

October 16, 2020

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Alexicon *insider*

INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY FOR THE
RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

Regulatory Headlines

[FCC to Start Section 230 Review](#)

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will draft regulations intended for social media companies following a petition earlier this year by the Trump administration, the agency's chairman said Thursday.

[FCC Preps Net Neutrality Order](#)

In a move blasted by open internet advocates, Federal Communications Commission Chairman Ajit Pai has circulated an order affirming the agency's 2017 decision to revoke the Obama-era net neutrality rules.

[RDOF Bidders Announced](#)

The Federal Communications Commission announced its list of 386 companies that have qualified to bid in the first auction for the RDOF. Beginning Oct. 29, the qualified vendors will compete against each other...to see who will be able to cash-in on the \$16 billion, 10-year RDOF program that was designed to build and connect gigabit broadband speeds, along with enabling lower latency, in unserved rural areas.

[FCC Asks DoJ to Weigh In](#)

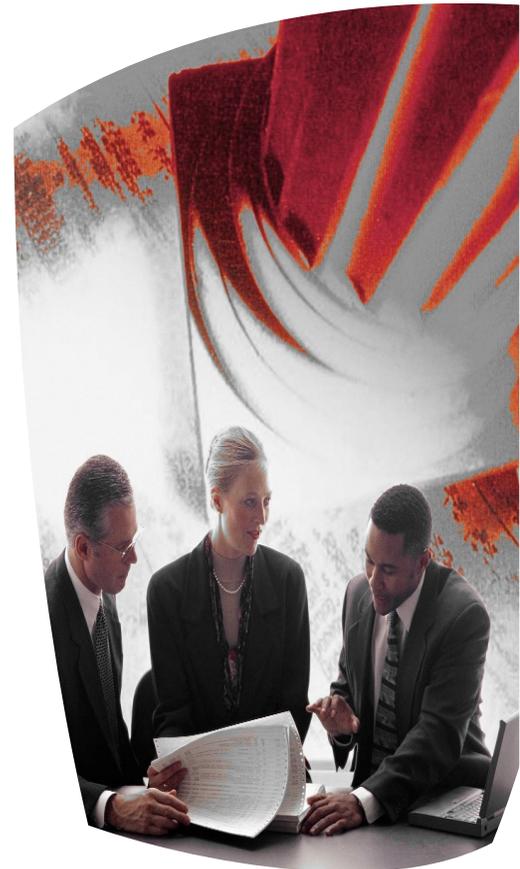
The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) asked the Justice Department and other U.S. agencies to detail if China Unicom's continued U.S operations pose national security risks, according to a letter released Friday.

[FCC Imposes \\$50m Fine on SIC](#)

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) has issued a forfeiture order imposing a fine on Sandwich Isles Communications, Waimana Enterprises, and Albert S.N. Hee of \$49,598,488 for violating the Universal Service Fund (USF) program rules that resulted in millions of dollars in improper payments.

[FCC Changes Headquarters](#)

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) has announced that it has moved its headquarters from its previous location at 445 12th Street SW, Washington, DC 20554 to 45 L Street NE Washington, DC 20554, effective immediately.



Market Watch

[PA County Invests in High-Speed Internet](#)

[Report: Divergence in Rural Broadband Speeds](#)

[Latest USDA ReConnect Program Awards](#)

[GCI's Grant to Bring Internet to Aleutians](#)



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Questions? Comments?
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Technology Trends

New and notable technology and services

Hacker Group Tries Ransomware

FIN11, a financially-motivated hacker group with a history starting since at least 2016, has adapted malicious email campaigns to transition to ransomware as the main monetization method. The group runs high-volume operations, lately targeting companies primarily in North America and Europe from almost every industry sector to steal data and to deploy Clop ransomware.

How to Protect Against DDoS Attacks

DDoS attacks are one of the crudest forms of cyberattacks, but they're also one of the most powerful and can be difficult to stop. Learn how to identify and protect against DDoS attacks with this guide. A distributed denial-of-service attack (DDoS attack) sees an attacker flooding the network or servers of the victim with a wave of internet traffic so big that their infrastructure is overwhelmed by the number of requests for access, slowing down services or taking them fully offline and preventing legitimate users from accessing the service at all.

