Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Iridium Satellite LLC	)	File Nos. SES-MOD-20130416-00322;
	)	Call Sign E960132
	)	
Iridium Carrier Services LLC	)	File No. SES-MOD-20130416-00323;
	)	Call Sign E960622
	)	
Applications for Modification of	)	
Blanket Earth Station Licenses to	)	
Permit AMS(R)S Communications	)	

OPPOSITION TO REQUEST TO HOLD IN ABEYANCE

In the above-captioned applications (the "Applications"), Iridium Satellite LLC and Iridium Carrier Services LLC (collectively, "Iridium") are seeking license modifications that would authorize using Iridium's blanket-licensed earth stations on aircraft to provide AMS(R)S. On December 19, 2014, Inmarsat Inc. ("Inmarsat") filed a Request to Hold in Abeyance ("Request") in which it asked that the Commission refrain from processing the Applications until Iridium provides additional information that, in Inmarsat's view, should have been included with the Applications. Iridium hereby opposes Inmarsat's Request.[1]

[1] On December 24, 2014, the International Bureau granted Iridium's request for a one-week extension of time, through January 9, 2015, to oppose Inmarsat's Request.

Inmarsat's Request is little more than a transparent attempt to hinder the growth of a new competitor into a market in which Inmarsat has, to date, been the only service provider. Iridium demonstrates below that each of Inmarsat's arguments is without merit:

- Inmarsat questions whether Iridium provided sufficient technical information, but in fact Iridium has furnished all of the technical details required by the Commission for the Applications, which seek no changes to the technical characteristics of Iridium's earth station operations;

- Inmarsat argues that a condition is needed to prevent Iridium's AMS(R)S transmissions from having "super primary" status, but this is another red herring, as Iridium expressly contemplated and agreed to this condition in the Applications;

- Inmarsat claims Iridium seeks overly broad geographic AMS(R)S authority in the United States for its earth stations, but Inmarsat's claim is based on a flat misstatement of the geographic scope of the AMS(R)S authority the International Bureau granted for Iridium's space stations; and

- Inmarsat claims it needs the technical specifications for Iridium's AMS(R)S operations so it can confirm that market-based solutions are appropriate for issues relating to simultaneous operation of Inmarsat's and Iridium's AMS(R)S terminals, but (as stated above) Iridium already has provided all relevant technical information.

Iridium respectfully requests that the Commission act expeditiously to reject Inmarsat's arguments and grant the authority requested in the Applications. Inmarsat is the only party to comment on Iridium's Applications. Not coincidentally, Inmarsat also is the only provider of AMS(R)S in the United States. The pendency of Inmarsat's Request delays action on Iridium's Applications, which in turn prevents the introduction of AMS(R)S competition—the only cognizable motive behind Inmarsat's Request. Not only does this hinder the development of competition in the AMS(R)S

marketplace, but because Inmarsat's coverage is less extensive than Iridium's, it restricts the areas in which AMS(R)S can be provided, thereby reducing aviation safety. Expedited action, therefore, is in the public interest.

I. IRIDIUM PROVIDED ALL REQUIRED TECHNICAL INFORMATION.

Inmarsat questions whether Iridium, in its Applications, provided sufficient information to document the technical changes that will be occasioned by Iridium's AMS(R)S operations. Inmarsat claims that it is unable to evaluate the technical characteristics of these operations because "the Applications do not include any FCC Form 312 Schedule B technical information regarding the proposed AMS(R)S operations."[2]

There was no reason to provide "Form 312 Schedule B technical information" in the Applications, however, because Iridium is not proposing any changes to the technical characteristics of its earth station operations. Iridium merely is requesting AMS(R)S authority for technical operations the Commission already has licensed. Iridium filed complete Form 312 Schedule B information for these operations in its initial blanket license applications and, more recently, in minor modifications that it submitted in 2008 and 2011.[3] Accordingly, Iridium has satisfied the Commission's technical information requirements.

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[2] Inmarsat Request at 5.

[3] *See*, as to Iridium Satellite LLC, FCC File Nos. SES-MOD-20081223-01705 and SES-MOD-20120119-00069; and, as to Iridium Carrier Services LLC, FCC File Nos. SES-MOD-20081223-01704 and SES-MOD-20120119-00068. The 2008 and 2011 filings addressed Iridium's OpenPort and LiveTV terminals, which

Inmarsat also takes issue with the level of specificity Iridium used to identify the antenna terminal type it will use to provide AMS(R)S, based on Iridium's reference in its Applications to "portable handheld terminals."[4] Inmarsat acknowledges, however, that in a supplement Iridium clarified it is seeking authority for "the first antenna type shown in each license."[5] The first antenna type in the licenses, in addition to referring to portable handheld terminals, specifies "MOBILE" operations, which include aeronautical operations. Accordingly, Iridium has made adequate identification.

II. THE LEVEL OF PROTECTION FOR IRIDIUM'S AMS(R)S OPERATIONS IS A NON-ISSUE.

In the order that authorized Iridium's space stations to provide AMS(R)S,[6] the International Bureau adopted a condition to clarify that Iridium's AMS(R)S transmissions do not have "super primary" status. The condition states that any additional protection from interference from previously-authorized MSS operations in adjacent frequency bands, beyond that afforded by current arrangements, must be sought and obtained through inter-operator arrangements.[7]

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are authorized to employ wider bandwidth carriers at reduced power levels but must always operate within the originally-authorized EIRP and EIRP density levels.

