

Federal Communications Commission.  
**William F. Caton,**  
*Deputy Secretary.*  
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## FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

[Report No. AUC-03-51-A (Auction No. 51);  
 DA 03-1065]

### Auction of Regional Narrowband PCS Licenses Scheduled for September 24, 2003; Comment Sought on Package Bidding Procedures, Reserve Prices or Minimum Opening Bids, and Other Auction Procedures

**AGENCY:** Federal Communications Commission.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This document announces the auction of six regional Personal Communications Service (PCS) licenses in the 900 MHz band ("narrowband PCS") scheduled to commence on September 24, 2003 (Auction No. 51). This document also seeks comment on package bidding procedures, reserve prices or minimum opening bids and other auction procedures.

**DATES:** Comments are due on or before April 17, 2003 and reply comments are due on or before April 24, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments and reply comments must be sent by electronic

mail to the following address:  
[auction51@fcc.gov](mailto:auction51@fcc.gov).

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Auctions and Industry Analysis Division: *For legal questions:* Christopher Shields at (202) 418-0660. *For general auction questions:* Lisa Stover at (717) 338-2888. *For questions about package bidding:* Martha Stancill at (202) 418-0660 or Craig Bomberger at (202) 418-0660. Commercial Wireless Division: *For service rule questions:* Amal Abdallah at (202) 418-7307, Evan Baranoff at (202) 418-7142, JoAnn Epps at (202) 418-0620 or Dwain Livingston at (202) 418-0620.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This is a summary of the *Auction No. 51 Comment Public Notice* released on April 3, 2003. The complete text of the *Auction No. 51 Comment Public Notice*, including the attachments, is available for public inspection and copying during regular business hours at the FCC Reference Information Center, Portals II, 445 12th Street, SW., Room CY-B402, Washington, DC 20554. The *Auction No. 51 Comment Public Notice* may also be purchased from the Commission's duplicating contractor, Qualex International, Portals II, 445 12th Street, SW., Room CY-B402, Washington, DC, 20554, telephone (202) 863-2893, facsimile (202) 863-2898, or via e-mail [qualexint@aol.com](mailto:qualexint@aol.com).

#### I. General Information

1. By the *Auction No. 51 Comment Public Notice*, the Wireless

Telecommunications Bureau ("Bureau") announces the auction of six regional Personal Communications Service (PCS) licenses in the 900 MHz band ("narrowband PCS") scheduled to commence on September 24, 2003 ("Auction No. 51"). These licenses were previously included as part of the inventory for Auction No. 50, *Auction No. 50 Comment Public Notice*, 67 FR 72417 (December 5, 2002). The one comment that the Bureau received in response to the *Auction No. 50 Comment Public Notice* stated that the regional licenses are uniquely complimentary and proposed a combinatorial (package bidding) auction, *Auction No. 50 Procedures Public Notice*, 68 FR 15174 (March 28, 2003). The commenter noted that these regional licenses effectively constitute a nationwide license and suggested that they would be more highly valued as a combined package by prospective auction participants intending to deploy nationwide service. After consideration of the issues raised by the comments, the Bureau determined that it may be appropriate to use package bidding for the regional licenses. Accordingly, the Bureau removed the six regional licenses from the Auction No. 50 inventory and announced that they would be included in Auction No. 51.

2. The following table describes the licenses that will be included in Auction No. 51:

Region	Channel no.	Channel description	Frequency bands (MHz)	Bandwidth (kHz)
Northeast .....	17	12.5 kHz/50 kHz paired .....	901.8250-901.8375, 930.70-930.75	62.5
South .....	16	12.5 kHz/50 kHz paired .....	901.8125-901.8250, 930.65-930.70	62.5
South .....	17	12.5 kHz/50 kHz paired .....	901.8250-901.8375, 930.70-930.75	62.5
Midwest .....	17	12.5 kHz/50 kHz paired .....	901.8250-901.8375, 930.70-930.75	62.5
Central .....	17	12.5 kHz/50 kHz paired .....	901.8250-901.8375, 930.70-930.75	62.5
West .....	17	12.5 kHz/50 kHz paired .....	901.8250-901.8375, 930.70-930.75	62.5

3. The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 requires the Commission to "ensure that, in the scheduling of any competitive bidding under this subsection, an adequate period is allowed \* \* \* before issuance of bidding rules, to permit notice and comment on proposed auction procedures \* \* \*." Consistent with the provisions of the Balanced Budget Act and to ensure that potential bidders have adequate time to familiarize

themselves with the specific rules that will govern the day-to-day conduct of an auction, the Commission directed the Bureau, under its existing delegated authority, to seek comment on a variety of auction-specific procedures prior to the start of each auction. The Bureau therefore seeks comment on the proposed Auction No. 51 procedures as set forth in sections following the "II. Introduction to Package Bidding."

## II. Introduction to Package Bidding

4. "Package bidding" refers to an auction design in which bidders may place bids on groups, or *packages*, of licenses. A bid on a package is an all-or-nothing bid for all of the licenses in that package. This is a departure from the Bureau's usual simultaneous multiple-round (SMR) design, in which bidders only have the ability to submit individual bids for each license. Like the Bureau's existing SMR design, its