

## **FHH Telecom Law June 2004**

### **On the FCC Auction Block**

*By: Raymond J. Quianzon  
703-812-0424  
quianzon@fhhlaw.com*

*Three Direct Broadcast Satellite Licenses (July 14, 2004):* The FCC will begin the auction of three of the eight satellite orbital licenses that are authorized to the United States. The licenses, for systems operating at 175 degrees West Longitude and 166 degrees W.L are for 32 channels and the license at 157 degrees W.L. is for 29 channels. (EchoStar uses three of the channels.) These licenses are for locations that primarily will cover the western United States. Bidding on the 32 channel licenses will begin at \$ 3.2 million and the 157 degree W.L. license starts at \$ 5.8 million. Applications must be filed by May 21 and up-front payments must be submitted by June 18.

*24 GHz Licenses (July 28, 2004):* The FCC is making 880 licenses across the United States available for fixed digital communications applications. The licenses are for paired 40 MHz segments (80 MHz per license) and operate between 24.250 and 24.450 GHz with paired channels between 25.050 and 25.250 GHz. Opening bids, which are based upon population range from \$2500 for Aberdeen, SD to \$617,000 for New York City. Applications must be filed by June 4 and up-front payments must be submitted by June 29.

*Automated Maritime Telecommunications Systems (September 15, 2004):* Twenty licenses are up for auction to provide service in the 217-220 MHz band. The licenses are for very large areas of the United States (such as the entire Mississippi River Basin area and the Great Lakes). Much of this spectrum currently is encumbered by three operators in the nation whose operations will need to be protected by any license winner. Opening bids range from \$631,000 for the Mississippi River Area to \$4,700 for Alaska. The FCC has not yet set application and up-front payment deadlines.

*FM Radio Licenses (November 3, 2004):* Bidders will have a chance at 290 different FM radio construction permits beginning in November. The auction will be for specific licenses of designated strengths throughout the nation. Clients interested in the frequencies at auction may review them at our firm's website, [http://www.fhhlaw.com/articles\\_fm\\_auctions\\_37.asp](http://www.fhhlaw.com/articles_fm_auctions_37.asp) The FCC has yet to announce the various deadlines for the FM permits.