

• Should we regulate who changes the software and the manner in which it is done? If so, should the Commission maintain records of such modifications?

• What are the various means that may be used to download new software? We anticipate, for example, that software could be downloaded by methods such as direct connection to a programming device or over the airwaves. To what extent will the software interfaces be standardized?

• Should we require anti-tampering or other security features? How would such security features work? Could equipment be designed to prevent it from transmitting in certain designated frequency bands, such as those allocated exclusively for government use, as a safeguard against causing interference?

• Do we need to adopt additional requirements for software defined radios to ensure the privacy of users' communications?

11. One possible scenario for an approval process for software defined radios could be as follows. The software could be tested and approved to ensure that the transmitter meets the applicable technical requirements under all operating conditions. In order to ensure that untested and unapproved software could not be loaded, such transmitters would have an authentication system that checks the software for an authentication code added to it by the FCC or a Telecommunications Certification Body (TCB). The software itself would be submitted for approval in a process similar to today's application process except that a copy of the object code would be supplied in machine-readable form. Upon approving the software application, which would involve a test of the hardware and software together similar to today's tests, the FCC or TCB would compute the authentication code for the submitted source code and send it to the applicant. The authentication system would be a two key system in which the key needed to compute the authentication code would be known to only the FCC or TCB, and the key needed to check in a transmitter object code which is being loaded would be publicly available.

12. In an analogy to the current requirement for labeling a transmitter, there may be a need for a method to allow users to determine whether the desired operating software is currently loaded in a transmitter, and to allow Commission enforcement personnel to verify that the software has been approved. To meet this need, the transmitter could display information about the software installed by a means such as a liquid crystal display (LCD) screen in response to an input from a keypad. The identification information about the software installed in the radio

could include such information as the technical operating parameters, the source of the software, and the name of the body that approved it. The user manual and the authorization application would describe how to access this information. Since such radios are expected to have displays for user information and input mechanisms for the user in normal use, we do not think this requirement would be burdensome. We seek comments on the following questions about this possible approval method.

• Is there a need for such an approval system, and is it feasible and practical?

• What type of authentication system should be used? Should there be one system or alternative systems? Who should have responsibility for generating the authentication codes: the FCC, TCBs, equipment manufacturers, or some other party?

• In the case of transmitters subject to verification how should authentication of software be handled? For example, could an "authentication only" service be offered in which the FCC or TCB computes the authentication code for the software after all elements of compliance with the FCC rules are verified by the manufacturer?

• How should simple changes to software be handled that do not affect the operating parameters of the equipment but require the computation of a new authentication code? Could an "authentication only" service be offered for them?

• Is there a need for a method to display information about the software loaded in a transmitter? If so, what method should be used and what information should be displayed?

13. Other matters. The questions raised in this notice are intended to solicit information to assist the Commission in deciding whether to propose rule changes as a result of the developing software defined radio technology. We realize that these questions do not necessarily encompass all of the issues raised by this technology. Commenters may want to address whether software defined radio technology could help parties comply with Sections 255 and 251(a) of the Communications Act. These sections require manufacturers of telecommunications equipment and providers of telecommunications services to ensure that such equipment and services are accessible to persons with disabilities, if readily achievable. Commenters may also wish to address how we would enforce any new rules for software defined radios. Accordingly, comments are invited on any other matters or issues that may be pertinent to software defined radios.

Federal Communications Commission.

**Magalie Roman Salas,**

*Secretary.*

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## FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

### 47 CFR Part 73

[DA 00-586; MM Docket No. 99-212; RM-9640]

### Radio Broadcasting Services; Amelia, LA

**AGENCY:** Federal Communications Commission.

**ACTION:** Proposed rule; denial.

**SUMMARY:** This document denies a petition for rule making filed by Mountain West Broadcasting proposing the allotment of FM Channel 249C3 to Amelia, Louisiana, as that locality's first local aural transmission service. Petitioner failed to establish the availability of a suitable location for tower construction as the required site restriction located 18.4 kilometers south of the community at coordinates 29-30-21 NL and 91-03-46 WL to accommodate Channel 249C3 at Amelia is in marshland. See 64 FR 31173, June 10, 1999. With this action, this proceeding is terminated.

**ADDRESSES:** Federal Communications Commission, Washington, DC 20554.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Nancy Joyner, Mass Media Bureau, (202) 418-2180.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This is a synopsis of the Commission's Report and Order, MM Docket No. 99-212, adopted March 8, 2000, and released March 17, 2000. The full text of this Commission decision is available for inspection and copying during normal business hours in the FCC's Reference Information Center (Room CY-A257), 445 Twelfth Street, SW., Washington, DC. The complete text of this decision may also be purchased from the Commission's copy contractor, International Transcription Service, Inc., 1231 20th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20036, (202) 857-3800.

Federal Communications Commission.

**John A. Karousos,**

*Chief, Allocations Branch, Policy and Rules Division, Mass Media Bureau.*

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