

Federal Communications Commission 101



October 27, 2015


Introduction

- The Federal Communications Commission is an independent United States government agency
- The FCC was established by Communications Act of 1934 and is charged with regulating interstate and international communications by radio, television, wire, satellite and cable
- The FCC's jurisdiction covers the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories

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FCC Mission


- Make communication services available – so far as possible – to all U.S. residents without discrimination
- Ensure a rapid, efficient, Nation-wide, and world-wide wire and radio communication service
- Encourage the rapid deployment of new telecommunications technologies



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About the FCC

- Approximately 1735 Full Time Employees
- Headquarters in SW Washington DC
- Laboratory in Columbia, Maryland
- Licensing and Consumer Center in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania
- Field Offices throughout the Country



Inside the FCC

- Five Commissioners appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate for 5-year staggered terms
- The President designates one of the Commissioners to serve as Chairperson
- Only three Commissioners may be members of the same political party
- None can have a financial interest in any Commission-related business

Chairman



Tom Wheeler

The Commissioners



Mignon
Clyburn



Jessica
Rosenworcel

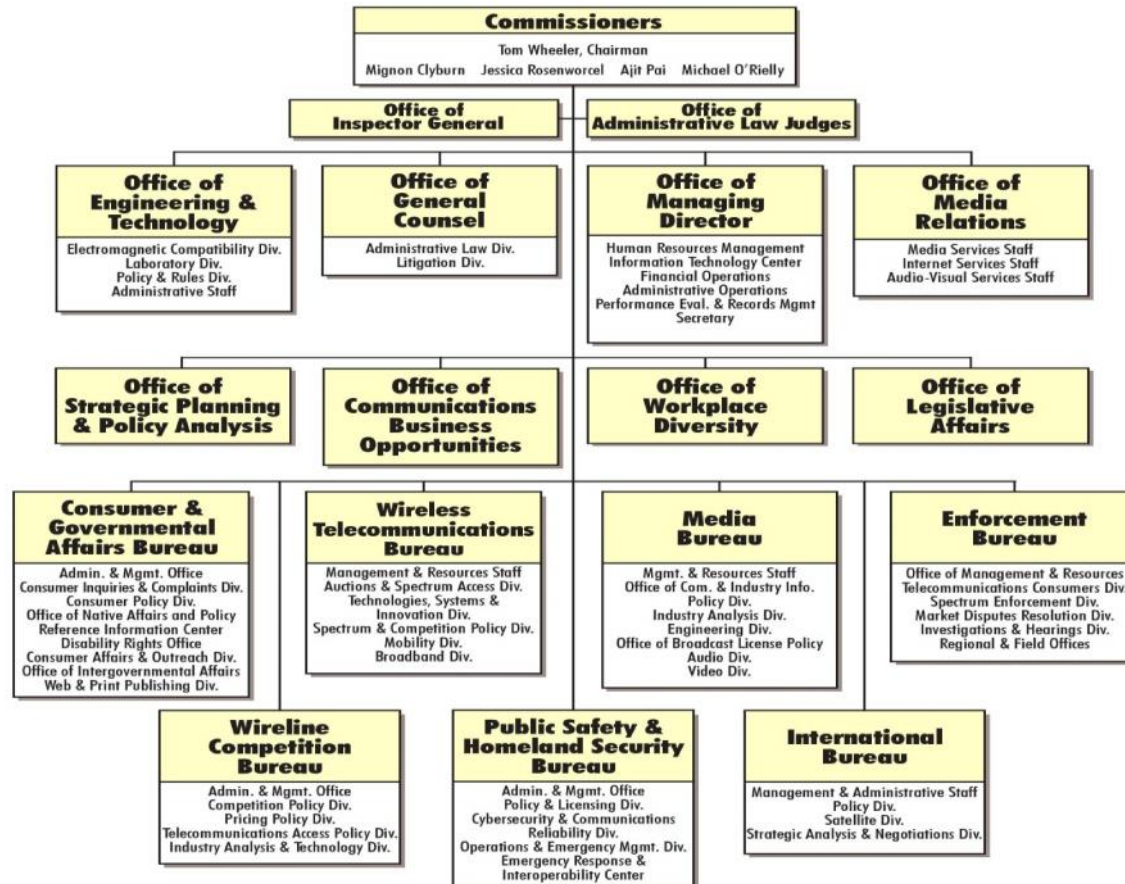


Ajit
Pai



Michael
O'Rielly

Commission Organization



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Wireline Competition Bureau

Administers the Universal Service program, which help ensure access to affordable broadband and voice services for schools, libraries, health care providers, and rural and low-income consumers.

