

FHH Telecom Law
March 2003

Expanded Wi-Fi
Advances

Our last issue reported that efforts to triple the size of the unlicensed Wi-Fi band at 5.8 GHz had met stiff opposition from the U.S. military. Since then, the FCC and the federal Government, including the Department of Defense and NASA, have reached agreement on private, unlicensed use of the frequencies in question. Commercial devices will presumably be required to incorporate a "listen-before-transmit" mechanism to avoid interfering with Government equipment. The agreement covers the technical details of that mechanism, and the frequencies involved. Thanks to the agreement, the U.S. will be able to put forward a consistent position at the World Radio Conference that convenes in Geneva in June.