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Alexicon *insider*

INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY FOR THE
RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

Regulatory Headlines

[Carr, Rosenworcel Nominations Close](#)

Come next Wednesday, Jessica Rosenworcel and Brendan Carr will be one step closer to getting new offices at The Portals. The Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee late Wednesday confirmed that it will hold an executive session on Aug. 2 at 10am that includes the nomination and reappointment of FCC Chairman Ajit Pai and Democratic Commissioner Rosenworcel.

[Clyburn on Title II & Broadband](#)

FCC Commissioner Mignon Clyburn, one of the remaining Democrats at the regulator, said that maintaining classification of broadband services under Title II will ensure competition and drive greater service availability.

[Rural Call Completion Revisited](#)

The FCC is revising its efforts to tackle rural call completion issues with a Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (Second Notice). Shortly after the FCC's Wireline Competition Bureau released a Report rec-

ommending the elimination of the FCC's recording, retention, and reporting rules for "covered providers" (including LECs, interexchange carriers, CMRS providers, and VoIP providers), the FCC is proposing to take a different approach to rural call completion problems whereby covered providers would themselves be held responsible for monitoring rural call completion performance and taking action to address poor performance.

[FirstNet: Can States Build Their Own?](#)

Verizon has asked the Federal Communications Commission to answer a question that the FCC neatly side-stepped when it laid out its guidelines for states wishing to opt out of the national First Responders Network Authority build by AT&T: can states build and operate their own network cores that would interoperate with the FirstNet core?



Market Watch

[Truck Rolls are a Pain in the Butt](#)

[Vyve Rural Cable Strategy: 200 Mbps](#)

[Carrier Demand for Fiber Fuels Growth](#)

[UPN on Small Cell Backhaul](#)



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Questions? Comments?
Contact Chris Barron

cbarron@alexicon.net

Technology Trends

New and notable technology and services

Cisco on Cybersecurity Threats

Cisco's latest report on the state of cybersecurity opens with a lament that would be astonishing if anyone were paying attention. That is, in fact, the lament: The world doesn't seem to appreciate how bad the cybersecurity threat is getting.

Defending Against Cyberwar

In the doorway of a low-ceilinged room with harsh strip lighting, Klaid Magi is looking tired. Behind him, the mess suggests this has not been a standard day at the office. The bins are overflowing with empty Coke cans, the desks are covered in snack wrappers, and the room probably smelled a whole lot fresher a few hours earlier. Magi's team, a small band of about two dozen now-weary security experts, wander between the rows of PCs and whiteboards scrawled with notes, gradually recovering from a day spent as the last defense of a

tiny nation against a massive cyberattack.

5G Backhaul Spending to Reach \$2b

The communications industry is certain 5G networks are going to need more backhaul. The question is, how much? CIR says \$2 billion a year's worth within five years, with half the annual total spent in the United States. The optical networking segment will be the main beneficiary, according to a new report from CIR.

Computing Shifts May Rearrange Chipmakers

Artificial intelligence, cloud computing, big data and the Internet of things along with a heavy dose of mobility are rewriting the semiconductor pecking order. This shakeout is going to be fun to watch.

CTL: Managed Hybrid SD-WAN

CenturyLink has introduced its new managed Hybrid SD-WAN solution, allowing businesses to integrate and optimize traffic flow over a mix of broadband internet connections and private MPLS networks. Being able to leverage a mix of MPLS and broadband networks will allow business users to get the benefits of a managed solution and lower-priced solutions.



IN FOCUS: **FCC to Work on Additional Reporting Relief**

In a continuing trend for regulatory relief at the Ajit Pai-led FCC, an [item](#) will be addressed at this week's Open Agenda Meeting that examines possible changes to Form 477. The draft Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FNPRM), if adopted at Thursday's meeting, would request comment on several possibly major changes to Form 477, which is the "principle tool used by the Commission to gather data on the availability of communications services, including broadband services, to help inform policymaking."

For small carriers, one potentially major change is revising the filing frequency. Currently, Form 477s are filed semi-annually, with filing dates of September 1 (data as of June 30) and March 1 (data as of December 31). The draft FNPRM asks if the FCC "should shift to an annual collection for all filers, for certain filers (such as smaller filers), or for certain parts of the form." Eliminating one Form 477 filing per year would certainly save some regulatory compliance time (the FCC burden estimate per filing is 65 hours, but small carriers can experience substantially more).

Also under consideration is (1) increasing the level of granularity at which data is collected, (2) collecting data that specifically identifies where new customers can readily obtain service, and (3) eliminating or simplifying the collection of business/government/enterprise data.

The proposal regarding granularity would, possibly as an option,

allow carriers to report geospatial or otherwise more granular data than the current required census block view. If adopted as a requirement, this could cause small carriers some additional reporting burden. The draft FNPRM also discusses building or location-specific reporting.

Chairman Pai, at least for now, seems to be serious about reducing some of the reporting burdens small companies currently face. In June, the Commission removed several of its annual ETC reporting rules (see July 11 Special Bulletin). In addition, it is likely that the FCC will eliminate certain international traffic and revenues reports required from some carriers.

Even with the progress made, more could be done to reduce reporting burdens. However, it is important to note that eliminating reporting requirements is easier said than done, with part of the reason being that Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) approval must still be obtained for eliminated requirements. Still, it is a useful exercise for all involved—carriers, FCC, USAC, NECA, etc.—to closely examine all requirements to ensure reports are (1) still necessary, and (2) are being put to some kind of reasonable use by the governmental or quasi-governmental agency.



Alexicon at Work

Now that cost study and USF season has wrapped up, Alexicon consultants are breathing a sigh of relief after all filings were made. Next on the schedule are the Form 499 filings due September 1, further analysis and assistance with the upcoming CAF Phase II auction, and possible assistance with the CAF BLS competitive overlap process.


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Questions? Comments?
Contact Chris Barron
cbarron@alexicon.net