SpaceX Hopes to Launch Satellites

After "Scrubtember" and then "Scrubtober" played havoc with the SpaceX launch schedule, Elon Musk's rocket company is eager to get more of its Starlink broadband satellites into orbit as soon as possible. Airspace closures indicate SpaceX aims to launch its next batch of orbiting routers from Cape Canaveral in Florida as soon as this Sunday, Oct. 18, to be followed just three days later by another group of 60 or so satellites launching from Florida on Wednesday, Oct. 21.

WFH: Workers Feel Abandoned

For many employees working through another month of full-time WFH while the Covid-19 pandemic shows no sign of subsiding, life away from the office is starting to take its toll. But a new survey from HP shows that despite the gloom, workers are trying to prepare for their own vision of the future of work – a future in which the IT giant predicts the rise of the "empowered employee".

Wireless Industry Against 5G Plan

The wireless industry on Tuesday urged President Trump to oppose any efforts to nationalize the 5G network infrastructure following the Pentagon's recent engagements with telecommunications companies. Groups that represent wireless telecommunication companies said a move toward 5G would be "at odds with more than a century of private sector-led innovation and investment in communications networkers."

IN FOCUS

FCC Revises 8YY Access Charge Rules

The FCC released a [Report and Order](#) last week that fundamentally changes how access charges related to toll-free traffic (8YY) are handled by the telecommunications industry. In summary, access charges for originating 8YY traffic (end office, tandem switched transport and tandem switching, and database queries) will be capped and, in the case of EO charges, phased down to bill and keep by 7/1/2023.

The R&O, which addresses concerns about traffic pumping, benchmarking abuse, mileage pumping, and database query abuse, will do the following:

End Office Charges. Originating EO charges will be capped at current levels as of the effective date of the order. Then, intrastate rates will mirror interstate rates effective 7/1/21. After that, there will be a two-year phase down to bill and keep on 7/1/22 and 7/1/23.

Tandem Switched Transport & Tandem Switching. Originating TST and TS rates will be capped at current levels as of the effective date of the R&O. Effective 7/1/21, there will be a national, non-distance sensitive joint rate of \$0.001 per minute. After that, the FCC has not yet adopted further reductions (but may revisit this in the future).

Database Query Charges. Rates capped at current levels as of the effective date of the order. As of 7/1/21, the rate will be \$0.004248 (or the current rate if lower). As of 7/1/22, the rate will be \$0.002224 (or 50% reduction of current rate, if lower). Effective 7/1/23, the rate will be \$0.0002. Carriers are also limited to charging for one database query per call.

Network Edge. The FCC declined to adopt any changes to rules surrounding the "network edge" that potentially could increase RLECs' financial responsibility for carrying 8YY calls. However, the FCC does have a proceeding open to address the network edge issue in general.

Revenue Recovery. The FCC states that "The Eligible Recovery calculation will allow rate-of-return carriers to account for most of their total lost 8YY revenues. Because the Eligible Recovery calculation requires rate-of-return carriers to subtract expected interstate switched access revenues from Base Period Revenue, adjusted downward 5% annually, a decline in originating 8YY interstate switched access revenues resulting from the reforms we make today means that less revenue will be subtracted from the adjusted Base Period Revenue. This will increase rate-of-return carriers' Eligible Recovery. Thus, the Eligible Recovery calculation will reflect rate-of-return carriers' lost interstate end office and tandem switching and transport access revenues and allow recovery of those revenues."

This R&O represents what is likely to be the FCC's next move in finishing the transition of all access charges to bill and keep—they state as much in the order. However, there is a lot of ground between now and then, including a possible shake-up at the FCC.

Reminders

- ⇒ **988 Suicide Prevention Hotline.** Mandatory 10-digit dialing transition has started for certain area codes containing 988 NXXs. See the 8/19/20 Special Bulletin and 8/20/20 email distribution of the NANPA transition schedule.
- ⇒ Providers that block robocalls are required to establish a **single point of contact** for resolving unintended or inadvertent blocking.
- ⇒ **Certifications for Robocall Mitigation** programs for carriers operating under the FCC's 2 year extension for STIR/SHAKEN adoption due by 6/30/21 at the earliest.



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