

Questions and Concerns About the Use of Sony Wireless Systems in the DTV Era

Q What are the FCC's future plans? How might they affect wireless usage?

A The FCC plans to auction off parts of the spectrum (including frequencies in the 700MHz-800MHz range) through competitive bidding, starting Jan. 1, 2001. It will likely be several months to a year (or more in some areas) after this date before activity starts to be a factor with wireless mics. This usage could be quite varied, including: DTV, PCS services, mobile communications, etc... Currently, the FCC has allocated channels 63, 64, 68 & 69 to Public Safety usage. This will include services such as Fire, Police, EMS, and disaster relief. This usage will be licensed, intermittent in nature and likely a digital system. This would make this type of usage similar to DTV, although the power levels are likely much lower. Also, the band-width of the signal is quite a bit smaller, so it will be easier to find frequencies around it that are usable. This differs a lot from DTV which has equal energy across the entire 6MHz band-width of each channel. RF engineers are of the consensus that this type of broadcast will most likely be an FSK, digital FM broadcast, which should not present a major problem, since the system will be "keyed" to a specific frequency. At this time it isn't clear exactly what effect this type of transmission will have on secondary users (i.e.-wireless) operating adjacent to or on the same frequency. This is currently being studied at an FCC compliance lab and results will be made available shortly.

Q Will I be able to use my Sony 800MHz UHF wireless mic system legally in the future?

A The FCC has stated publicly that: All secondary usage (i.e.: wireless mic systems) in the areas of channel 60-69 (where public safety has been allocated), will be allowed to operate legally, at least until the end of the DTV transition period (Jan. 1, 2006). It is also important to note, that concern about secondary usage interfering with Public Safety is highly unlikely since, 1) Public Safety operates at much higher power level and over greater distance than wireless. 2) This usage will be a digital system, which is keyed to ignore other signals. Based on these facts, any concern over being forced to discontinue use, or FCC fines for interfering with a primary use facility, would be unfounded.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (219) 929-4127 extension 15.

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