

Request for Special Temporary Authority extension

Background:

Thales Avionics currently has an active blanket license authorization to operate an ESAA earth station called the Advanced Connectivity Terminals, Ka-band (ACT-A) with five FCC-authorized GSO satellites whose Ka-band spot beam coverage areas include CONUS, most of Canada, and portions of Mexico and the Caribbean region¹. Initially, five points of communication are: AMC-15 (S2180) at 105.0° W.L., AMC-16 (S2181) at 85.0° W.L., Jupiter 1 (S2753) at 107.1° W.L., Jupiter 2 (S2834) at 97.1° W.L., and Telenor Norway satellite Thor-7 at orbital location 0.65° W.L. Complete details of the Thales remote terminal and system architecture are included in the most recent Thales modification filing².

In order to provide network coverage with seamless connectivity and compensate for the loss of AMC-16, Thales added a new point of communication, Telesat Telstar 19V (T19V), and is using the improved beam pointing characteristics of the AMC-15 and additional beams of Jupiter 2. Thales has currently a request for a modification of the blanket license to incorporate changes above³ as well as the initial granted Special Temporary Authority (STA)⁴, for which additional extensions have been filed on September 20th, 2021 and November 12th, 2021⁵.

STA extension request:

Thales respectfully request an extension of the current STA for 60 days to operate the ACT-A terminals with Telesat T19V beams⁶, repointed AMC-15 beams⁷, and additional Jupiter 2 beams⁸. Expedited action by January 11th 2022 is requested to ensure continuity of In-Flight Connectivity Services in light of decommissioning of the AMC-16 satellite. This satellite has experienced solar anomalies, which required Thales to change the network configuration.

ESAA operations on T19V will be on the frequencies set out in Table 1 below.

Satellite (Call Sign)	Satellite Operator	GSO Orbital Location (W.L.)	Transmit Spectrum (MHz)	Receive Spectrum (MHz)
Telstar T19V	Telstar	63.0°	29500 – 30000	19700 – 20200

Table 1: Satellite List and Spectrum Details for Thales's ESAA Operations

¹ See IBFS File No. SES-LIC-20170217, Call Sign E170068, granted July 7, 2017

² See IBFS File No. SES-MOD-20200818-00888, call sign E170068, granted August 26, 2020

³ See IBFS File No. SES-MOD-20210715-01042, call sign E170068

⁴ See IBFS File No. SES-STA-20210715-01049, call sign E170068, granted July 22, 2021

⁵ See IBFS File No. SES-STA-20210920-01609, filed on September 20, 2021 and SES-STA-20211112-01813 filed on 11/12/21

⁶ See IBFS File No. SAT-PPL-20160225-0020, granted August 31, 2016

⁷ See IBFS File No. SAT-MOD-20200227-00020, granted June 11, 2020

⁸ See IBFS File No. SAT-MOD-20171204-00163, granted January 18, 2018

Thales operations under this STA will be consistent with the criteria proposed in the modification application and will adhere to any commission STA provisions.

The grant of this STA is in the public interest because it will allow Thales to maintain services and meet urgent customer requirements for provision of aeronautical, two-way in-flight broadband data services to airline passengers, crews, and operations.