Welcome to the webinar, Overview of FCC's Universal Licensing System (otherwise known as ULS). Thank you for joining us. I'm Carol DiCaro, Processor for AFC, APCO International's Spectrum Management division and I'll be presenting the webinar today.
Overview

- Accessing the FCC ULS site
- New User (or Update) Registration
- Filings
- Searches
- Tools
- Resources
- Q & A

This session is designed to be an overview of ULS to give you some guidance and tips on how to navigate through the FCC ULS system and also provide some guidance on the sections for FRN registration, online filing, FCC searches and tools, such as TOWAIR and the ASR (Antenna Structure Registration) database.
There are many ways to access the FCC ULS website. It can be accessed directly by using the web address, [www.fcc.gov/uls](http://www.fcc.gov/uls).
• Access from the FCC home page → www.fcc.gov
  – Browse by Category menu
    • Licensing & Databases

ULS can also be found by starting from the FCC home page, www.fcc.gov. From this page, you can hover your mouse over Licensing & Databases, or use the Access Now section. In the Licensing & Databases links, you will see a large menu of items in alphabetical order to choose from. ULS is near the end of this list.
In the middle of the screen you can see that the FCC has put several quick links for frequently used items. This is the Access Now section. Here you’ll find a quick link to ULS. In addition, you’ll find links to 47 CFR, which is the FCC rules link, the EDOCS and ECFS systems, FRN registrations and Auctions.
No matter which way you choose to get to ULS, this is where you will end up. You may have noticed that ULS now has a new look. Although they've changed the look and moved some things around, the information basically remains the same. The FCC updated the appearance and browser compatibility in August 2018 to get rid of the Java applets. From the ULS home page, you can make various filings and run searches. You can also pull copies of licenses and check the status of pending applications. There are also various tools available to help you manage your licenses.
At the very top of the ULS page, the FCC lists any alerts pertaining to ULS, such as when ULS is down for maintenance outside of the normal downtime period or when they are need to make updates to the system. When the government shutdown was taking place, the FCC listed information about that here. To see more information about an alert, click on the plus sign next to it.
Under the New User Registration section, you will get access to FRN (FCC Registration Number) information. This system is known as CORES (Commission Registration System), where you can register a new FRN, or update your existing FRN, or search for public FRN information. An FRN is a 10-digit number that is assigned to a business or individual registering with the FCC. This unique FRN is used to identify the registrant’s business dealings with the FCC and is listed on every license.
When you click on New User Registration, this is where you are brought. The Register link is where you will register for a new FRN. When you register, the program will require certain information, including the Taxpayer ID number of your agency, address and phone number, and the type of agency – such as whether or not it’s a governmental entity or a business. Some vendors or applicants will create a new FRN each time they submit an application, whether it is because they cannot find the password of an existing FRN or for some other reason. This may be handy at the time, but it is potentially very confusing for the applicant because they will find themselves in possession of licenses with multiple FRNs or with FRNs for which they don’t have a password. Having multiple FRNs can make it difficult to find and manage your licenses, so using fewer FRNs is usually the better way to go. And it is relatively easy to have a password reset by the FCC. The Update link is where you can update the information in your FRN record. Be aware that if you update licensee name or contact information on the FRN record, it does not automatically update the license. If the license needs to be updated, you’ll need to file an administrative update to correct contact information or you’ll need to file an assignment authorization to change the ownership or control of the license. And the Search link is where you can look up public FRN information. This information does not show the Taxpayer ID number.
You can only view that when you log into your FRN account.
Here are the search results for an FRN. Clicking on the FRN number link takes you to the FRN record.
This is the information shown for an FRN. You can see when it was first registered, when it was last updated, the name of the business registered for that FRN, their business type, and their contact information.
The current version of the CORES system is going to be phased out at a future date. You can access the updated version by clicking on the updated version link from the current New User Registration page. According to the FCC, the updated CORES will provide enhanced security and functionality to make it easier to manage applications.
The FCC has provided tutorials to help licensees with the new CORES system.
Under the File Online section, you can apply for a new license, renew a license, modify an existing license, assign or transfer licenses, and manage licenses and applications. Keep in mind that if you modify a license, you can only file modifications that do not require frequency coordination. If you file an application that requires frequency coordination, the FCC will return or dismiss it. When in doubt, refer to the FCC rules or contact your preferred frequency coordinator for assistance.
When you click on File Online, it takes you to this general login page where you'll use your FRN and password to login and maintain your license contact information, submit a required notification, and so forth.
The FCC is mostly paperless now and is no longer mailing license authorizations, so they have provided the Obtain Official ULS Authorization section to help licensees get copies of their licenses.
This section provides instructions for downloading your granted FCC license or changing your ULS paper preference. If you provide an email address on your application, a link to print your official copy of your license will be automatically emailed to you when the application has granted.
Under the Narrowband Filing section, you can either make filings to modify emissions or remove wideband emissions. This Narrowband Filing section was created in response to the FCC’s narrowbanding mandate issued several years ago and gives licensees an easy way to file narrowbanding only applications. Keep in mind when you use this online tool to modify your emissions, that you can only change your emissions to narrowband emissions with the same configuration as your wideband emissions. Wideband emissions are those with a bandwidth exceeding 11.25 kHz. The bandwidth of an emission is identified by the first 4 digits of the emission, such as the 20K0 of 20K0F3E. The configuration of an emission is identified by the last 3 digits of the emission, such as the F3E of 11K2F3E which identifies it as an analog voice emission, or the F1D of 8K10F1D which identifies it as a digital data emission. If you change your configuration, then you'll need to file your application through a frequency coordinator.
When you click on either of the narrowband filing links, it takes you to a login page where you must login to file your narrowbanding changes.
Submit a Pleading

