

Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials-International (APCO)
 International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)
 International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC)
 Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCC)
 Major County Sheriffs' Association (MCSA)
 Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association (Metro Chiefs)
 National Emergency Management Association (NEMA)
 National Emergency Number Association (NENA)
 National Sheriffs' Association (NSA)

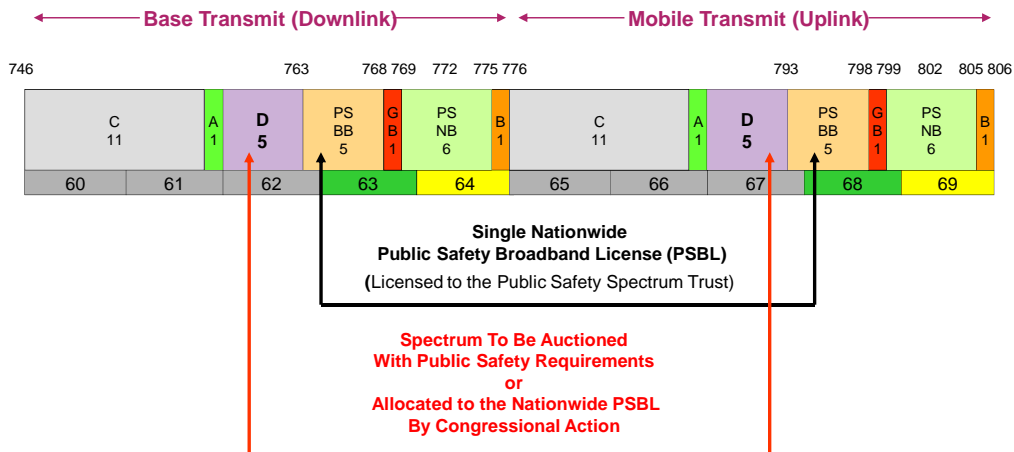
PUBLIC SAFETY NEEDS THE 700 MHz D BLOCK FOR AN EFFECTIVE NATIONWIDE PUBLIC SAFETY WIRELESS BROADBAND NETWORK

Action Required

Our police, fire, medical and other emergency professionals must have access to modern and reliable communications capabilities, including high speed data and video, to communicate with each other and with federal officials across agencies and jurisdictions during emergencies. A hardened broadband network designed to meet public safety operational requirements and provide seamless nationwide roaming capability is essential for public safety to meet its ever increasing responsibilities. Such a network is achievable if Congress and the FCC work with us and take action to support public safety as follows:

1. Pass legislation directing the FCC to remove any auction requirements for the D Block and to allocate it directly to public safety as part of the nationwide Public Safety Broadband License (PSBL). This will result in public safety having access to 20 MHz of broadband spectrum that is essential to meet public safety's expanding requirements and to maximize efficient use of broadband technologies. The legislation should direct the FCC to adopt rules that will authorize the PSBL to allow providers of public safety services to construct and operate local, regional or state broadband systems that are fully interoperable and in conformance with the technology standards adopted by the PSBL. The legislation should also expressly provide the PSBL and local entities flexibility to deploy and control their own networks or enter into network-sharing and infrastructure-sharing agreements with commercial or non-profit entities. Such Congressional action will allow the rapid deployment of a nationwide public safety wireless broadband network in both populated centers and rural areas.
2. Identify and provide an annually recurring and dedicated funding source to build and maintain the nationwide public safety wireless broadband network. In addition to funding to build and maintain the network, a source of funding is needed by the PSBL to help ensure implementation of a nationwide framework for interoperability. Such funding will support the volunteer board members of the PSBL in their efforts to identify and retain strategic planning, technical, and legal assistance needed for ongoing discussions with the FCC and potential commercial partners. To date, the PSBL has operated without any government funding.

New Upper 700 MHz Band Plan - Adopted by FCC on July 31, 2007



Background

The goal is for the public safety community to have priority access to a nationwide, interoperable, wireless broadband network that supports high speed data and video, incorporates the latest technologies utilized by the private sector, and is built and maintained to meet public safety requirements for coverage and reliability. To support this effort, the Public Safety Spectrum Trust (PSST), a not-for-profit corporation, was established in June 2007. The PSST is governed by a board of fifteen members representing a cross-section of the national public safety community. In November, 2007, the FCC issued the PSST the nationwide broadband license (the PSBL) for 12 MHz of spectrum in the upper 700 MHz band (10 MHz of broadband spectrum and 2 MHz of guardband spectrum). The FCC also adopted rules to form a public-private partnership between the PSST and the licensee of the adjacent D Block, which was to be auctioned.

The spectrum defined in the PSBL is one half of the 24 MHz of spectrum in the 700 MHz band allocated to public safety in 1997 as required by the Congress. Many local and state public safety agencies are implementing or planning to implement locally managed and licensed land mobile systems in the other 12 MHz of this spectrum for additional mission-critical public safety narrowband voice channels. In much of the country, the 700 MHz spectrum was occupied by TV broadcasters and did not become available for public safety use until June 12, 2009.

Almost all of the 700 MHz spectrum, with the exception of the D Block, was sold in a 2008 auction with the proceeds reaching almost \$20 billion. The D Block auction was not successful. On March 20, 2008, the FCC issued an order delaying further D Block action until further notice.

It is essential that public safety be able to access a broadband network that is capable of providing reliable high speed applications. Developing 4G broadband technologies will require a minimum of 20 MHz of spectrum (PSBL 10 MHz and D Block 10 MHz) to efficiently meet the current and future needs of public safety. In this regard, a minimum of 20 MHz of broadband spectrum is critical if this proposal is to be in concert with the stated objectives of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) of an eventual convergence of voice and data networks for public safety.

The vision is that a Nationwide Wireless Broadband Network would give public safety:

1. Broadband data services (such as text messaging, photos, diagrams, and streaming video) not currently available in most existing public safety land mobile systems.
2. A hardened public safety network with infrastructure built to withstand local natural hazards (tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, etc.) that would include strengthened towers and back-up power with fuel supplies to withstand long-term outages of public power sources.
3. Nationwide coverage, roaming and interoperability for local, state, and federal public safety agencies (police, fire and EMS) and other emergency services such as transportation, health care, and utilities.
4. Access to the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) similar to current commercial cellular services.
5. Push-to-talk, one-to-one and one-to-many public safety-grade voice capability.
6. Access to satellite services to provide reliable nationwide communications where terrestrial services either do not exist or are temporarily out of service.

President Obama, in his weekly remarks to the nation on January 24, 2009, said – “Finally, we will rebuild and retrofit America to meet the demands of the 21st century. That means repairing and modernizing thousands of miles of America’s roadways and providing new mass transit options for millions of Americans. It means protecting America by securing 90 major ports and creating a better communications network for local law enforcement and public safety officials in the event of an emergency. And it means expanding broadband access to millions of Americans, so business can compete on a level-playing field, wherever they’re located.”

State-of-the-art public safety communications are essential to provide the public with the protection and security it deserves. Public safety touches every facet of our lives, including the safety of our families and economic growth, and we urge Congress and the Administration to work with us so the nation’s citizens will be able to receive the best possible public safety services.