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March 11, 2011

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VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Hon. Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Iridium Satellite LLC
Request for Special Temporary Authorization to Test and Commence
Mobile Satellite Service in the 1616-1617.775 MHz Band

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

Iridium Satellite LLC (“Iridium”), by its attorneys and pursuant to 25 C.F.R. § 25.120, hereby requests Special Temporary Authorization (“STA”), for 7 days, to test and then commence Mobile Satellite Service (“MSS”) in the 1616-1617.775 MHz band. Grant of the requested STA will serve the public interest in accommodating the anticipated dramatic increase in demand for voice and data communications services in support of emergency response efforts following the recent earthquake in Japan. Additionally, grant will allow the continued monitoring of tsunami after-effects in other areas, including Hawaii and the west coast of the United States.¹ It will also facilitate communications in the event of earthquake aftershocks and additional tsunamis. This STA request is similar to the requests the Commission granted following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the earthquake in Haiti.

As the FCC is aware, the recent earthquake in Japan has caused extraordinary devastation, including damage to communications infrastructure in the region. Public safety officials, relief organizations, businesses and the public urgently need

¹ A widespread tsunami warning is in effect throughout the Pacific. See the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (“NOAA”) National Weather Service, Pacific Tsunami Warning Center at <http://www.weather.gov/ptwc/>. Iridium’s satellite service is an integral part of NOAA’s tsunami monitoring system. See NOAA, National Data Buoy Center, Deep-ocean Assessment and Reporting of Tsunamis (DART®) Description at <http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/dart/dart.shtml>.



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reliable voice and data communications services as they respond to the crisis. Iridium's mobile satellite service is ideally suited to meet this need and indeed, is already providing vital service to emergency response teams and organizations in Japan. In fact, many emergency vehicles in Japan are already pre-positioned with Iridium equipment.

Iridium's current MSS allocation in the 1617.775-1626.5 MHz band is expected to prove insufficient to handle growing call volumes beginning this weekend and continuing through the next week. Particularly because of the existing heavy presence of Iridium equipment in Japan, a strong surge in demand for capacity is expected over the weekend as relief efforts continue and expand. In addition, Iridium expects a usage spike as additional phones are brought into the area. As a result, Iridium expects its current spectrum allocation may reach maximum congestion very soon, thus causing the satellites to be overloaded and potentially calls to be dropped.

To meet anticipated extraordinary demand, Iridium seeks to utilize the 1616-1617.775 MHz band for 7 days beginning immediately so that Boeing can begin testing. Upon successful conclusion of the tests this weekend, Iridium plans to commence service. Because of the strong surge in demand expected this weekend, Iridium respectfully requests grant of this STA request by the end of the business day today.

Please direct any questions regarding this matter to Donna Bethea Murphy or the undersigned.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer D. Hindin".

Jennifer D. Hindin
Counsel to Iridium Satellite LLC

cc: Bob Nelson
Karl Kensinger
Cassandra Thomas
Kathryn Medley