- File non-docketed pleadings
  - Petitions For Reconsideration (PFR) of termination pending, application dismissals, etc.

The Submit a Pleading section allows you to file non-docketed pleadings – meaning ones that are not associated with a specific FCC Rulemaking or Docket Number. Pleadings include but are not limited to petitions that are filed against a pending application or Petitions for Reconsideration, also known as PFRs, which you may file in response to a Termination Pending status on a license. An FRN and password are not required to submit a pleading.
When you click on the Submit a Pleading link, it takes you to this page where you can select your pleading type and provide other relevant information. When you file a pleading on a call sign or application, a copy of the filing appears under the Admin tab of the License or Application record, which we will get to shortly.
FCC Searches

- License Search
- Application Search
- License Archive Search

Back on the ULS home page, you can do various searches to look up licenses, applications or license archives.
Under the License Search, you can look up licenses using the call sign, the FRN, or by licensee name. Using the licensee name is a hit or miss kind of thing, because if you don’t get the name exactly right, it may not show up in your results. Best results are received by using either the FRN or call sign, or you can use the Advanced, Service Specific, or Specialized Searches to search by longitude and latitude coordinates, frequencies or other search criteria. One thing I’ve found using the specialized Market search to do a BEA market search – which you may do if you’re anticipating licensing 800 MHz vacated spectrum – is that you need to search by a small frequency range rather than the exact frequency. For example, if your proposed channel is 854.0125, then you’d search from 854.012 to 854.013.
For the basic License Search, I used a specific call sign here and this is what the results of the search looks like. The call sign itself is a link to the license record.
From this page you can get a lot of information about the license. You can see that there are several tabs along the top of the page to select from. You can also get a reference copy of the license in PDF form by clicking on that link. The Main tab shows the licensed radio service, the grant and expiration dates, and lists the control points.
This is the lower part of the Main tab and it provides addresses, telephone numbers, and often email addresses. The Licensee information is self-explanatory as it identifies who the licensee is. If possible, using general contact information such as a department name or the title of an individual and that department’s phone number and general email address is often better than using a specific individual’s contact information, since it is not uncommon for agency staff to change over the 10-year period that most land mobile radio licenses are valid for. The Contact information on the other hand may be the vendor or a licensing service, rather than the applicant. Or it may be another contact from licensed entity. This tab will also indicate if a slow growth plan has been requested, list any associated call signs, and provide the rule section under which the applicant qualifies for specific frequencies.
The Admin tab provides a history of the license. It shows if the FCC has sent any letters to the applicant, such as reminder notices that they need to submit their buildout notification, as shown here. If you click on the notice link, it takes you to a copy of the document.
The Locations tab provides the site information. If you click on the Location number, it will provide full site information.
While the longitude and latitude coordinates were also seen on the previous page, here you will see more location detail and it is where you will find the antenna information. If there are multiple antennas, they will all be listed at the bottom of the page. Sometimes you may find there is incomplete or missing information on the license. If this was the case here, the missing information would have to be provided when the license is modified.
The Frequencies tab can also provide all kinds of information. A quick glance shows that this is a repeater system and it tells us the location and antenna numbers, the number of units or paging receivers, and the output power and ERP for each specific frequency. This page also tells us that there is a special condition placed on some of the frequencies – identified by the SC.
If you click on the frequency link, the special condition appears at the bottom of the page. The special condition will also appear on the printed or PDF copy of the license.
Clicking on any of the other Define View links on the Frequencies tab (highlighted at the upper right hand side) will provide more specialized information.
Clicking on the Buildout link brings you to this page. The next to last column provides the buildout deadline and the last column provides the date of the actual notification. All new licenses and most modifications will require a buildout notification to be submitted. Also known as a Schedule K, the buildout notification allows the applicant to advise the FCC of the date the sites and frequencies were constructed and fully operational. For mobiles, there is no construction but instead you will identify when they became fully operational. If you fail to file the required buildout notification timely, the FCC will place the affected license or specific frequencies in a Termination Pending status and you'll only have 30 days to let the FCC know you have satisfied the construction/buildout requirement by filing a petition before you will lose your authorization to operate on them.
The COSER link is especially important to any licensee who is above Line A and must deal with Canadian objections. COSER is the Canadian Co-Channel Serial Coordination System, which allows the FCC to exchange data with Industry Canada.
COSER Results Codes

- Number – Sequential number identifying the proposal being sent to Canada.
- Request Type – Code indicating the type of request and action required. The valid codes are as follows:
  - N – New Proposal
  - T – Notification
  - R – Reconsideration
  - O – On-Air Test
  - C – Cancellation
- Result – Code identifying the results of the coordination with Canada. The values are as follows:
  - NHIA – No Harmful Interference Anticipated
  - NHIC – No Harmful Interference with Conditions
  - HIA – Harmful Interference Anticipated
  - NOTED – Acknowledgment of a Notification or a Cancellation
  - ERROR – Proposal was found to be in error

