

PUBLIC NOTICE

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COMMISSION ADOPTS NEW METHOD OF COMPUTING NIGHTTIME
SERVICE AREA OF CLASS II AND III STANDARD BROADCAST STATIONS August 26, 1976

As a result of the recently announced "closed" season on the filing of applications for new standard broadcast (AM) stations and for major changes in existing stations, in the month of June 1976, we received 256 AM applications for new stations and major changes, whereas we received only 287 similar applications in the other eleven months of the year ending June 30, 1976. The drastic increase in the number of applications, coupled with our relatively small staff, requires that we search for methods of streamlining the processing of AM applications. After consultations with the Association of Federal Communications Consulting Engineers (AFCCCE), we have concluded that one change is possible at this stage. This change is announced in this Public Notice; it will be applied immediately to all currently pending applications as well as to those which are filed at the end of the "closed" season.

Currently, section 73.182(o) of our rules defines the nighttime service area of class II and class III stations to be the area within the locus of points at which the ratio of the station's groundwave field intensity to the RSS (using the 50 percent exclusion method defined in section 73.182(o) of our rules) of the 10 percent skywave signals of other co-channel stations is 20. Protection of this service area currently is accomplished by "clipping" studies. Clipping studies, as presently performed involve an extremely rigorous technical procedure. Generally, it is necessary to determine by trial and error where the 20 to 1 ratio occurs and then to determine whether the signal from the proposed operation aggravates the interference (i.e., increases the RSS) at points along the locus of the 20 to 1 ratio.

AFCCCE proposes, and we now adopt, a simplified procedure which we hope will eliminate much of the laborious and tedious work now required in "clipping" studies. Rather than using the trial and error method of determining the service area, the existing RSS at the station to be protected will be computed on a site-to-site basis. This RSS will be used to determine the nighttime limitation contour of the station instead of recomputing it at each point. Then, at each "clipping point", it will be necessary to determine only if the proposed operation would raise the previously calculated existing

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site-to-site RSS rather than recomputing the existing RSS at each "clipping point". This procedure is identical to the procedure currently used in protecting the nighttime operations of class II and class III stations in Canada and other countries under the North American Regional Broadcasting Agreement (NARBA). Unlike NARBA, however, measured values of radiation and conductivity will continue to be used.

We believe that the new procedure adopted here will result in a more expeditious processing of applications and provide, essentially, the same protection to a station's service area as at present. The Commission will, of course, continue to consider technical studies submitted which indicate inadequate protection to service areas of stations in accord with section 73.182(e) of our rules, but will not initiate such studies, as presently done, on a routine basis.

Action by the Commission August 24, 1976. Commissioners Wiley (Chairman), Lee, Hocks and Quello.

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