a ruling by the Nebraska Supreme Court. Effect of ruling had been to put license up to the FCC.

The seven bids follow:
George W. Kline, Lincoln, would form corporation to buy WOW for \$1,675,280 or lease not less than 10 years for \$17,500 monthly or 85% of net profit after taxes.

Omaha Post No. 1, American Legion, lease with option to buy for \$2,500,000 at annual rental of \$150,000 plus 50% of net until \$1,500,000 is paid, then title would pass.

Radio Station WOW Inc., present lessee, lease for 15 to 25 years at annual rental of \$140,000 or \$3,500,000 over 25-year period, title remaining with Society.

A. H. Blank, theatre operator, and D. Ralph Branden, both of Des Moines, form corporation to lease for 15 years at annual rental of \$103,338.12 plus 10% appraised value of physical assets, with option to buy after two years for \$2,952,289.20.

World Publishing Co., owner of Omaha World-Herald and KOWH (which it would sell), purchase for \$1,106,000.

Central Newspapers Inc., publisher of Indianapolis Star, purchase for \$1,205,000 or lease five years for total rental of \$900,000 with option to buy for \$500,000 at end of lease period.

J. M. Harding & Associates (W. J. Coad, W. D. Hosford, Robert H. Storz, Paul Gallagher), of Omaha, lease 15 years \$1,890,000 payable \$126,000 a year, Society retaining title but if it proposes to sell during lease period, group would have right to purchase at any bona fide price offered by a third party.