

MYTH: Aviation Raised 5G Concerns at the Last Minute

FACT: Aviation Started Raising Concerns as Far Back as May 2018

TIMELINE

2018

March 2018 – The Mobile Now Act is enacted, authorizing the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) through notice and comment on the feasibility of allowing commercial wireless services, licensed or unlicensed, to use or share use of the frequencies between 3700 megahertz and 4200 megahertz.

April 2018 – **FCC** issues public notice encouraging the public to comment on potential for more intensive use of the 3.7-4.2 GHz Band to submit those filings in this docket.

May 2018 – **A4A** files comments in response to FCC public notice raising radio altimeter and satellite communication (SATCOM) interference concerns.

July 2018 – **FCC** issues Order and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Expanding Flexible Use of the 3.7 to 4.2 GHz spectrum band.

October 2018 – **AVIATION SPECTRUM RESOURCES, INC. (ASRI)** files comments to FCC reiterating aviation industry concerns on the potential impact to radio altimeter and SATCOM.

2019

October 2019 – **AEROSPACE VEHICLE SYSTEMS INSTITUTE (AVSI)** files “Behavior of Radio Altimeters Subject to Out-Of-Band Interference” report in FCC rulemaking docket, raising the potential for interference issues affecting the 4.2-4.4 GHz band start for commercial aircraft.

November 22, 2019 – **HOUSE TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE (T&I) COMMITTEE** Chair DeFazio sends letter to FCC warning of potential interference to radio altimeters from 5G deployment in the C-Band.

2020

February 21, 2020 – **AVIATION INDUSTRY COALITION** sends ex parte letter and presentation to FCC raising safety concerns.

February 28, 2020 – **FCC** issues Order to move forward with auctioning “C-band” spectrum.

May 2020 – **AVIATION INDUSTRY COALITION** files petitions for reconsideration of the FCC Order.

October 7, 2020 – **RADIO TECHNICAL COMMISSION FOR AERONAUTICS (RTCA)** completes a six-month assessment of interference from 5G network emissions with radio altimeter performance, revealing a “major risk that 5G telecommunications systems in the 3.7-3.9 GHz band will cause harmful interference to [radio] altimeters on all types of civil aircraft.”

December 2020 – **AVIATION INDUSTRY COALITION** submits letter of support for petition for reconsideration.

December 1, 2020 – **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (DOT) AND FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION (FAA)** submit joint letter voicing interference concerns to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and request NTIA to submit their letter to the FCC public docket. NTIA did not submit the letter to the FCC docket.

December 7, 2020 – HOUSE T&I COMMITTEE Chair DeFazio sends letter to FCC asking the agency to delay its C-Band auction.

December 8, 2020 – FCC begins auction of the 3.7-3.98 GHz frequency band.

2021

February 2021 – FCC completes \$81 billion auction of the 3.7-3.98 GHz frequency band and subsequently issues licenses to Verizon and AT&T to begin deployment on December 5, 2021.

May 2021 – AVIATION INDUSTRY COALITION sends letter to FCC supporting aviation petition for reconsideration and responding to Cellular Telecommunications Industry Association (CTIA) FCC filing.

July 2021 – AVIATION INDUSTRY COALITION sends letter to DOT raising imminent safety risk facing aviation industry.

August 2021 – AVIATION INDUSTRY COALITION sends presentation to FCC raising safety concerns and asking for a taskforce to resolve concerns.

November 2, 2021 – FAA issues Special Airworthiness Information Bulletin alerting manufacturers, operators and pilots that action might be required to address potential interference with aircraft radio altimeter caused by the rollout of 5G wireless broadband on December 5, 2021.

November 3, 2021 – FAA and FCC announce that AT&T and Verizon have agreed to delay the 5G C-band deployment from December 5, 2021 to January 5, 2022.

November 5, 2021 – AVIATION INDUSTRY COALITION sends letter to National Economic Council (NEC) urging it to “work with the FCC and FAA to convene a joint industry working group and continue to delay the deployment of 5G technologies in this band until the safety and efficiency of the [National Air Space] is ensured.”

November 19, 2021 – HOUSE T&I COMMITTEE Chair DeFazio and Aviation Subcommittee Chair Larsen send letter to FCC urging the agency not to go through with any 5G C-band deployments until the FAA conducts a risk assessment that proves no further “mitigations are necessary or that all necessary mitigations are in place,” and requesting FCC to provide FAA with any technical data related to aviation and 5G broadband service.

December 7, 2021 – FAA issues two Airworthiness Directives (ADs) identifying safety concerns and outlining potential flight restrictions. The ADs state that “radio altimeters cannot be relied upon to perform their intended function if they experience interference from wireless broadband operations in the 3.7-3.98 GHz frequency band (5G C-Band).”

December 22, 2021 – A4A, AEROSPACE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION (AIA) AND CTIA announce agreement to work together in coordination with the FAA and FCC to “identify a path forward.”

December 23, 2021 – FAA issues second Special Airworthiness Information Bulletin and a Safety Alert for Operators regarding the “Risk of Potential Adverse Effects on Radio Altimeters when Operating in the Presence of 5G C-Band Interference.”

December 30, 2021 – A4A files emergency petition with the FCC to stay initiation of the deployment of 5G around certain airports until a solution can be identified.

2022

January 4, 2022 – WHITE HOUSE announces agreement with Verizon and AT&T to delay the 5G C-band deployment by two weeks from January 5 to January 19, 2022 and to reduce the 5G signal power and not activate transmitters in close proximity to up to 50 priority airports for six months through July 5, 2022.