Reviews communications industry transactions and conducts rulemakings and proceedings to ensure the availability of key inputs for communications providers, such as access to utility poles and rights of way


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Wireless Telecommunications Bureau

Handles all FCC domestic wireless telecommunications programs and policies

Covered services include cellular telephone, paging, personal communications services, and other commercial and private radio services

Auctions spectrum



Media Bureau

Develops and recommends policy and licensing programs relating to cable television service, broadcast television and broadcast radio services in the United States and its territories

Handles post-licensing policy matters regarding Direct Broadcast Satellite television service and satellite radio service

Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau

Provide information to consumers on communications policies

Coordinates telecommunications policy efforts with other governmental agencies — Federal, Tribal, state and local — in serving the public interest

Leads disability rights efforts

Handles informal complaint resolution

Handles major consumer related policy rule making initiatives

Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau

Addresses public safety, homeland security, national security, emergency management and preparedness, disaster management, and other related issues



FCC Interaction with Other Authorities

- Federal - Interagency work
- State, Tribal, and Local
The FCC works closely with state, city, local and Tribal governments to expand communications footprint
- International
Provides advice and technical assistance to U.S. trade officials in the negotiation and implementation of telecommunications trade agreements

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Decision Making Process

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Decision Making Process

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graph LR; A[Notice of Inquiry (Optional)] --> B[Notice of Proposed Rulemaking]; B --> C[Order]; C --> D[Post-Decision Actions];
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Notice of Inquiry (Optional)

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

Order

Post-Decision Actions

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Rulemaking Proceeding - Policies/Rules Adoption

- FCC is subject to the Administrative Procedures Act requirements
- Must seek public input on proposals where the FCC is trying to adopt a new policy or rule or a modification to an existing policy or rule
- FCC releases its proposal (for example, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking)
- Public is given time to comment – usually 30 days; and time to reply to other people’s comments – usually an additional 30 days
- Meetings with Commission staff are permitted during the process but must be disclosed (ex parte meetings)
- Once all comments are received, FCC makes a decision based on the information they received
- Parties can appeal decisions (motion for reconsideration) or ask for clarifications or waiver of a rule

FCC Oversight of Providers

- Wireline Common Carriers – Will need to obtain an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier designation to participate in Universal Service Fund
 - Tenth Circuit decision – No guarantee even with a designation
 - Will need to comply with certain requirements after start service. Details can be found at: <http://transition.fcc.gov/wcb/filing.html>
- Wireless Providers – Operate under license issued by the FCC following completion of an auction.
 - Build-out and other requirements associated with maintaining a license.
 - Licenses are subject to renewal
- Broadcast (FM/AM/TV) - Operate under license issued by the FCC
 - Subject to public service obligations to the communities in their service area

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Congressional Oversight of FCC

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House Energy and Commerce Committee

Leadership:
Subcommittee Chairman Fred Upton (R-MI)
Subcommittee Ranking Member Frank Pallone (D-NJ)
Subcommittee Chairman Greg Walden (R-OR)
Subcommittee Ranking Member Anna Eshoo (D-OH)

Key Members (Subcommittee on Communications and Technology)

- Rep. Bob Latta (R-OH)
- Rep. Kevin Cramer (R – ND)
- Rep. Lujan (D-NM)
- Rep. Matsui (D-CA)

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Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation

Leadership:

John Thune (R-SD)

Bill Nelson (D-FL)

Subcommittee Chairman Roger Wicker (R-MS)

Subcommittee Ranking Member Brian Schatz (D-HI)

Other Key Members (Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation and the Internet)

- Tom Udall (D-NM)
- Jerry Moran (R-KS)
- Maria Cantwell (D-WA)
- Corey Booker (D-NJ)

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Update on Areas of Interest

- Communications Act Re-Write
- Rate-of-Return Reform for Tribal Lands
- Remote Areas Fund
- Connect America Fund – Opportunity

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Questions