

U.S. Code

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§ 303. Powers and duties of Commission

Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, the Commission from time to time, as public convenience, interest, or necessity requires, shall—

- (a) Classify radio stations;
- (b) Prescribe the nature of the service to be rendered by each class of licensed stations and each station within any class;
- (c) Assign bands of frequencies to the various classes of stations, and assign frequencies for each individual station and determine the power which each station shall use and the time during which it may operate;
- (d) Determine the location of classes of stations or individual stations;
- (e) Regulate the kind of apparatus to be used with respect to its external effects and the purity and sharpness of the emissions from each station and from the apparatus therein;
- (f) Make such regulations not inconsistent with law as it may deem necessary to prevent interference between stations and to carry out the provisions of this chapter: Provided, however, That changes in the frequencies, authorized power, or in the times of operation of any station, shall not be made without the consent of the station licensee unless the Commission shall determine that such changes will promote public convenience or interest or will serve public necessity, or the provisions of this chapter will be more fully complied with;
- (g) Study new uses for radio, provide for experimental uses of frequencies, and generally encourage the larger and more effective use of radio in the public interest;
- (h) Have authority to establish areas or zones to be served by any station;
- (i) Have authority to make special regulations applicable to radio stations engaged in chain broadcasting;
- (j) Have authority to make general rules and regulations requiring stations to keep such records of programs, transmissions of energy, communications, or signals as it may deem desirable;
- (k) Have authority to exclude from the requirements of any regulations in whole or in part any radio station upon railroad rolling stock, or to modify such regulations in its discretion;
- (l)
 - (1) Have authority to prescribe the qualifications of station operators, to classify them according to the duties to be performed, to fix the forms of such licenses, and to issue them to persons who are found to be qualified by the Commission and who otherwise are legally eligible for employment in the United States, except that such requirement relating to eligibility for employment in the United States shall not apply in the case of licenses issued by the Commission to
 - (A) persons holding United States pilot certificates; or
 - (B) persons holding foreign aircraft pilot certificates which are valid in the United States, if the foreign government involved has entered into a reciprocal agreement under which such foreign government does not impose any similar requirement relating to eligibility for employment upon citizens of the United States;

(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1) of this subsection, an individual to whom a radio station is licensed under the provisions of this chapter may be issued an operator's license to operate that station.

(3) In addition to amateur operator licenses which the Commission may issue to aliens pursuant to paragraph (2) of this subsection, and notwithstanding section 301 of this title and paragraph (1) of this subsection, the Commission may issue authorizations, under such conditions and terms as it may prescribe, to permit an alien licensed by his government as an amateur radio operator to operate his amateur radio station licensed by his government in the United States, its possessions, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico provided there is in effect a multilateral or bilateral agreement, to which the United States and the alien's government are parties, for such operation on a reciprocal basis by United States amateur radio operators. Other provisions of this chapter and of subchapter II of chapter 5, and chapter 7, of title 5 shall not be applicable to any request or application for or modification, suspension, or cancellation of any such authorization.

(m)

(1) Have authority to suspend the license of any operator upon proof sufficient to satisfy the Commission that the licensee—

(A) has violated, or caused, aided, or abetted the violation of, any provision of any Act, treaty, or convention binding on the United States, which the Commission is authorized to administer, or any regulation made by the Commission under any such Act, treaty, or convention; or

(B) has failed to carry out a lawful order of the master or person lawfully in charge of the ship or aircraft on which he is employed; or

(C) has willfully damaged or permitted radio apparatus or installations to be damaged; or

(D) has transmitted superfluous radio communications or signals or communications containing profane or obscene words, language, or meaning, or has knowingly transmitted—

(1) false or deceptive signals or communications, or

(2) a call signal or letter which has not been assigned by proper authority to the station he is operating; or

(E) has willfully or maliciously interfered with any other radio communications or signals; or

(F) has obtained or attempted to obtain, or has assisted another to obtain or attempt to obtain, an operator's license by fraudulent means.