Here are the COSER results codes that correspond with the COSER page. The most common results are NHIA – No Harmful Interference Anticipated, NHIC – No Harmful Interference with Conditions, or HIA – Harmful Interference Anticipated. The FCC issues a return notice listing the frequencies and sites that Canada objects to. These notices are posted to the Admin tab of the application record, which we’ll touch on soon.
There is also an Emissions link which shows which emission designators have been licensed. The FCC will license multiple emission designators, but strongly recommends licensing only what will actually be used. They prefer that an applicant does not license emission designators for equipment they “might” obtain in the future.
There is also an IRAC link. IRAC is the Interdepartment Radio Advisory Committee. They coordinate between the FCC, FAA, and NTIA (who is the coordinator for Federal applicants).
Here are IRAC results codes that you may find on the IRAC page. You can get either an RF—Rejected by FAA, an RN—Rejected by NTIA, or AN—Approved by the FAA and NTIA result.
The Map tab allows you to create maps and display the licensed frequencies in relation to geographical boundaries.
Now let’s look at the information available under an application. Under the Application Search, you can look up applications using the file number, call sign, FRN, or by applicant name. Much like the License Search, if you use the applicant name and don’t get the name exactly right, it may not show up in your results. Best results are received by using the FRN, call sign or file number, or by using the Advanced or Specialized Searches.
The results of our search by file number looks very much like our search by call sign. The File Number is a link to additional information.
This is the Main tab. Much like this same tab on the License record, it provides information about the licensee, identifies the proposed radio service and gives the status of the application. If you need a copy of the application, you can obtain a PDF copy by clicking on the Reference Copy link highlighted. Just like the License Search, there are several tabs providing additional information.
This is the Admin tab. You can see the complete history of the application here. The history can give you an indication of reviews the FCC has completed or what they may still be working on. If the FCC returns or dismisses an application or if a pleading is filed against an application, a copy of the notice will be uploaded at the bottom of this page.
The Trans (or Transactions) Log tab appears when the application is for an Amendment, Modification, Renewal Modification, Renewal Only, Administrative Update, Duplicate, Cancellation, or Data Correction filing.
On the Trans Log tab, a list of the changes requested is displayed. You can see the date those changes were requested on and both the existing and requested values.
Here is the Service Specific tab. It identifies if slow growth is requested, lists any associated call signs, provides the rule section under which the applicant qualifies for specific frequencies, and identifies the frequency coordinator who coordinated the application.
The Locations Tab provides information about the sites that are part of the proposed system.
More site details are provided if you click on the links. At the bottom of the fixed site page, you get the antenna information, just like on the License Search.
The Frequencies tab provides much the same information as the frequency tab in the License Search. There are also links to the COSER, Emission, and IRAC information. But there is no Buildout link however because that only applies to a granted license, not an application.
Now let’s take a look at the License Archive Search. You can search by quite an assortment of license data. The Archives section will allow you to see the various stages of a license and its progression to the current version.
Your search results will show all versions of the license back to about 2000 or so, when ULS was put into service.
Back once again at the ULS homepage on the left hand side, you can see that there are various helpful tools that are available to use. Some of the most commonly used ones are the Pay Fees section, Forms, Processing Utilities, TOWAIR and the Antenna Structure Registration database.
The Pay Fees section allows you to pay fees that may apply to your application, such as regulatory or application filing fees. Most government entities are exempt from such fees. You'll need your FRN and password to login to this section.
