

VPS Memo

FCC Auction 108

UNASSIGNED 2.5GHZ SPECTRUM

Overview

On March 21, 2022, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released an updated Public Notice, FCC 22-24, in which the FCC announced the procedures, deadlines, minimum opening bid amounts and the adopted inventory for the upcoming unassigned 2.5GHz spectrum auction, Auction 108, which is scheduled to begin on July 29, 2022.

Important Dates & Deadlines

- The Short-Form Application (FCC Form 175) Window Opens on April 27, 2022, at 12:00PM (Eastern)
- The Short-Form Application Filing Window Closes on May 10, 2022, at 6:00PM (Eastern)
- Upfront Payments will need to be made by June 23, 2022, at 6:00PM (Eastern)
- A Mock Auction will be conducted on July 26-27, 2022
- Bidding Begins in Auction 108 on July 29, 2022

The 2.5 GHz band is prime mid-band spectrum divided into two distinct services: the Broadband Radio Service (BRS) and the Educational Broadband service (EBS). For Auction 108, the FCC is making available the unassigned EBS spectrum within the 2.5 GHz band. The 2.5GHz band is currently utilized for providing high speed data services, including voice over LTE (VoLTE), for both fixed and mobility networks.

Auction 108 will offer geographic overlay licensing and will be licensed on a county basis. Due to the nature of the geographic overlay licensing, Auction 108 participants are recommended to fully map the incumbent license holders, both historic EBS license holders and Tribal Entities that participated in the Tribal Priority Window, with respect to their targeted markets well ahead of the Auction 108 Short-Form filing.

The FCC plans to categorize the unassigned EBS spectrum into three distinct categories: C1, C2 and C3. Category C1 is comprised of 49.5 MHz of spectrum and encompasses EBS Channels A1-A3, B1-B3 and C1-C3 (2502 - 2551.5 MHz), as shown in Figure 1 below. Category C2 is comprised of 50.5 MHz of spectrum and encompasses EBS

Channels D1-D3, the J Channels and Channels A4-G4 (2551.5 - 2602 MHz), as shown in Figure 1 below. Category C3 is comprised of 17.5 MHz of spectrum and encompasses EBS Channels G1-G3 and KG1-KG3 (2615 - 2616 MHz and 2673.5 – 2690 MHz), as shown in Figure 1 below.

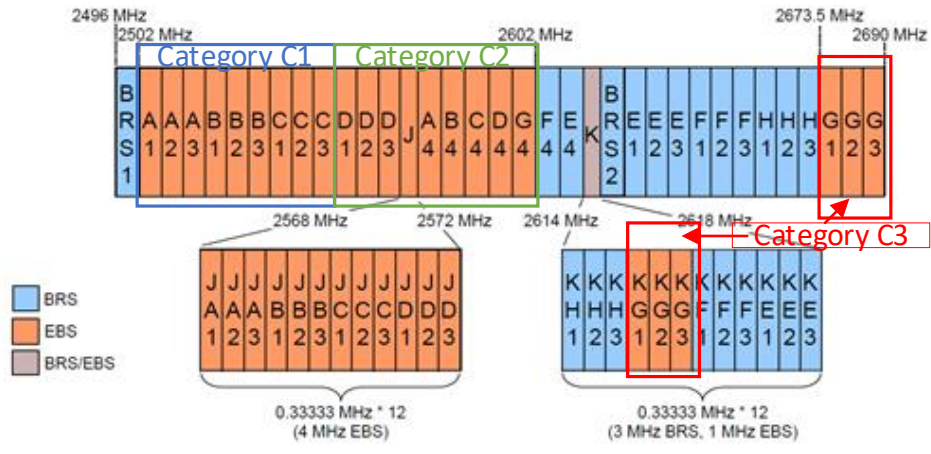


Figure 1 - 2.5 GHz Band Plan¹

Vantage Point’s wireless team can help prepare your company for success in the upcoming Auction 108. Prior to the opening of the Auction 108 Short-Form application window is the perfect time to have Vantage Point’s wireless team review license availability in any counties that your company plans to pursue and discuss how this spectrum may be a good fit for your current or future operations. Many of our clients are looking at service expansion opportunities in the next couple of years with unprecedented state and federal grant funding and this spectrum may be one of the best opportunities to get up to 117.5 MHz of powerful mid-band spectrum in county sized licenses.

Additional Information

VPS will be providing further information upon the FCC posting the final rules on its e-CFR system. In the meantime, if you have any questions or require any additional information, please feel free to contact any of the following VPS staff members for assistance:

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¹ Edited version of the band plan, found here: <https://www.fcc.gov/economics-analytics/auctions-division/auctions/band-plans>