(2) No order of suspension of any operator's license shall take effect until fifteen days' notice in writing thereof, stating the cause for the proposed suspension, has been given to the operator licensee who may make written application to the Commission at any time within said fifteen days for a hearing upon such order. The notice to the operator licensee shall not be effective until actually received by him, and from that time he shall have fifteen days in which to mail the said application. In the event that physical conditions prevent mailing of the application at the expiration of the fifteen-day period, the application shall then be mailed as soon as possible thereafter, accompanied by a satisfactory explanation of the delay. Upon receipt by the Commission of such application for hearing, said order of suspension shall be held in abeyance until the conclusion of the hearing which shall be conducted under such rules as the Commission may prescribe. Upon the conclusion of said hearing the Commission may affirm, modify, or revoke said order of suspension.

(n) Have authority to inspect all radio installations associated with stations required to be licensed by any Act, or which the Commission by rule has authorized to operate without a license under section 307 (e)(1) of this title, or which are subject to the provisions of any Act,

treaty, or convention binding on the United States, to ascertain whether in construction, installation, and operation they conform to the requirements of the rules and regulations of the Commission, the provisions of any Act, the terms of any treaty or convention binding on the United States, and the conditions of the license or other instrument of authorization under which they are constructed, installed, or operated.

- (o)** Have authority to designate call letters of all stations;
- (p)** Have authority to cause to be published such call letters and such other announcements and data as in the judgment of the Commission may be required for the efficient operation of radio stations subject to the jurisdiction of the United States and for the proper enforcement of this chapter;
- (q)** Have authority to require the painting and/or illumination of radio towers if and when in its judgment such towers constitute, or there is a reasonable possibility that they may constitute, a menace to air navigation. The permittee or licensee, and the tower owner in any case in which the owner is not the permittee or licensee, shall maintain the painting and/or illumination of the tower as prescribed by the Commission pursuant to this section. In the event that the tower ceases to be licensed by the Commission for the transmission of radio energy, the owner of the tower shall maintain the prescribed painting and/or illumination of such tower until it is dismantled, and the Commission may require the owner to dismantle and remove the tower when the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Agency determines that there is a reasonable possibility that it may constitute a menace to air navigation.
- (r)** Make such rules and regulations and prescribe such restrictions and conditions, not inconsistent with law, as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter, or any international radio or wire communications treaty or convention, or regulations annexed thereto, including any treaty or convention insofar as it relates to the use of radio, to which the United States is or may hereafter become a party.
- (s)** Have authority to require that apparatus designed to receive television pictures broadcast simultaneously with sound be capable of adequately receiving all frequencies allocated by the Commission to television broadcasting when such apparatus is shipped in interstate commerce, or is imported from any foreign country into the United States, for sale or resale to the public.
- (t)** Notwithstanding the provisions of section 301 (e) of this title, have authority, in any case in which an aircraft registered in the United States is operated (pursuant to a lease, charter, or similar arrangement) by an aircraft operator who is subject to regulation by the government of a foreign nation, to enter into an agreement with such government under which the Commission shall recognize and accept any radio station licenses and radio operator licenses issued by such government with respect to such aircraft.
- (u)** Require that apparatus designed to receive television pictures broadcast simultaneously with sound be equipped with built-in decoder circuitry designed to display closed-captioned television transmissions when such apparatus is manufactured in the United States or imported for use in the United States, and its television picture screen is 13 inches or greater in size.
- (v)** Have exclusive jurisdiction to regulate the provision of direct-to-home satellite services. As used in this subsection, the term "direct-to-home satellite services" means the distribution or broadcasting of programming or services by satellite directly to the subscriber's premises without the use of ground receiving or distribution equipment, except at the subscriber's premises or in the uplink process to the satellite.
- (w)** Omitted.
- (x)** Require, in the case of an apparatus designed to receive television signals that are shipped in interstate commerce or manufactured in the United States and that have a picture screen 13 inches or greater in size (measured diagonally), that such apparatus be equipped with a feature designed to enable viewers to block display of all programs with a common rating, except as otherwise permitted by regulations pursuant to section 330 (c)(4) of this title.
- (y)** Have authority to allocate electromagnetic spectrum so as to provide flexibility of use, if—
 - (1)** such use is consistent with international agreements to which the United States is a

party; and

- (2)** the Commission finds, after notice and an opportunity for public comment, that—
- (A)** such an allocation would be in the public interest;
 - (B)** such use would not deter investment in communications services and systems, or technology development; and
 - (C)** such use would not result in harmful interference among users.

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