The Forms section provides you with access to PDF copies of the various FCC forms available, including the form instructions, and it provides electronic filing links where applicable. The FCC 601 form is what is used to apply for a new license to operate radio stations, modify existing licenses, and perform a variety of other miscellaneous transactions in the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (WTB) radio services and/or the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau (PSHSB) radio services.
There are several Processing Tools available. I’ve listed just a few here that I commonly use. The Channel 4 & 5 tool is for determining proximity to TV Channels 4 & 5 when you are licensing VHF Low Band channels in the 72-76 MHz range. The US Border Regions tool is for determining the distance to various borders, such as the Canadian and Mexican Borders. The Line A & C Check tool determines whether the latitude and longitude coordinates entered are south of Line A or west of Line C with relation to the US-Canadian border. And the Population 200/600k tool provides access to population databases that are used to verify compliance with various FCC rule sections.
The TOWAIR tool is where you put in your new or modified location parameters and see if your site needs to have an ASR number. The FCC requires the latitude and longitude coordinates, the height of the structure with appurtenances and without appurtenances, elevation, and structure type. Please note that plain Tower is no longer an option. You need to define whether your tower is lattice, guyed, or a monopole. Also, do not choose NNGTANN, NNLTANN, or NNMTANN structure types unless your tower is part of an array.
This is an example of what your results may look like if your site fails slope. With these results, your application cannot be sent to the FCC because the Electronic Batch Filing (EBF) program will bounce it for failing TOWAIR. You'll need to provide an ASR number or a pending ASR file number or an ASR exemption request showing that your site is shielded by existing structures or terrain.
Under the Antenna Structure Registration (or ASR) database, you can access lots of information related to an ASR number. There is a link to the TOWAIR tool, which we just covered. You can also file Tribal/Historic notifications, make various ASR filings, as well as search for ASR numbers and applications.
To file Tribal/Historic notifications regarding your sites, click on the TCNS/E106 link from the ASR home page and it will take you here where you'll login using your FRN and password.
On the ASR home page, you will click on File Online to file for a new ASR or to modify, cancel, or associate ASR numbers.
Clicking on File Online takes you here where you will use your FRN and password to login to make any ASR filings. There are also a few quick links on the right hand side; some of which we’ve already explored.
To check out an ASR number, click on Registration Search from the ASR home page.
There are several search options to choose from and on the right you can put in the latitude and longitude coordinates of a specific tower and try to find an ASR that way.
Here is what the ASR results of the search looks like. The ASR number is a link to the ASR record.
The ASR record lists the status of the structure, such as whether it is constructed or dismantled. The latitude and longitude coordinates, structure heights, elevation and site address are also listed here, as well as contact information of the site owner.
The bottom half of the page provides links to filings or letters and other information related to that ASR. Note that if the information in the ASR record changes, it does not automatically update all licenses that have that ASR number in ULS. The ASR database and ULS database are separate from one another. If the ASR is updated, the licensee must file a license modification to update the site information so that they are licensed correctly and this usually requires coordination by a frequency coordinator.
On the ASR home page, you also have the ability to search for ASR applications.
However, your search options are limited to the ASR file number or the FAA Study number only. There is also a link to listings that are on environmental notice.
Here is what the results of a pending ASR application search looks like. Clicking on the File Number link takes you to the application record.
The application details are very similar to what we see in the ASR record, listing the site's location and other structure details.
You can also see the site owner and contact information, the environmental compliance details, as well as a complete history of the ASR application are here.
Other Tools

