

To: Regional Directors, Regional Managers
From: Ken Jong, Deputy Program Director - Engineering
Copy: John Chirco, Infrastructure; Rick Schmedes, Systems; Rebecca Kohlstrand, Environmental
Date: June 18, 2012
Subject: Notice to Designers No. 9 – Radio Tower location suitability investigation via FCC's TOWAIR online tool

PURPOSE

This memorandum establishes the requirement for the Regional Teams to evaluate suitability of identified radio tower locations using the FCC online tool, TOWAIR as part of the environmental investigations.

While final tower permitting will be conducted by the Design/Builder, the information generated by the TOWAIR investigation will indicate which antenna structures require FAA approval and FCC registration thereby:

1. Providing a necessary element of the environmental clearance task
2. Providing the Regional Teams indication to select or suggest alternative tower sites that do not require registration
2. Providing PMT information to possibly favor one site over alternatives
3. Indicating whether it is necessary to investigate alternative radio tower locations
4. Providing site-specific information to future bidders, thereby reducing risk and cost
5. Initiating the required tower regulatory process for radio tower permitting

BACKGROUND

Based on criteria, the FCC requires some but not all antenna towers to be registered. Via TOWAIR, the FCC provides a straightforward method to determine whether radio towers need to be registered or not. The need for registration doesn't indicate whether or not a radio tower may be constructed; it indicates that further inspection of the radio tower location is needed by the FAA and FCC. The FCC review may result in approval or disapproval. Relocation to a location that does not require registration, if possible, may remove the risk of disapproval and the impacts of mitigation.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The PMT has previously given direction to the Regional Teams to provide space accommodations for a radio tower at traction power (TP) facilities (Substations, Paralleling Stations, and Switching Stations), signaling equipment houses, tunnel portal sites and Standalone Radio Sites.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENT

PMT directs the Regional Teams to conduct TOWAIR investigations on each radio tower including alternatives.

TOWAIR can be found at the following URL: <http://wireless2.fcc.gov/UlsApp/AsrSearch/towairSearch.jsp>

The following screen capture is from the FCC TOWAIR site. The Regional Teams shall use the input data shown below for Overall Structure Height, Support Structure Height and Structure Type selection. Other information is site specific.

DETERMINE if Registration is Necessary	
NAD83 Coordinates (Convert from NAD27)	
Latitude	<input type="text"/> ° <input type="text"/> ' <input type="text"/> " N (+) ▾
Longitude	<input type="text"/> ° <input type="text"/> ' <input type="text"/> " W (+) ▾
Measurements	
Measurement System	Feet ▾
Overall Structure Height (AGL)	105
Support Structure Height (AGL)	100
Site Elevation (AMSL)	<input type="text"/>
Structure Type	
	TOWER - Free standing or Guyed Structur ▾
<input type="button" value="Submit"/> <input type="button" value="Reset"/>	

Screen capture from FCC TOWAIR site

The Regional Teams shall report to the PMT whether a tower requires registration or does not require registration. This information, along with tower nomenclature and latitude and longitude shall be tabulated and included within Regional Teams' EIR/EIS document. Additionally, the TOWAIR output is to be captured electronically and transmitted to the PMT CADD team for convenient incorporation into a GIS tool.

Questions are to be addressed to the PMT Engineering Team. Contact Bradley Banks at banksb@pbworld.com.