

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

In the Matter of)
)
Request to Streamline Licensing of L-band)
User Terminals Using Inmarsat Satellites as)
Points of Communication)

File No. SES-PDR-20080303-00367

FILED/ACCEPTED

MAY -2 2008

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

JOINT COMMENTS

Stratos Communications, Inc. ("Stratos"), Satamatics, Inc. ("Satamatics") and SkyWave Mobile Communications, Corp. ("SkyWave") (collectively referred to as the "Joint Commenters") submit these Comments in support of the Petition for Declaratory Ruling recently filed by Inmarsat, Inc. ("Inmarsat").¹ The Inmarsat Petition proposes that the International Bureau (the "Bureau") modify the manner in which it authorizes points of communication in the Inmarsat L-band² user terminal licenses held by the distributors of Inmarsat's services, including the licenses of Stratos, Satamatics and SkyWave. Adopting the Inmarsat proposal would significantly streamline the Commission's licensing process for Inmarsat services, thereby conserving the Commission's resources and speeding the delivery of Inmarsat services to end users, including the public safety community.

¹ See Satellite Communications Services Re: Satellite Radio Applications Accepted for Filing, Report No. SES-01020 (April 2, 2008).

² The L-band, as described in these Comments, refers to Inmarsat's coordinated spectrum in the United States. The L-band encompasses frequencies from 1525-1544/1545-1559 MHz and 1626.5-1645.5/1646.5-1660 MHz. The frequencies 1525-1544 MHz and 1626.5-1645.5 MHz are referred to as the "lower L-band" and 1545-1559 MHz and 1646.5-1660.5 MHz are referred to as the "upper L-band."

The Joint Commenters are authorized distributors of Inmarsat's satellite services in the United States. Stratos currently offers the Inmarsat B, C, M, mini-M, M4 and BGAN voice and data services and holds licenses from the Commission for the Inmarsat mobile earth terminals ("METs"), which are used in connection with each Inmarsat service.³ Satamatics and SkyWave offer the Inmarsat D+ service (a low bit rate data service) in the United States, and each company holds a license from the Commission for the D+ METs that are used in connection with the service.⁴

The Inmarsat services provided by the Joint Commenters are relied upon by not only the private sector, but the public sector as well. The Inmarsat BGAN services offered by Stratos are used by the U.S. military and public safety community as an alternative broadband network, which can offer high data speeds in the event of a large-scale natural disaster or terrorist attack. The Inmarsat D+ services offered by SkyWave and Satamatics are relied upon by government agencies, such as the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Coast Guard, as well as private sector customers, to track and monitor sensitive assets in the United States, including shipping containers, trucks and oil/gas pipelines.

Currently, each of the MET licenses held by the Joint Commenters specifically references the Inmarsat satellites and orbital locations (i.e., "points of communication") with which the authorized METs are permitted to communicate. To the extent that a new satellite is launched by Inmarsat, or an existing Inmarsat satellite is moved to a new orbital position, the

³ See Stratos Communications Inc. Call-signs E050249, E000180, E010050, E010049, E010048 and E010047.

⁴ See Satamatics, Inc. Call-sign E020074 and SkyWave Mobile Communications, Corp. Call-sign E030055.

Joint Commenters (as well as all other Inmarsat distributors) must apply to the Commission to modify the "points of communication" in their MET licenses in order to reflect the new, or repositioned, Inmarsat satellite.

This procedural process results in numerous repetitive applications being filed with the Commission. For example, when Stratos, Satamatics and SkyWave sought to use a newly launched fourth generation Inmarsat satellite at 52.75° W.L. ("the Inmarsat 4F2"), all three companies (as well as all other Inmarsat distributors seeking to use the same satellite) had to submit to the FCC the same duplicative technical information concerning the Inmarsat 4F2 satellite. As a result, the Commission staff was required to review the same technical information for each applicant. Even though the use of the Inmarsat 4F2 satellite has now been approved by the Commission for use by Stratos, Satamatics and SkyWave, another Inmarsat distributor seeking to use the same satellite for the same services still needs to submit to the Commission the same Inmarsat 4F2 technical information that is already on file with, and approved by, the Commission. The result of these duplicative filings is regulatory delay, which slows down the delivery of Inmarsat services to end users, including the public safety community.

The proposal set forth in Inmarsat's Petition would significantly streamline this procedural process. Under the Inmarsat proposal, by designating "ISAT" as the desired point of communication, applicants and licensees will be permitted to seek authority to communicate with all Inmarsat spacecraft that have been approved for U.S. service in the L-band.⁵ The term "ISAT" would refer to all Inmarsat spacecraft that are contained on a list to be maintained by the Commission, and would automatically provide authority to communicate with future and

⁵ See Inmarsat Petition at 1-2.

repositioned Inmarsat L-band spacecraft, once those spacecraft have been approved for service in the United States.

Designating "ISAT" as a point of communication in MET licenses would provide significant public interest benefits and is consistent with Commission policy. Streamlining the licensing process with the use of the ISAT designation will minimize regulatory delay, conserve Commission resources, and speed the delivery of service to the public. The Inmarsat proposal is consistent with Commission policy because it would not adversely affect the interference environment. The obligation to make all required technical and regulatory showings will remain unchanged, but instead of the same technical and regulatory showing being made to (and reviewed by) the Commission multiple times, it would be submitted and reviewed one time and become applicable to all existing and/or future Inmarsat MET licensees. As Inmarsat's Petition points out, its proposal is consistent with other procedural streamlining mechanisms the Commission has adopted for other satellite services.⁶

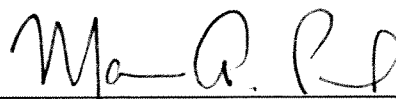
For the foregoing reasons, the Joint Commenters support Inmarsat's proposal to create a list of all Inmarsat spacecraft that are approved to provide L-band service to the United States. In conjunction with compiling this ISAT list, the Commission should simultaneously modify the Joint Commenters' existing blanket MET licenses to specify "ISAT" as the

⁶ *Intelsat North America, LLC, Application for Authority to Modify Earth Station Authorization to Provide Launch and Early Orbit Phase ("LEOP") operations for Newly Launched Satellites*, File Nos.: SES-MOD-20050615-00751, SES-AMD-20051116-01587, Call Sign E040125, Order and Authorization, DA 06-2557 ¶ 14 (rel. Dec. 21, 2006); *Amendment of the Commission's Regulatory Policies to Allow Non-U.S. Licensed Space Stations to Provide Domestic and International Satellite Service*, First Order on Reconsideration, 15 FCC Rcd 7207 ¶ 16 (1999).

designated point of communication,⁷ and allow the Joint Commenters, as well as other applicants, for any new blanket MET licenses to specify "ISAT" as the desired point of communication.

Respectfully submitted,

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⁷ See Stratos Communications Inc. Call-signs E050249, E000180, E010050, E010049, E010048 and E010047, Satamatics, Inc. Call-sign E020074 and SkyWave Mobile Communications, Corp. Call-sign E030055. See Public Notice, "International Bureau Satellite Engineering Branch Information: Revisions to Earth Station Licenses Authorized to Access INTELSAT," Report No. SPB-172 (rel. July 20, 2001) (modifying specified earth station licenses to provide domestic service using INTELSAT satellites without requiring that the earth station licensees file license modification requests).

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Marc Paul, an attorney with the law firm of Steptoe & Johnson LLP, hereby certify that on this 2nd day of May 2008, I served a true copy of the foregoing Joint Comments by first class mail, postage pre-paid upon the following:

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. A. Paul', written over a horizontal line.

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