- Routine Downtime Schedule
- TCNS/E106
- ULS Electronic Batch Filing (EBF)
- Hearing Aid Compatibility Status Reporting
- AM Tower Locator

Some of the other tools from the left side menu on ULS are the Routine Downtime Schedule, the TCNS/E106 tool that we touched on earlier, information about ULS Electronic Batch Filing (EBF), Hearing Aid Compatibility Status Reporting, and the AM Tower Locator.
The Routine Downtime Schedule lets you know when ULS is down for daily maintenance. Currently it takes place from 12 Midnight to 2 AM Eastern time every day. This downtime affects filing in the ULS and ASR databases during this time period but searches are unaffected.
The ULS Electronic Batch Filing (or EBF) process is how the frequency coordinators file applications with the FCC. This section provides information on this process.
The FCC provides information regarding Hearing Aid Compatibility Status Reporting here. This impacts mobile wireless services providers and device manufacturers.
The AM Tower Locator tool lets you determine if you need to notify any AM Stations prior to building a proposed tower site. For this tool, you need to enter the latitude and longitude coordinates in decimal degrees format rather the degrees-minutes-seconds format and the FCC has a link to their Lat/Long Converter on this page to help you with that. If you also need to convert your coordinates from NAD 27 to NAD 83 data, there is also a link to that converter on this page.
Here are a few other resources to help you get around ULS.
Many of the sections we discussed today are not only accessible from the main ULS page, but are also accessible via quick links at the bottom of the ULS search pages. The examples shown here are what you will find at the bottom of the Application Search, License and Archive Searches, and ASR Search pages. You can see that you are able to access various ULS support items, get back to the ULS home page, or even do basic searches. However, I have found that the ULS Glossary link does not work. To get to the glossary, you need to use the Online Help link instead.
There is also a ULS Resources page, which provides information on several common ULS tasks. These resources can be accessed either by clicking on the Technical or Licensing Support links at the bottom of the Search pages or by clicking on the Available Support Services link at the bottom of the main ULS home page. As we were going through this presentation, on a few of the slides you may have noticed a little boxed question mark with the word HELP at the top right of some of the ULS pages. When you see this question mark as you navigate through ULS, you can click on it to get help regarding the specific page you are on.
Near the bottom of the ULS home page, there are additional resources. This is where you'll find the Available Support Services link where I just mentioned you can find the ULS Resources. There is additional support regarding the New User Registration or CORES system and also help about the types of fees collected. The Communications section provides you with a link to weekly public notices and other recent releases. The weekly notices pertain to filings in ULS, providing lists of certain application filings and licenses in Termination Pending status. The other releases will include these weekly notices in addition to other public notices the FCC puts out. If you are subscribed to the FCC's Daily Digest, you may see many of these notices in your daily email. Finally, the Data section is where the FCC makes its daily transaction and public access files available for download from the various databases it maintains. These files are typically ZIP files and can be very large because sometimes they may contain ALL of the data from a particular database.
Q & A

Thank you for your time and interest.
Questions?

Thank you for attending our webinar today.
Here is our contact information for future reference. Have a great day!