[4] Inmarsat Request at 5.

[5] *Id.*

[6] *Iridium Constellation LLC, for Authority to Modify License for a Low Earth Orbit Mobile Satellite System*, File Nos. SAT-MOD-19961204-00139, SAT-AMD-20050816-00160, SAT-AMD-2005118-00236, Call Sign: S2110, Memorandum Opinion and Order, DA 13-141 (rel. Feb. 4, 2013) ("*Iridium AMS(R)S Order*").

[7] *See Iridium AMS(R)S Order*, ¶ 11.

In its Request, Inmarsat asks that the same condition be adopted in any grant of the Applications.[8] Iridium, however, already acknowledged in its Applications "that any additional protection desired for AMS(R)S operations from interference from previously authorized MSS operations in adjacent frequency bands, beyond that afforded by existing arrangements, must be sought through new or modified inter-operator arrangements."[9] The condition sought by Inmarsat, therefore, will be adopted as a matter of course, and the level of protection for Iridium's AMS(R)S transmissions is a non-issue.

III. INMARSAT MISCHARACTERIZES THE GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE OF IRIDIUM'S AMS(R)S AUTHORITY IN THE UNITED STATES.

Inmarsat claims Iridium seeks broader geographic AMS(R)S authority in the United States for its earth stations than the International Bureau granted for Iridium's space stations.[10] According to Inmarsat, Iridium's space station AMS(R)S authority in the United States is limited to oceanic regions, which Inmarsat believes prevents Iridium from securing authority for its earth stations to provide AMS(R)S within remote areas of the United States.[11]

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[8] *See* Inmarsat Request at 8.
[9] Applications, Exhibit 2 ("Response to Question 43: Description of Application") at 1 (specifically (c)).
[10] *See* Inmarsat Request at 6.
[11] *See* Inmarsat Request at 7.

Inmarsat has mischaracterized the geographic scope of Iridium's AMS(R)S authority. The *Iridium AMS(R)S Order* grants space station authority "for operations in oceanic, polar, and remote regions."[12] The only limitation on this geographic scope, which is irrelevant for this purpose, applies to Iridium's operations outside the United States.[13] Accordingly, within the United States Iridium's space stations are authorized to provide AMS(R)S in remote areas (among other places), and Iridium's request in the Applications for earth station authority to provide AMS(R)S in remote areas in the United States is consistent with its space station authority.[14]

IV. ISSUES RELATING TO SIMULTANEOUS OPERATION OF INMARSAT'S AND IRIDIUM'S AMS(R)S TERMINALS SHOULD BE LEFT TO THE MARKETPLACE.

Inmarsat previously took the position that "any … [AMS(R)S] interference issues between Inmarsat and Iridium AES operating on the same aircraft could be left up to the marketplace for resolution."[15] Iridium agrees that these issues should be left to the marketplace, subject to any requirements adopted by ICAO/FAA and any Minimum

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[12] *See Iridium AMS(R)S Order*, ¶ 16.

[13] As stated in paragraph 16e of the *Iridium AMS(R)S Order,* "Iridium must limit AMS(R)S operations outside the United States to the oceanic regions, the Antarctic land mass and adjacent waters, and the remote areas of those territories for which it has successfully completed the agreement seeking process pursuant to ITU Radio Regulation 5.367."

[14] Inmarsat also objects that the Commission did not define "remote areas" in the *Iridium AMS(R)S Order*. *See* Inmarsat Request at 7. As the Commission stated in that order, however, it is appropriate for airspace authorities, which in the case of the United States means the Federal Aviation Administration ("FAA"), to define this term. *See Iridium AMS(R)S Order,* n. 31. Iridium will comply with all FAA requirements for operation within remote areas.

[15] Inmarsat Request at 4.

Operational Performance Standards adopted by the Radio Technical Commission for Aeronautics, Inc. ("RTCA").

In its Request, however, Inmarsat states that it needs the technical specifications for Iridium's AMS(R)S operations so it can "confirm that the market-based solutions that Inmarsat previously had envisioned still would be a reasonable solution to any potential interference issue."[16] This unsupported change in position should be disregarded.

As shown in Section I, above, Iridium has provided all required technical information. Moreover, Inmarsat was directly involved in the development of the RTCA performance standards for the AMS(R)S earth stations,[17] and provided technical details related to performance levels Iridium equipment should meet for simultaneous operations. The relevant standards already define acceptable criteria for simultaneous operations. It remains the case, therefore, that issues concerning simultaneous operation should be left to the marketplace, subject to any requirements adopted by ICAO/FAA and any Minimum Operational Performance Standards adopted by RTCA.

[16] Inmarsat Request at 6.
[17] RTCA, Inc., DO-262B Minimum Operational Performance Standards for Avionics Supporting Next Generation Satellite Systems (NGSS) (June 17, 2014).

CONCLUSION

In view of the forgoing, the arguments in Inmarsat's Request should be rejected and Iridium's Applications should be granted expeditiously.

Respectfully submitted,

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January 9, 2015

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing Opposition To Request To Hold In Abeyance was sent by United States first class mail on this the 9th day of January, 2015, to the following:

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