

§ 73.1

- 73.6001 Eligibility and service requirements.
- 73.6002 Licensing requirements.
- 73.6003–73.6005 [Reserved]
- 73.6006 Channel assignments.
- 73.6007 Power limitations.
- 73.6008 Distance computations.
- 73.6010 Class A TV station protected contour.
- 73.6011 Protection of TV broadcast stations.
- 73.6012 Protection of Class A TV, low power TV, and TV translator stations.
- 73.6013 Protection of DTV stations.
- 73.6014 Protection of digital Class A TV stations.
- 73.6016 Digital Class A TV station protection of TV broadcast stations.
- 73.6017 Digital Class A TV station protection of Class A TV and digital Class A TV stations.
- 73.6018 Digital Class A TV station protection of DTV stations.
- 73.6019 Digital Class A TV station protection of low power TV, TV translator, digital low power TV and digital TV translator stations.
- 73.6020 Protection of stations in the land mobile radio service.
- 73.6022 Negotiated interference and relocation agreements.
- 73.6023 Distributed transmission systems.
- 73.6024 Transmission standards and system requirements.
- 73.6025 Antenna system and station location.
- 73.6026 Broadcast regulations applicable to Class A television stations.
- 73.6027 Class A TV notifications concerning interference to radio astronomy, research and receiving installations.

Subpart K—Application and Selection Procedures for Reserved Noncommercial Educational Channels, and for Certain Applications for Noncommercial Educational Stations on Non-Reserved Channels

- 73.7000 Definition of terms (as used in subpart K only).
- 73.7001 Services subject to evaluation by point system.
- 73.7002 Fair distribution of service on reserved band FM channels.
- 73.7003 Point system selection procedures.
- 73.7004 Petitions to deny tentative selectee(s).
- 73.7005 Holding period.

ALPHABETICAL INDEX—PART 73

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47 CFR Ch. I (10–1–11 Edition)

Subpart A—AM Broadcast Stations

§ 73.1 Scope.

This subpart contains those rules which apply exclusively to the AM broadcast service and are in addition to those rules in Subpart H which are common to all AM, FM and TV broadcast services, commercial and non-commercial.

[47 FR 8587, Mar. 1, 1982]

§ 73.14 AM broadcast definitions.

AM broadcast band. The band of frequencies extending from 535 to 1705 kHz.

AM broadcast channel. The band of frequencies occupied by the carrier and the upper and lower sidebands of an AM broadcast signal with the carrier frequency at the center. Channels are designated by their assigned carrier frequencies. The 117 carrier frequencies assigned to AM broadcast stations begin at 540 kHz and progress in 10 kHz steps to 1700 kHz. (See § 73.21 for the classification of AM broadcast channels).

AM broadcast station. A broadcast station licensed for the dissemination of radio communications intended to be received by the public and operated on a channel in the AM broadcast band.

Amplitude modulated stage. The radio-frequency stage to which the modulator is coupled and in which the carrier wave is modulated in accordance with the system of amplitude modulation and the characteristics of the modulating wave.

Amplitude modulator stage. The last amplifier stage of the modulating wave amplitude modulates a radio-frequency stage.

Antenna current. The radio-frequency current in the antenna with no modulation.

Antenna input power. The product of the square of the antenna current and the antenna resistance at the point where the current is measured.

Antenna resistance. The total resistance of the transmitting antenna system at the operating frequency and at the point at which the antenna current is measured.

Auxiliary facility. An auxiliary facility is an AM antenna tower(s) separate

from the main facility's antenna tower(s), permanently installed at the same site or at a different location, from which an AM station may broadcast for short periods without prior Commission authorization or notice to the Commission while the main facility is not in operation (e.g., where tower work necessitates turning off the main antenna or where lightning has caused damage to the main antenna or transmission system) (See § 73.1675).

Blanketing. The interference which is caused by the presence of an AM broadcast signal of one volt per meter (V/m) or greater strengths in the area adjacent to the antenna of the transmitting station. The 1 V/m contour is referred to as the blanket contour and the area within this contour is referred to as the blanket area.

Carrier-amplitude regulation (Carrier shift). The change in amplitude of the carrier wave in an amplitude-modulated transmitter when modulation is applied under conditions of symmetrical modulation.

Combined audio harmonics. The arithmetical sum of the amplitudes of all the separate harmonic components. Root sum square harmonic readings may be accepted under conditions prescribed by the FCC.

Critical hours. The two hour period immediately following local sunrise and the two hour period immediately preceding local sunset.

Daytime. The period of time between local sunrise and local sunset.

Effective field; Effective field strength. The root-mean-square (RMS) value of the inverse distance fields at a distance of 1 kilometer from the antenna in all directions in the horizontal plane. The term "field strength" is synonymous with the term "field intensity" as contained elsewhere in this Part.

Equipment performance measurements. The measurements performed to determine the overall performance characteristics of a broadcast transmission system from point of program origination at main studio to sampling of signal as radiated. (See § 73.1590)

Experimental period. the time between 12 midnight local time and local sunrise, used by AM stations for tests, maintenance and experimentation.

