

**Contribution of the United States Federal Communications Commission
to the
2008 Global Symposium for Regulators Consultation**

GENERAL COMMENTS

- The United States Federal Communications Commission (FCC) appreciates the significant work of GSR Chairperson General Choochart Promphrasid and the ITU Development Bureau on this draft.
- The FCC strongly supports national, regional and global efforts to achieve affordable access to communications – particularly broadband services. Broadband technology is a key driver of economic growth and is an essential element to realizing the inclusive, people-centered and development-oriented information society envisioned by the World Summit on the Information Society. A dynamic, robust communications landscape that supports the multi-service platforms of tomorrow can more widely distribute the social and economic benefits that will improve the health, education, and security of the world’s citizens
- In general, we believe that the guidelines provide a measured and balanced view of infrastructure sharing and its role in promoting broader and more affordable access to telecommunications services. With respect to the adoption of a regulatory approach to infrastructure sharing, however, the need for and potential approach to the subject should be based on the situation in a particular region or nation of the world.
- Sharing infrastructure has long been a means to facilitate network deployment, increase access and lower costs. To facilitate network deployment in broadband in the United States, we have encouraged competition and investment in infrastructure across platforms.
- The United States is fortunate to have robust facilities-based wireless competition, vigorous wireline competition between both traditional telecommunications carriers and cable systems operators, and increasingly competition amongst all of them. Such robust facilities-based competition and corresponding lack of market power by any one provider has minimized any general need for regulatory mandates for infrastructure sharing. We therefore support the recognition in the guidelines in Section A.2. that, in some cases, infrastructure sharing can undermine competition and investment incentives and that offering of shared facilities must not be biased towards any specific service provider or types of services.
- To the contrary, we have seen the market drive infrastructure sharing where it is effective and efficient without government intervention. For example, there has been a general trend towards third party ownership of towers used for mobile cellular service and other wireless services, which in turn has led to such towers hosting equipment for multiple operators' networks.
- The U.S. has removed regulatory hurdles to foster infrastructure investment by competing broadband platforms, including DSL, cable, wireless broadband, and fiber-to-the-premises. In addition, the FCC and the U.S. National Telecommunications and Information Administration

have worked cooperatively to promote the development of broadband over power lines (BPL) as a potential third wire into the home. Collaborative reform efforts have improved the efficient use of spectrum by freeing up radio frequencies for public safety and advanced wireless applications. Federal rights-of-way management has become more streamlined and cost-based. Fiscal policies, such as accelerated depreciation for capital-intensive equipment, a tax credit for research and development, and a moratorium on taxing Internet access, are also designed to facilitate broadband deployment.

- In January 2008, the FCC began auctioning an additional 62 megahertz of spectrum in the 700 MHz band. This spectrum is well-suited for the provision of wireless broadband. It represents a critical opportunity to continue deploying wireless broadband services, especially to rural communities. The license winners for about one-third of the spectrum will be required to provide a platform that is more open to devices and applications. Licensees that operate on this spectrum will not be allowed to prevent consumers from using the wireless device or software of their choice on the licensees' networks. This open platform requirement is designed to foster innovation on the edge of the network.