

**FHH Telecom Law**  
**March 2007**

**Wireless Bureau Gets Down To It**

*By Donald Evans*  
*evans@fhhlaw.com*  
*703-812-0430*

So often we complain about inaction at the FCC that it's nice for a change to be able to report on a welcome spate of new activity. As veteran FCC watchers know, the full Commission tends to focus on great policy issues and rulemakings while the nitty-gritty, ground-level, day-to-day aspect of FCC activity – the part that is usually of most pressing concern to companies who need a particular authorization in order to conduct business -- is taken care of at the Bureau level. The FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau had been drifting without a chief since April of 2005. Though the Bureau had a very capable "acting chief" in place, observers had noted that many routine petitions, waivers, applications with some quirk, and contested proceedings had simply been sitting in limbo. Presumably, the acting chief was awaiting appointment of a permanent chief to act on any non-routine matters. At the end of December, Chairman Martin finally appointed a new permanent Bureau Chief, Fred Campbell, who had been serving as his personal advisor on wireless issues. Fred moved immediately to clear out the backlog of pending cases. In January there was a flood of orders resolving reconsideration petitions, assessing fines, granting or denying applications, and otherwise meting out FCC justice. Applicants who have spent a long time in limbo can attest that it is a subtle but nevertheless painful form of torture. Indeed, sometimes it's even better to have an application or petition be denied than to simply be left hanging indefinitely without knowing where you stand. It has been a great relief to see things moving again at the Wireless Bureau, and we hope that the energy and activity level remains high.