

**FHH Telecom Law
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3G Licensing Rules

Long awaited mobile broadband services -- also known as "3G" -- took another step toward deployment with the FCC's adoption of licensing rules for the 1710-1755 and 2110-2155 MHz bands. That 90 MHz of spectrum will be licensed in blocks of 10, 10, 20, 20, and 30 MHz, although licensees will be free to aggregate or partition their holdings. The FCC will auction the five blocks using three different maps of geographic areas: Economic Areas, Cellular Market Areas, and Regional Economic Area Groups. Licenses will issue under the Part 27 rules, "Miscellaneous Wireless Communications Services" -- a regulatory scheme that gives licensees a great deal of flexibility in how their spectrum is used. The initial license period is 15 years, with 10 year renewal terms. Licensees must be providing "substantial service" by the end of the license term, but have no construction requirements until then. Information on technical rules was not available at press time. (See page 3 for a related story on clearing spectrum for 3G.)