

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATIONS COUNCIL T-BAND REPORT

Offered by:
International Municipal Signal Association
International Association of Fire Chiefs

WHEREAS, on February 22, 2012, the President signed Public Law 112-96 which requires the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to begin auctioning the public safety T-Band spectrum by February 2021 and clear all public safety operations from the band within 2 years of auction close, (i.e., by early 2023); and

WHEREAS, this spectrum is used in 11 metropolitan areas to support critical public safety communications and provide regional interoperability among first responders. These areas are Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C.; and,

WHEREAS, while the law provides that auction revenues can be used toward the cost of relocating public safety operations out of the band, the law is silent on identifying a new spectrum home. The law is also silent on the status of thousands of industrial/business users who also utilize this spectrum and whose frequencies are intermingled with public safety frequencies. In response to the law, the FCC placed a freeze on new and expanded T-Band operations for all licensees, including both public safety and industrial/business entities; and

WHEREAS, The National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC) is a federation of 15 national organizations whose mission is to improve public safety communications and interoperability through collaborative leadership; and

WHEREAS, the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC) responded by establishing a T-Band Working Group chartered to study the issue, assess and document the impact of the legislation and the FCC freeze on public safety, evaluate the viability and cost of potential relocation options, and provide its findings to the NPSTC Governing Board; and

WHEREAS, given the lack of alternative spectrum, cost of relocation, major disruption to vital public safety services, and likelihood that the spectrum auction would not even cover relocation costs, NPSTC believes implementing the T-Band legislation is not feasible, provides no public interest benefit, and the matter should be re-visited by Congress;

THEREFORE be it resolved that the Congressional Fire Services Institute urges Congress to give serious and thorough consideration to the critical issues raised by the NPSTC T-Band Report, and revisit the reallocation of the T-Band spectrum as warranted.