



June 3, 2016

VIA IBFS

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW

Re: *Ex Parte* Letter – File Nos. SAT-STA-20150821-00060; SAT-MOD-20150802-00053; SAT-LOA-20151123-00078

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On June 1, 2016, ORBCOMM, represented by the undersigned, participated in a telephone call with Dr. Jose Albuquerque, Chief of the Satellite Division. The purpose of the call was an update on the status of ORBCOMM's ongoing efforts to collaborate with the applicants in the three above-referenced proceedings to address the Commission's unresolved concerns regarding issues raised in ORBCOMM's respective pleadings.

ORBCOMM explained that efforts appear to be progressing towards reaching agreement with Planet Labs Inc. (File No. SAT-MOD-20150802-00053) on mutually acceptable Planet Labs license conditions relating to in-orbit collision avoidance, and cooperative procedures to be used in the case of a conjunction alert involving ORBCOMM and Planet Labs satellites. ORBCOMM also reported that, based on the most recent discussions between the parties, it appears that ORBCOMM and Spire Global, Inc. (File No. SAT-LOA-20151123-00078) could be able to reach a similar agreement (modeled on the Planet Labs/ORBCOMM example, once completed).

In addition, ORBCOMM reported that Planet Labs has provided ORBCOMM with a document summarizing a study it recently conducted to assess the probability of in-plane collisions arising from Spaceflight, Inc.'s proposed SHERPA mission deployment of approximately 90 satellites into a single elliptical orbit plane (File No. SAT-STA-20150821-00060). ORBCOMM advised the Commission that it is reviewing the new Planet Labs study. At the request of Dr. Albuquerque, to ensure that the Commission's unresolved concerns regarding debris mitigation and in-orbit collision risks arising from the proposed SHERPA mission can be addressed, ORBCOMM agreed to provide the Commission with its assessment of the new Planet Labs study. ORBCOMM also agreed to provide any further suggestions it may have regarding additional specific information that should be entered into the record.



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During the conversation, ORBCOMM again underscored the necessity of Spaceflight's full cooperation to address the Commission's unresolved concerns regarding possible in-orbit collision risks and debris hazards arising from Spaceflight's proposed SHERPA mission. Unfortunately, ORBCOMM also had to inform the Commission that its ongoing efforts to collaboratively engage with Spaceflight, both before and after ORBCOMM submitted its comments on the Spaceflight application, continue to be rebuffed by Spaceflight. In this regard, ORBCOMM told the Commission that, most recently, a May 18, 2016, voicemail message received from Spaceflight's counsel advised that that Spaceflight has concluded that no discussions with ORBCOMM are necessary "at this time", because "the pleadings speak for themselves."

Planet Labs' recent efforts to address the Commission's unresolved concerns regarding Spaceflight's proposed SHERPA mission are laudable. However, during the call with Dr. Albuquerque, ORBCOMM observed that the SHERPA mission satellite roster and corresponding spacecraft characteristics used in the Planet Labs study were compiled by Planet Labs, and apparently not confirmed by Spaceflight. Thus, this critical input data may not be sufficiently accurate for purposes of validating the results of the Planet Labs study. Regardless, the Commission's Rules and policies place the onus on Spaceflight to demonstrate that the proposed deployment of approximately 90 SHERPA mission secondary payload satellites will not create unacceptable risks of in-orbit collisions or debris hazards.

ORBCOMM reiterated that the Commission should require Spaceflight to: (i) compile and provide the technical parameters necessary to conduct in-orbit collision analysis for all satellites on the final proposed SHERPA mission manifest; (ii) provide the details regarding the proposed manner and order of release of these satellites from the SHERPA deployment vehicle; (iii) perform orbital debris and in-orbit collision analysis (including in-plane collisions during the orbital life of the proposed SHERPA mission satellites, and possible collisions with ORBCOMM Generation 2 satellites) for all satellites on the final proposed SHERPA mission manifest; and (iv) file all such information on the record of the Spaceflight application.¹

¹ See, Informal Comments of ORBCOMM on the Application of Spaceflight, Inc., Request for Special Temporary Authority, File No. SAT-STA-20150821-00060 (May 11, 2016), at pp. 2-4.

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Pursuant to Section 1.1206(b) of the Commission's rules, this letter is being filed electronically in the above-referenced proceedings. Please direct any questions regarding this submission to the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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cc: Dr. Jose Albuquerque