Frequency departure. The amount of variation of a carrier frequency or center frequency from its assigned value.

Incidental phase modulation. The peak phase deviation (in radians) resulting from the process of amplitude modulation.

Input power. Means the product of the direct voltage applied to the last radio stage and the total direct current flowing to the last radio stage, measured without modulation.

Intermittent service area. Means the area receiving service from the groundwave of a broadcast station but beyond the primary service area and subject to some interference and fading.

Last radio stage. The radio-frequency power amplifier stage which supplies power to the antenna.

Left (or right) signal. The electrical output of a microphone or combination of microphones placed so as to convey the intensity, time, and location of sounds originated predominately to the listener's left (or right) of the center of the performing area.

Left (or right) stereophonic channel. The left (or right) signal as electrically reproduced in reception of AM stereophonic broadcasts.

Main channel. The band of audio frequencies from 50 to 10,000 Hz which amplitude modulates the carrier.

Maximum percentage of modulation. The greatest percentage of modulation that may be obtained by a transmitter without producing in its output, harmonics of the modulating frequency in excess of those permitted by these regulations. (See § 73.1570)

Maximum rated carrier power. The maximum power at which the transmitter can be operated satisfactorily and is determined by the design of the transmitter and the type and number of vacuum tubes or other amplifier devices used in the last radio stage.

Model I facility. A station operating in the 1605-1705 kHz band featuring fulltime operation with stereo, competitive technical quality, 10 kW daytime power, 1 kW nighttime power, non-directional antenna (or a simple directional antenna system), and separated by 400-800 km from other co-channel stations.

§ 73.21

47 CFR Ch. I (10–1–11 Edition)

Model II facility. A station operating in the 535–1605 kHz band featuring fulltime operation, competitive technical quality, wide area daytime coverage with nighttime coverage at least 15% of the daytime coverage.

Nighttime. The period of time between local sunset and local sunrise.

Nominal power. The antenna input power less any power loss through a dissipative network and, for directional antennas, without consideration of adjustments specified in paragraphs (b)(1) and (b)(2) of § 73.51 of the rules. However, for AM broadcast applications granted or filed before June 3, 1985, nominal power is specified in a system of classifications which include the following values: 50 kW, 25 kW, 10 kW, 5 kW, 2.5 kW, 1 kW, 0.5 kW, and 0.25 kW. The specified nominal power for any station in this group of stations will be retained until action is taken on or after June 3, 1985, which involves a change in the technical facilities of the station.

Percentage modulation (amplitude)

In a positive direction:

$$M = \frac{\text{MAX} - C \times 100}{c}$$

c

In a negative direction:

$$M = \frac{C - \text{MIN} \times 100}{c}$$

c

Where:

M = Modulation level in percent.

MAX = Instantaneous maximum level of the modulated radio frequency envelope.

MIN = Instantaneous minimum level of the modulated radio frequency envelope.

C = (Carrier) level of radio frequency envelope without modulation.

Plate modulation. The modulation produced by introduction of the modulating wave into the plate circuit of any tube in which the carrier frequency wave is present.

Primary service area. Means the service area of a broadcast station in which the groundwave is not subject to objectionable interference or objectionable fading.

Proof of performance measurements or antenna proof of performance measurements. The measurements of field strengths made to determine the radiation

pattern or characteristics of an AM directional antenna system.

Secondary service area. Means the service area of a broadcast station served by the skywave and not subject to objectionable interference and in which the signal is subject to intermittent variations in strength.

Stereophonic channel. The band of audio frequencies from 50 to 10,000 Hz containing the stereophonic information which modulates the radio frequency carrier.

Stereophonic crosstalk. An undesired signal occurring in the main channel from modulation of the stereophonic channel or that occurring in the stereophonic channel from modulation of the main channel.

Stereophonic pilot tone. An audio tone of fixed or variable frequency modulating the carrier during the transmission of stereophonic programs.

Stereophonic separation. The ratio of the electrical signal caused in the right (or left) stereophonic channel to the electrical signal caused in the left (or right) stereophonic channel by the transmission of only a right (or left) signal.

Sunrise and sunset. For each particular location and during any particular month, the time of sunrise and sunset as specified in the instrument of authorization (See § 73.1209).

White area. The area or population which does not receive interference-free primary service from an authorized AM station or does not receive a signal strength of at least 1 mV/m from an authorized FM station.

[47 FR 8587, Mar. 1, 1982, as amended at 47 FR 13164, Mar. 29, 1982; 47 FR 13812, Apr. 1, 1982; 50 FR 18821, May 2, 1985; 50 FR 47054, Nov. 14, 1985; 56 FR 64856, Dec. 12, 1991; 62 FR 51058, Sept. 30, 1997; 66 FR 20755, Apr. 25, 2001]

§ 73.21 Classes of AM broadcast channels and stations.

(a) **Clear channel.** A clear channel is one on which stations are assigned to serve wide areas. These stations are protected from objectionable interference within their primary service areas and, depending on the class of station, their secondary service areas. Stations operating on these channels are classified as follows: