Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Unleashing American Drone Dominance	)	GN Docket No. 26-74
	)	
Spectrum Rules and Policies for the Operation of Unmanned Aircraft Systems	)	WT Docket No. 22-323
	)	
Facilitating Opportunities for Advanced Air Mobility	)	WT Docket No. 24-629
	)	
	)	

REPORT AND ORDER

Adopted: October 29, 2026 **Released: October 30, 2026**

By the Commission: Chairman Carr and Commissioner Trusty issuing separate statements.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. With this Report and Order, we advance the Commission's efforts to promote U.S. drone leadership by modernizing a rule that has unintentionally prevented unmanned aircraft systems (UAS or drones) from operating in the 800 MHz Radiotelephone Service (Cellular) band. Our decision furthers President Trump's call for American drone dominance by eliminating a restriction that has foreclosed access to 50 megahertz of low-band spectrum for UAS investment and innovation.[1]

2. Opening the 800 MHz Cellular band for UAS command, control, communication, and payload operations is overdue and serves the public interest. The Commission effectively prohibited UAS in the band 35 years ago—long before the advent and commercialization of drone technology—when it adopted a categorical restriction on "airborne" use. In crafting this rule, the Commission intended to restrict the use of phones on airplanes. Three decades later, this overbroad and outdated rule deprives the emerging American drone economy of usable spectrum, a critical input that is necessary to support the next generation of commercial and defense applications. The Commission has sought comment on correcting this regulatory anachronism multiple times since 2023 and received overwhelming support for enabling UAS use of the band. So today, we surgically update our rules to permit UAS operations in the band.[2] We anticipate that today's Report and Order, alongside our other ongoing efforts to promote American drone dominance, will foster U.S. leadership on this critical technology.

[1] *Unleashing American Drone Dominance, Exec. Order 14307*, 90 Fed. Reg. 24727 (June 6, 2025), https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidentialactions/2025/06/unleashing-american-drone-dominance/; Restoring *American Airspace Sovereignty, Exec. Order 14305*, 90 Fed. Reg. 24719 (June 6, 2025), https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidentialactions/2025/06/restoring-american-airspace-sovereignty/. Together, these Executive Orders reflect a sweeping policy shift: one that frames U.S. drone leadership not only as an economic imperative but as a cornerstone of American national security, technological sovereignty, and global competitiveness.

[2] We make clear that this *Report and Order* does not affect the provision in section 22.925 that prohibits customers from operating their mobile devices while an aircraft is airborne. 47 CFR § 22.925. This *Report and Order* also does not affect the Federal Aviation Administration rules governing the use of portable electronic devices on certain

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II. BACKGROUND

3. Cellular spectrum was one of the earliest licensed spectrum bands for terrestrial mobile operations.[3] In 1981, the Commission established the rules for the licensing of 800 MHz cellular radiotelephone service.[4] In 1991, the Commission codified in section 22.925 of the Commission's rules an existing 1984 Commission policy prohibiting airborne operation in the Cellular band.[5]

4. Section 22.925 of the Commission's rules was adopted at the infancy of the Commission's mobile wireless policies when few spectrum bands were used for wireless operations. In the 35-years since the rule's adoption, wireless technology and the U.S. wireless services marketplace have expanded and advanced significantly, and the Commission has made other spectrum bands available for mobile telephony and broadband services.[6] Many such bands lack airborne prohibitions.[7] Since 1991, the cellular industry has transitioned through successive generations of wireless technologies, including CDMA, GSM, UMTS, LTE, and 5G.[8] Additionally, in more recent years, operators have expressed considerable interest in using licensed flexible-use spectrum and in using existing wireless networks to support UAS communications, given the coverage, low-latency, and security those networks offer.

5. In January 2023, the Commission released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) seeking comment on spectrum rules to facilitate UAS operations.[9] In the *UAS NPRM*, the Commission sought comment on the elimination of rules which impede UAS.[10] The Commission acknowledged that the flexible-use spectrum landscape for potential UAS use is varied, consisting of bands that prohibit airborne use and bands that are silent on airborne operation, and sought comment on whether existing

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aircraft. *See* 14 CFR §§ 91.21, 121.306, 125.204, 135.144. The narrow change we adopt today enables the use of 800 MHz Cellular spectrum as a platform for UAS under the Commission's rules.

[3] The 800 MHz Cellular Radiotelephone Service is in the 824–849 MHz and 869–894 MHz spectrum range. The rules governing the Cellular band are found in part 22 of the Commission's rules. *See generally* 47 CFR Part 22.

[4] *See, e.g., Policies Regarding Mobile Spectrum Holdings; Expanding the Economic and Innovation Opportunities of Spectrum Through Incentive Auctions*, WT Docket No. 12-269, GN Docket No. 12-268, Report and Order, 29 FCC Rcd 6133, 6137, para. 9 (2014).

[5] *Amendment of Sections of Part 22 of the Commission's Rules in the Matter of Airborne Use of Cellular Telephones and the Use of Cell Enhancers in the Domestic Public Cellular Radio Service*, Report and Order, 7 FCC Rcd 23 (1991) (*Airborne Use of Cellular Telephones Report and Order*). Section 22.925 prevents the airborne use of cellular phones carried onboard by passengers or crew members, as well as use of cellular equipment that might be installed permanently, on both private and commercial aircraft. 47 CFR § 22.925.

[6] The total amount of spectrum that is currently considered suitable and available for the provision of mobile telephony/broadband services is 1,123 megahertz. *2024 Communications Marketplace Repor*t, 39 FCC Rcd 14116, 14173–74, para. 69, Fig. II.B.11 (2024) (*2024 Communications Marketplace Report*).

[7] *See*, *e.g.*, 47 CFR pt. 24, Personal Communication Services, subpt. E, Broadband PCS; 47 CFR pt. 27 Miscellaneous Wireless Communications Services, 698–746 MHz band, 1695–1710 MHz, 1710–1755 MHz, 1755–1780 MHz, 1915–1920 MHz, 1995–2000 MHz, 2000–2020 MHz, 2110–2155 MHz, 2155–2180 MHz and 2180–2200 MHz bands.

[8] *See, e.g.*, *2024 Communications Marketplace Repor*t, 39 FCC Rcd at 14192–95, paras. 93–100 (describing innovation and technological change for 4G and 5G wireless technology including carrier aggregation, network slicing and standalone 5G); *see also Implementation of Section 6002(b) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993*, 13th Annual CMRS Competition Report, 24 FCC Rcd 6185, 6251–60, paras. 129–54 (2009), https://www.fcc.gov/document/implementation-section-6002b-omnibus-budget-reconciliation-act-9 (describing wireless network design and technology from 2G to 3G network technologies).

[9] *See Spectrum Rules and Policies for the Operation of Unmanned Aircraft Systems*, WT Docket No. 22-323, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 38 FCC Rcd 474 (2023) (*UAS NPRM*).

[10] *Id.* at 533, para. 144.

airborne use restrictions should be modified to accommodate UAS.[11] Specifically, the Commission noted the Cellular Radiotelephone Service airborne use prohibition in section 22.925 was put in place to address the risk of interference by airborne mobile devices to cellular networks and sought comment on whether current prohibitions on airborne operations are unnecessary and should be removed.[12]

6. In April 2026, the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (WTB) and Office of Engineering and Technology (OET) issued a Public Notice seeking comment on an array of reforms the Commission might take to unleash American drone dominance, including reevaluating spectrum for UAS, and permitting more intensive UAS operations in flexible-use terrestrial bands typically used for mobile broadband.[13] As part of this inquiry, and following from the *UAS NPRM*, the *Drone Dominance Public Notice* sought comment on whether to relax the 800 MHz airborne use prohibition for drones.[14]

III. DISCUSSION

7. Based on the record and the compelling public interest in promoting the use of UAS for commercial purposes, we find that the public interest is served by allowing UAS operations in the 800 MHz Cellular band. We, therefore, modify section 22.925 of the Commission's rules to allow 800 MHz Cellular spectrum to be used by unmanned aircraft and unmanned aircraft systems.[15] To facilitate this change, we also add a mobile footnote allocation for UAS operations to the U.S. Table of Frequency Allocations.[16] We find that the state of wireless technology has changed materially since the adoption of

[11] *UAS NPRM*, 38 FCC Rcd at 525, 533, paras. 120, 144.

[12] *Id.* at 533, para. 144.

[13] *Unleashing American Drone Dominance Public Notice*, GN Docket No. 26-74, WT Docket No. 22-323, WT Docket No. 24-629, Public Notice, 41 FCC Rcd 2373, 2378 (WTB/OET Apr. 1, 2026) (*Unleashing American Drone Dominance Public Notice or Refresh PN*). The Public Notice had a comment date of May 1, 2026 and a reply comment date of May 18, 2026. As the *Unleashing American Drone Dominance Public Notice* sets out, the national strategy for achieving U.S. drone superiority involves the production, deployment, and export of both UAS and Counter-UAS, and the public notice sought comment on measures designed to increase UAS spectrum access and deployment in addition to steps that the Commission can take to facilitate Counter-UAS operations. Following the *Unleashing American Drone Dominance Public Notice*, the FCC has taken a range of actions to enable UAS and Counter-UAS operations, including actions to advance the coordinated federal effort to implement the SAFER SKIES Act by clarifying the legal authority and providing guidance that enable state, local, Tribal, and territorial law enforcement and correctional agencies operating under that Act to take effective counter-drone measures. *See* Fact Sheet, Supporting State, Local, and Tribal Efforts to Counter Drone Threats, (Jul. 2, 2026), https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-supports-sltt-drone-efforts. The FCC also recently issued an Order conditionally waiving certain Commission rules to support a U.S. Department of Transportation program to test drone use of mobile networks. *See Waiver of Aeronautical Mobile Restrictions to Enable Mobile Network Aviation Assessment Program (MNAAP)*, GN Docket No. 26-74, Order, DA 26-972 (WTB/OET Sept. 11, 2026).

[14] *Unleashing American Drone Dominance Public Notice,* 41 FCC Rcd at 2378; *UAS NPRM*, 38 FCC Rcd at 533–34, para. 144.

[15] For consistency with other Commission rules applicable to UAS operations, we will apply the part 88 definitions for "uncrewed aircraft," which is "[a]n aircraft operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft," and "uncrewed aircraft system" which is "[a] UA and its associated elements (including an uncrewed aircraft station, communication links, and the components not on board the UA that control the UA) that are required for the safe and efficient operation of the UA in the airspace of the United States." *See* 47 CFR § 88.5.

[16] 47 CFR § 2.106, U.S. Table of Frequency Allocations; *see also* AT&T *Refresh PN* Reply Comment at 4; CTIA *Refresh PN* Comment at 12–13; Raptor Aeronautics LLC *Refresh PN* Comment at 1–2; Qualcomm *Refresh PN* Comment at 6. We note that a mobile allocation conforms to the International Table of Frequency Allocations except for 890–894 MHz which includes, for Region 2, a mobile (except for aeronautical mobile) allocation. Accordingly, consistent with Article 4.4 of the International Telecommunication Union's (ITU) Radio Regulations, any UAS operations in the 890–894 MHz band shall not cause harmful interference to, and shall not claim protection from harmful interference caused by a station operating in accordance with the provisions of the ITU Constitution, the ITU Convention, and the ITU Radio Regulations. *See* ITU Radio Regulation No. 4.4.

section 22.925 in 1991 and that the technical premise supporting the original prohibition is not necessary to protect modern 800 MHz wireless networks from airborne drone operations. Moreover, the record reflects the substantial public interest benefits of permitting such operations. Today's deregulatory actions will encourage innovation, maximize the potential uses for this vital, nationwide low-band spectrum, and provide parity with other similar flexible-use bands.[17] We note, however, that while we revise our rules to enable increased opportunities for UAS use and innovation, licensees and operators are subject to applicable existing or future rules regarding UAS operations established by the Commission, as well as by the Federal Aviation Administration.

8. *Eliminating Unnecessary Cellular Band UAS Restrictions*. We find that eliminating the airborne use restriction for UAS in the 800 MHz Cellular band will promote UAS command-and-control and payload operations[18] and that modern networks employ advanced technologies to prevent aeronautical and other ancillary services from causing interference to wireless networks.[19] The Cellular band, whose name has become synonymous with wireless service, was originally licensed by the Commission more than three decades ago.[20] The Commission adopted the aeronautical restriction for Cellular spectrum with the support of the wireless industry out of an abundance of caution in the early stages of wireless operations in the United States, when first generation analog technology was the norm and first generation digital technology was beginning to be deployed. The restriction, which was adopted by policy in 1984 and codified in Commission rules in 1991,[21] was originally intended to address the potential for interference from fast-moving, airborne handsets, which operate with an unobstructed line of sight of multiple terrestrial base stations, limiting the ability of ground stations to serve local terrestrial traffic.[22]

9. 800 MHz licensees observe that they are capable of limiting harmful interference from airborne devices through technical capabilities, some of which have been incorporated into industry standards, as well as coordination processes to allow for drone operations in this band.[23] CTIA, Ericsson,

[17] These deregulatory actions are consistent with the Commission's *Delete, Delete, Delete* Initiative and with Executive Orders directing administrative agencies to unleash prosperity through deregulation. *See In re: Delete, Delete, Delete*, GN Docket No. 25-133, Public Notice, 40 FCC Rcd 1601 (2025); *see also* Executive Order 14192, Unleashing Prosperity Through Deregulation, 24 Fed. Reg. 9065 (Feb. 6, 2025); Executive Order 14219, Ensuring Lawful Governance and Implementing the President's "Department of Government Efficiency" Deregulatory Initiative, 36 Fed. Reg. 10583 (Feb. 25, 2025).

[18] We note that UAS operations in the band will be subject to the service rules in part 22, which may impact the specific use cases that may be conducted in the band. *See, e.g.*, 47 CFR § 22.923 (providing that "[m]obile stations communicate with and through base transmitters only"). Drones used as base stations are subject to power limits in section 22.913 and field strength limits in section 22.983. 47 CFR §§ 22.913, 22.983. Whether operated as base stations or mobiles, drone operations are subject to licensed Cellular Geographic Service Areas or areas where secondary service is authorized. 47 CFR §§ 22.911, 22.912.

[19] CTIA *Refresh PN* Comment at 13; Ericsson *Refresh PN* Comment at 2–3; AT&T *Refresh PN* Reply Comment at 2–8; Qualcomm *Refresh PN* Comment at 11–12; Wireless Infrastructure Association *Refresh PN* Reply Comment at 5 (stating that "[a]dvances in wireless technologies—such as beamforming, dynamic spectrum management, including network slicing, and improved interference mitigation—allow modern networks to support aerial operations without causing harmful interference").

[20] Verizon Comment at 12–13; *see also* Qualcomm *Refresh PN* Comment at 11–12.

[21] *See generally Airborne Use of Cellular Telephones Report and Order*, 7 FCC Rcd at 23–28.

[22] *See id.* at 23; *see also* Verizon Comment at 13 & n.42 (stating that rule as having been adopted in order to guard against the threat of harmful interference from airborne use of cellular phones to terrestrial cellular networks); CTIA *Refresh PN* Comment at 13 (stating that the Commission enacted the section 22.925 prohibition decades ago to guard against harmful interference to cellular networks); CTIA *Refresh PN* Reply Comment at 3–4; Qualcomm *Refresh PN* Comment at 11–12.

[23] Verizon Comment at 10–13; AT&T Comment at 5–9; AT&T *Refresh PN* Reply Comment at 3–6; *see also* CTIA Comment at 13. We also note that the Commission's existing part 22 rules direct 800 MHz Cellular licensees to

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and Qualcomm describe how commercial wireless technology has changed drastically since section 22.925's inception.[24] CTIA observes that legacy rules like section 22.925 place wireless providers at a competitive disadvantage and ignore modern engineering realities.[25] CTIA explains that commercial wireless industry standards have developed mitigation methods to ensure that ancillary operations, such as UAS communications, do not cause interference to existing and new services.[26] In particular, 3GPP has introduced enhancements to its 5G mobile system specifications to enable UAS operation. 3GPP's Release 15 addressed the core problem that drones can have line-of-sight visibility to many base stations simultaneously, creating unusual uplink and downlink interference conditions.[27] Further, capabilities introduced after the initial Release 15 interference-mitigation enhancements have facilitated improved network awareness of drone operations, which in turn allows operators to apply more targeted mobility and interference-management policies.[28] Accordingly, existing Cellular rules, technical standards, and network practices provide mechanisms for coordination and interference management.[29] Because section 22.925 was adopted to minimize the greater risk of interference posed by airborne mobiles generally, we find that such technical developments should be effective in limiting the potential for UAS operations in

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cooperate and make reasonable efforts to resolve technical issues that may inhibit use of the Cellular spectrum or cause interference to other systems. *See* 47 CFR §§ 22.907, 22.352.

[24] CTIA *Refresh PN* Comment at 10–13; Ericsson *Refresh PN* Comment at 2–3; Qualcomm *Refresh PN* Comment at 12 (stating that "modern cellular networks (along with all commercial wireless networks) utilize state-of-the-art interference mitigation capabilities that minimize the potential for interference from airborne use of the spectrum. Airborne use restrictions also may not make sense today in the context of commercial wireless networks that may be designed and optimized to support UAS communications").

[25] CTIA *Refresh PN* Comment at 3.

[26] *Id*. at 10–13; *see also* AT&T *Refresh PN* Reply Comment at 6.

[27] 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP), TR 36.777, *Enhanced LTE Support for Aerial Vehicles*, Release 15. The Release 15 enhancements introduced unmanned aircraft identification, height reporting, mobility enhancements, and interference-management mechanisms.

[28] Release 16 established comprehensive UAS service requirements (3GPP, TS 22.125, *Uncrewed Aerial System (UAS) support in 3GPP; Stage 1*, Release 16), Release 17 expanded support for drone identification, tracking, and integration with UAS traffic-management systems (*See, e.g.*, 3GPP, TS 23.255, *Application layer support for Uncrewed Aerial System (UAS); Functional architecture and information flows*, Release 17; 3GPP, TS 23.256, *Support of Uncrewed Aerial Systems (UAS) connectivity, identification and tracking; Stage 2*, Release 17), and Release 18 initiated a dedicated "Phase 2" work program for further UAV and urban-air-mobility enhancements (3GPP, TR 23.700-58, Study on Phase 2 of Uncrewed Aerial System (UAS), Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) and Urban Air Mobility (UAM), Release 18; 3GPP, TS 23.256, Support of Uncrewed Aerial Systems (UAS) Connectivity, Identification and Tracking; Stage 2, Release 18).

[29] We also note that, after the close of the comment cycle in the underlying proceedings, the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau approved a transaction for Grain Management to purchase spectrum from T-Mobile in bands directly adjacent to the 800 MHz (Cellular) band we are authorizing for UAS. *See Applications of T-Mobile USA, Inc. and Grain Management, LLC For Consent to Assign Licenses*, WT Docket No. 25-178, Memorandum Opinion and Order, DA 26-653 (WTB July 1, 2026). The *Grain* decision was an important step to bring more intensive use of that spectrum for the American people, and it was also the first time that WTB signaled use of those spectrum bands for potential standalone direct-to-device (D2D) service. Grain and SpaceX recently filed an application for SpaceX to acquire the spectrum. *Applications of Starlink Spectrum Holdings, LLC and NewLevel IV, L.P. for Consent to Transfer Control of Prism License Co. 1 LLC and Prism License Co 2 LLC*, ULS File No. 0012212612 (lead) (filed Oct. 9, 2026). *See* Letter from Alison Minea, Satellite Policy Director, SpaceX to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, GN. Docket No. 26-74 et al. at 2. In revising section 22.925 of the Commission's rules, we expect that UAS operating in the 800 MHz (Cellular) bands will coexist with operations in all adjacent spectrum bands, including with potential mobile and/or D2D operations in adjacent 817–824 and 862–869 MHz bands, and we clarify that we intend for both spectrum bands to be fully utilized to provide next-generation services to the American public.

the 800 MHz Cellular band to cause harmful interference to those networks and support eliminating the restriction for UAS operations.[30]

10. *Encouraging Innovation in the UAS Marketplace*. We also find that the elimination of this restriction will promote innovation in the UAS marketplace. CTIA contends that the airborne operation restriction is "outdated and impede[s] innovation and U.S. leadership in next-generation aviation technologies."[31] AT&T and Verizon assert that the airborne restriction in section 22.925 hinders UAS innovation in this band and wireless licensees' ability to meet customer needs.[32] CTIA, AT&T, and Verizon observe that UAS operations support critical infrastructure use cases, such as border security and state and local public safety operations (e.g., firefighters, first responders, other emergency support) that would be enhanced by allowing UAS operations in the 800 MHz band.[33] While drone operations are playing an increasingly important role in our national economy and communities, AT&T argues that innovative UAS use cases are not possible without wireless networks.[34] AT&T explains that over the years, it has had to forego opportunities to support cutting-edge customer use cases due to airborne use prohibitions in particular spectrum bands due to the increased development and supply chain costs that airborne prohibitions impose.[35] Commenters emphasize that commercial wireless networks operating on flexible-use spectrum, with their unique attributes, are critical for UAS development.[36]

11. AT&T and Verizon also argue that the propagation characteristics of 800 MHz spectrum are particularly well-suited for drone operations in rural and suburban geographic areas.[37] Verizon notes that removing the airborne prohibition will allow this fully-deployed, nationwide spectrum resource to be used for a wide variety of use cases in the 800 MHz Cellular band.[38] We concur with industry commenters that permitting licensees to offer commercial services to enable UAS drone operations will support a broad range of public interest applications, including precision agriculture, utility and pipeline inspection, search-and-rescue operations, wildfire monitoring, and last-mile delivery.[39]

12. *Parity With Other Flexible-Use Bands*. As explained by AT&T, commercial networks operating on spectrum without an airborne use prohibition already support UAS operations across the country.[40] While the Commission has prohibited airborne use of 800 MHz cellular equipment in part 22,

[30] We note that, unlike the Cellular service, certain airborne restrictions in other bands were adopted to protect specific incumbent operations that may be particularly susceptible to interference. Our analysis here is limited to the potential for interference in the 800 MHz Cellular band and does not speak to any airborne restrictions in other bands. With respect to operations by 800 MHz Cellular licensees around sensitive areas such as quiet zones, licensees continue to be subject to the coordination provisions of section 1.924 of the Commission's rules, which are intended to minimize possible impact on the operations of radio astronomy or other facilities that are highly sensitive to interference. 47 CFR § 1.924.

[31] CTIA *Refresh PN* Comment at 12; *see also* T-Mobile Comment at 3.

[32] Verizon Reply Comment at 7; AT&T Comment at 7–8.

[33] CTIA *Refresh PN* Comment at 12–13; Verizon Comment at 12–13; AT&T *Refresh PN* Reply Comment at 1 & n.4; *see also* Silvus Technologies Inc. *Refresh PN* Comment at 5; Utility Broadband Alliance *Refresh PN* Comment at 5; Skydio, Inc. *Refresh PN* Comment at 3–4.

[34] AT&T *Refresh PN* Reply Comment at 2.

[35] *Id.* at 4.

[36] *Id.* at 2–9; CTIA *Refresh PN* Comment at 14.

[37] AT&T *Refresh PN* Reply Comment at 7 (stating that some spectrum bands, particularly low band spectrum, present advantages in propagation and ubiquity of coverage); Verizon Comment at 12–13.

[38] Verizon Comment at 12–13.

[39] *Id.* at 12–13; CTIA *Refresh PN* Reply Comment at 2–3; *see also* Ericsson *Refresh PN* Comment at 3–4, 8.

[40] AT&T *Refresh PN* Reply Comment at 3–4.

there is no similar restriction on the airborne use of services such as Personal Communications Services (PCS) governed by part 24 of the Commission's rules or the commercial 700 MHz Band services authorized under part 27 of our rules.[41] Thus, commenters assert that other flexible-use bands, with similar characteristics, do not have a restriction and drones have been deployed in those bands without causing the type of issue that the Commission was concerned about in 1991.[42] We agree with commenters that the 800 MHz Cellular band bears similarities to these bands that lack airborne restrictions and where UAS operate today, and that elimination of the restriction would help achieve parity among similarly situated bands for purposes of drone operations.

13. *Cost-Benefit Analysis.* Removing the airborne restriction from the 800 MHz band allows drone use in an additional spectrum band. Improvements in wireless technologies since the rule was adopted in 1991 have reduced concerns about interference from airborne use of the 800 MHz band. Current industry standards and coordination processes ensure that harmful interference from airborne devices is sufficiently limited such that other services are not affected.[43] Hence, there are no additional potential costs related to interference protection or network management for licensees in this band from UAS operations as a result of removing the airborne restriction. Indeed, similar bands, including 700 MHz and PCS, do not have airborne restrictions, and we are not aware that drone operations have led to interference issues.

14. In terms of benefits, adding a spectrum band in which network operators can deploy UAS services has the potential to spur the deployment of UAS enabled services and increase innovation in the UAS marketplace. Allowing network operators to substitute 800 MHz spectrum for bands with pre-existing UAS authorization, or augment such bands with additional capacity, could lower deployment costs and improve the quality of services. As commenters have noted, the 800 MHz band is particularly well suited for UAS use, and adding capacity of this kind has the potential to enable new and innovative services in the UAS space.[44]

15. Thus, while there are no significant costs related to removing the airborne use restriction in the 800 MHz band, benefits are likely to accrue through incremental increases in the deployment of UAS operations and innovation in UAS use cases.

16. *Conclusion*. The record demonstrates substantial and broad-based support for this action from wireless carriers,[45] drone companies and operators,[46] equipment and technology manufacturers,[47] and

[41] *UAS NPRM*, 38 FCC Rcd at 525, para. 120 & n.276; *see also* T-Mobile Comment at 2–4 & n.4 (asserting that the flexible-use spectrum landscape for potential UAS use is varied, with some bands like part 22 that prohibit airborne use and others that are silent on that use); CTIA *Refresh PN* Comment at 12–13 (stating that removing the aeronautical restriction would provide parity with a variety of other part 24 and part 27 licenses).

[42] CTIA Reply Comment at 13 (arguing that the record reflects that commercial wireless providers, using flexible-use spectrum bands, have already been supporting UAS communications successfully); CTIA *Refresh PN* Comment at 8 & n.16–18 (discussing MNO drone operations in licensed low-band spectrum bands); Qualcomm *Refresh PN* Comment at 11 & n.24.

[43] CTIA *Refresh PN* Comment at 6 (stating that commercial wireless networks using licensed spectrum benefit from interference protection, which is especially essential for a variety of safety-critical UAS functionalities because licensed spectrum, with rights of assured access and interference protection against other operations throughout the entirety of the license area, allows the holder to manage its network and provide a high and consistent level of service).

[44] AT&T *Refresh PN* Reply Comment at 7 (stating that some spectrum bands, particularly low band spectrum, present advantages in propagation and ubiquity of coverage); Verizon Comment at 12–13.

[45] Verizon Reply Comment at 7 (stating that 800 MHz Cellular band is a prime example where airborne restrictions are unnecessary); AT&T *Refresh PN* Reply Comment at 4–8 (asserting that airborne use prohibitions stifle innovation and lead to inefficient spectrum use); T-Mobile Comment at 2–5.

the industry associations and organizations that represent these sectors.[48] As AT&T notes, the aeronautical restriction in the Cellular band has been an obstacle and has prevented commercial wireless spectrum operators from using this band for UAS operations.[49] Given that the prohibition's underlying intent was to prevent interference to wireless provider terrestrial operations, we are persuaded that technical developments, including network enhancements aimed at enabling UAS operations without causing interference, provide a sufficient basis to relax the airborne prohibition as it applies to UAS use.[50] As reflected in the record, we find it is timely and appropriate to eliminate the aeronautical restriction for 800 MHz Cellular band spectrum for drones to increase the spectrum available for this critically important technology and also to promote parity among similar flexible-use bands for UAS purposes. Our actions today will promote more efficient use of the 800 MHz Cellular band and encourage innovation in UAS development and operations.

IV. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

17. *Regulatory Flexibility Act*. The Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980, as amended (RFA),[51] requires that an agency prepare a regulatory flexibility analysis for notice and comment rulemakings, unless the agency certifies that "the rule will not, if promulgated, have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities."[52] Accordingly, the Commission has prepared a Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (FRFA) concerning the possible impact of the rule and policy changes contained in this *Report and Order* on small entities. The FRFA is set forth in Appendix B.

18. *Paperwork Reduction Analysis*. This *Report and Order* does not contain new or substantively modified information collections subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501–3521. Therefore it also does not contain any new or modified information collection burdens for small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees, pursuant to the Small Business Paperwork Relief Act of 2002, 44 U.S.C. § 3506(c)(4).

19. *Congressional Review Act*. The Commission has determined, and the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA), Office of Management and Budget (OMB), concurs, that this rule is "non-major" under the Congressional Review Act, 5 U.S.C. § 804(2). The

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[46] Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma *Refresh PN* Comment at 5 (commenting as an active drone operator and infrastructure developer); Loiter.ai *Refresh PN* Comment at 1; CACI International, Inc. *Refresh PN* Reply Comment at 1; Ceres Air LLC, Elevon Aerial AG, and Exedy Drones *Refresh PN* Joint Reply Comment at 2, 5–7, 9; Zipline Comment at 4; Skydio, Inc. *Refresh PN* Comment at 3–4; *see also* WolfSky RF Sensing Systems *Refresh PN* Comment at 1. Certain commenters suggest authorizing the use of Cellular spectrum for UAS operations at reduced power levels or below certain altitudes. *See* James Edwin Whedbee *Refresh PN* Comment at 4–5; Zipline International Inc. *Refresh PN* Comment at 7–8. Because we find the record supports eliminating the restriction for UAS entirely, we decline to adopt parameters on such operations.

[47] Ericsson *Refresh PN* Comment at 3–4; Qualcomm *Refresh PN* Comment at 11–12; Lockheed Martin Comment at 2.

[48] Commercial Drone Alliance Comment at 6; Small UAV Coalition Comment at 5; Small UAV Coalition *Refresh PN* Comment at 4; CTIA Comment at 16–17; CTIA *Refresh PN* Comment at 2–3, 11–13; Association for Uncrewed Vehicle Systems International *Refresh PN* Comment at 2; Wireless Infrastructure Association Reply Comment at 2, 5; Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions *Refresh PN* Reply at 2.

[49] AT&T *Refresh PN* Reply Comment at 8 (stating that manufacturers are reluctant to purpose-build equipment for UAS to circumvent airborne use prohibitions or to customize firmware on existing equipment to remove prohibited bands).

[50] *See, e.g.*, CTIA *Refresh PN* Comment at 10–13.

[51] 5 U.S.C. §§ 601 *et seq*., as amended by the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act (SBREFA), Pub. L. No. 104-121, 110 Stat. 847 (1996).

[52] *Id.* § 605(b).

Commission will send a copy of this *Report and Order* to Congress and the Government Accountability Office pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 801(a)(1)(A).

20. *People with Disabilities*. To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), send an e-mail to fcc504@fcc.gov or call the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau (CGB) at 202-418-0530.

V. ORDERING CLAUSES

21. Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED, pursuant to sections 1, 4, 301, and 303 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. §§ 151, 154, 301, and 303 that this Report and Order IS HEREBY ADOPTED.[53]

22. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Report and Order, including the rules as set forth in Appendix A, SHALL BE EFFECTIVE thirty (30) days after publication in the Federal Register.

23. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Office of the Secretary, SHALL SEND a copy of this Report and Order, including the Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis, to the Chief Counsel for the Small Business Administration (SBA) Office of Advocacy.

24. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Commission SHALL SEND a copy of this Report and Order in a report to be sent to Congress and the Government Accountability Office pursuant to the Congressional Review Act, see 5 U.S.C. § 801(a)(1)(A).

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary

[53] Pursuant to Executive Order 14215, 90 Fed. Reg. 10447 (Feb. 24, 2025), this regulatory action has been determined to be significant under Executive Order 12866, 58 Fed. Reg. 51735 (Oct. 4, 1993).

APPENDIX A

Final Rules

For the reasons discussed in the document above, the Federal Communications Commission amends 47 CFR parts 2 and 22 as follows:

PART 2 – FREQUENCY ALLOCATIONS AND RADIO TREATY MATTERS; GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. The authority citation for part 2 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 47 U.S.C. 154, 302a, 303, and 336, unless otherwise noted.

2. Section 2.106 is amended by:

a. Revising page 30 of the Table of Frequency Allocations; and

b. Adding paragraph (d)(37).

The revision and addition read as follows:

§ 2.106 Table of Frequency Allocations.

* * * * *

5.149 5.291A 5.294 5.296 5.300 5.304 5.306 5.312	614-698 BROADCASTING Fixed Mobile 5.293 5.308 5.308A 5.309	
694-790 MOBILE except aeronautical mobile 5.312A 5.317A BROADCASTING	698-806 MOBILE 5.317A BROADCASTING Fixed	
5.300 5.312		
790-862 FIXED MOBILE except aeronautical mobile 5.316B 5.317A BROADCASTING		
	5.293 5.309	
	806-890 FIXED MOBILE 5.317A BROADCASTING	
5.312 5.319		

614-890	614-698 FIXED MOBILE Mobile-satellite NG33A NG5 NG14 NG33 NG115 NG149	RF Devices (15) Satellite Communications (25) Wireless Communications (27) LPTV, TV Translator/Booster (74G Low Power Auxiliary (74H)
	698-758 FIXED MOBILE Mobile-satellite NG33A NG159	Satellite Communications (25) Wireless Communications (27) LPTV and TV Translator (74G)
	758-775 FIXED MOBILE Mobile-satellite NG33A NG34 NG159	Satellite Communications (25) Public Safety Land Mobile (90R)
	775-788 FIXED MOBILE Mobile-satellite NG33A NG159	Satellite Communications (25) Wireless Communications (27) LPTV and TV Translator (74G)
	788-805 FIXED MOBILE Mobile-satellite NG33A NG34 NG159	Satellite Communications (25) Public Safety Land Mobile (90R)
	805-806 FIXED MOBILE Mobile-satellite NG33A NG159	Satellite Communications (25) Wireless Communications (27) LPTV and TV Translator (74G)
	806-809 LAND MOBILE	Public Safety Land Mobile (90S)
	809-849 FIXED LAND MOBILE Mobile-satellite NG33A NG37	Public Mobile (22) Satellite Communications (25) Private Land Mobile (90)
	849-851 AERONAUTICAL MOBILE	Public Mobile (22)
	851-854 LAND MOBILE	Public Safety Land Mobile (90S)
	854-894 FIXED	Public Mobile (22)

862-890 FIXED MOBILE except aeronautical mobile 5.317A BROADCASTING 5.322 5.319 5.323	5.317 5.318	5.149 5.305 5.306 5.307 5.320		LAND MOBILE Mobile-satellite NG33A US116 US268 NG37	Satellite Communications (25) Private Land Mobile (90) Page 30

* * * * *

(d) * * *

(37) NG37 Uncrewed aircraft systems may operate under the mobile service on a primary basis in the 824–849 MHz and 869–894 MHz bands in the Cellular Radiotelephone Service, subject to the provisions of part 22 of this chapter.

PART 22 –PUBLIC MOBILE SERVICES

3. The authority citation for part 22 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 47 U.S.C. 154, 222, 303, 309, and 332.

4. Amend § 22.99 by adding the definitions of "*Uncrewed Aircraft (UA)*" and "*Uncrewed Aircraft System (UAS)*" in alphabetical order to read as follows:

§ 22.99 Definitions.

* * * * *

Uncrewed Aircraft (*UA*). An aircraft operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft.

Uncrewed Aircraft System (UAS). A UA and its associated elements (including an uncrewed aircraft station, communication links, and the components not on board the UA that control the UA) that are required for the safe and efficient operation of the UA in the airspace of the United States.

* * * * *

5. Amend § 22.925 by redesignating the existing text as paragraph (a) and adding paragraph (b) to read as follows:

§ 22.925 Prohibition on airborne operation of cellular telephones.

(a) Cellular telephones installed in or carried aboard airplanes, balloons or any other type of aircraft must not be operated while such aircraft are airborne (not touching the ground). When any aircraft leaves the ground, all cellular telephones on board that aircraft must be turned off. The following notice must be posted on or near each cellular telephone installed in any aircraft:

> "The use of cellular telephones while this aircraft is airborne is prohibited by FCC rules, and the violation of this rule could result in suspension of service and/or a fine. The use of cellular telephones while this aircraft is on the ground is subject to FAA regulations."

(b) The prohibition as described in paragraph (a) of this section shall not apply to uncrewed aircraft or uncrewed aircraft systems using Cellular Radiotelephone Service frequencies as specified in § 22.905.

* * * * *

APPENDIX B

Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis

1. As required by the Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980, as amended (RFA),[1] the Federal Communications Commission (Commission) incorporated an Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (IRFA) in the *Spectrum Rules and Policies for the Operation of Unmanned Aircraft Systems*, *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* (*UAS NPRM*) released in January 2023.[2] The Commission sought written public comment on the proposals in the *UAS NPRM*, including comments on the IRFA.[3] No comments were filed addressing the IRFA, however we discuss a comment filed by a small business in response to the *Unleashing American Drone Dominance Public Notice*[4] below. This Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (FRFA) conforms to the RFA and it (or summaries thereof) will be published in the Federal Register.[5]

A. Need for, and Objectives of, the Report and Order

2. In the *Report and Order*, the Commission takes action to permit unmanned aircraft system(s) (UAS or drones) airborne operations in the 800 MHz Cellular band by adopting rules modifying section 22.925 of the Commission's rules, which contained prohibitions on airborne operations in the band, and adding a mobile allocation specific to 800 MHz Cellular UAS operations to the U.S. Table of Frequency Allocations.[6] Our actions today further the Commission's long-standing objectives of promoting U.S. drone leadership in the band, cutting regulatory red tape, modernizing obsolete regulations and furthering our objective of establishing American drone dominance by promoting innovation in the UAS marketplace. In addition, the Commission finds wide support in the record for this rule modification from wireless carriers, drone companies and operators, equipment and technology manufacturers, and the industry associations and organizations that represent these sectors.

B. Summary of Significant Issues Raised by Public Comments in Response to the IRFA

3. No comments were filed addressing the impact of the proposed rules on small entities. However, we note that one comment was filed in response to the *Unleashing American Drone Dominance Public Notice* by a small business providing drone-based mapping, inspection support, aerial data capture, and 3D modeling services[7] urging the Commission to support spectrum access for UAS operations because many small commercial drones today rely on unlicensed spectrum and commercial wireless networks for control, telemetry, video, mapping workflows, and data transfer. The comment also stated that as drone operations grow more advanced, reliable spectrum access will become more important.

C. Response to Comments by the Chief Counsel for the Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy

4. Pursuant to the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010, which amended the RFA,[8] the Commission is required to respond to any comments filed by the Small Business Administration (SBA)

[1] 5 U.S.C. § 603. The RFA, 5 U.S.C. §§ 601–612, was amended by the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (SBREFA), Pub. L. No. 104-121, Title II, 110 Stat. 857 (1996).

[2] *Spectrum Rules and Policies for the Operation of Unmanned Aircraft Systems*, WT Docket No. 22-323, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 38 FCC Rcd 474 (2023) (*UAS NPRM*).

[3] *UAS NPRM*, 38 FCC Rcd at Appx. B, para. 1.

[4] *See generally Unleashing American Drone Dominance Public Notice*.

[5] 5 U.S.C. § 604.

[6] 47 CFR §§ 2.106, 22.925.

[7] Aeroscan3d LLC *Refresh PN* Comment.

[8] Small Business Jobs Act of 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-240, 124 Stat. 2504 (2010).

Office of Advocacy, and also provide a detailed statement of any change made to the proposed rules as a result of those comments.[9] The Chief Counsel did not file any comments in response to the proposed rules in this proceeding.

D. Description and Estimate of the Number of Small Entities to Which the Rules Will Apply

5. The RFA directs agencies to provide a description of, and where feasible, an estimate of the number of small entities that may be affected by the adopted rules.[10] The RFA generally defines the term "small entity" as having the same meaning as the terms "small business," "small organization," and "small governmental jurisdiction."[11] In addition, the term "small business" has the same meaning as the term "small business concern" under the Small Business Act.[12] A "small business concern" is one which: (1) is independently owned and operated; (2) is not dominant in its field of operation; and (3) satisfies any additional criteria established by the SBA.[13] The SBA establishes small business size standards that agencies are required to use when promulgating regulations relating to small businesses; agencies may establish alternative size standards for use in such programs, but must consult and obtain approval from SBA before doing so.[14]

6. Our actions, over time, may affect small entities that are not easily categorized at present. We therefore describe three broad groups of small entities that could be directly affected by our actions.[15] In general, a small business is an independent business having fewer than 500 employees.[16] These types of small businesses represent 99.9% of all businesses in the United States, which translates to 34.75 million businesses.[17] Next, "small organizations" are not-for-profit enterprises that are independently owned and operated and are not dominant in their field.[18] While we do not have data regarding the number of non-profits that meet that criteria, over 99 percent of nonprofits have fewer than 500 employees.[19] Finally, "small governmental jurisdictions" are defined as cities, counties, towns, townships, villages, school districts, or special districts with populations of less than fifty thousand.[20]

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[9] 5 U.S.C. § 604(a)(3).

[10] *Id.* § 604.

[11] *Id.* § 601(6).

[12] *Id.* § 601(3) (incorporating by reference the definition of "small-business concern" in the Small Business Act, 15 U.S.C. § 632). Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 601(3), the statutory definition of a small business applies "unless an agency, after consultation with the Office of Advocacy of the Small Business Administration and after opportunity for public comment, establishes one or more definitions of such term which are appropriate to the activities of the agency and publishes such definition(s) in the Federal Register."

[13] 15 U.S.C. § 632.

[14] 13 CFR 121.903.

[15] 5 U.S.C. § 601(3)–(6).

[16] *See* SBA, Office of Advocacy, *Frequently Asked Questions About Small Business* (July 23, 2024), https://advocacy.sba.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Frequently-Asked-Questions-About-Small-Business_2024-508.pdf.

[17] *Id.*

[18] 5 U.S.C. § 601(4).

[19] *See* SBA, Office of Advocacy, *Small Business Facts, Spotlight on Nonprofits* (July 2019), https://advocacy.sba.gov/2019/07/25/small-business-facts-spotlight-on-nonprofits/.

[20] 5 U.S.C. § 601(5).

Based on the 2022 U.S. Census of Governments data, we estimate that at least 48,724 out of 90,835 local government jurisdictions have a population of less than 50,000.[21]

7. The rules adopted in the *Report and Order* will apply to small entities in the industries identified in the chart below by their six-digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)[22] codes and corresponding SBA size standard.[23] Where available, we also provide additional information regarding the number of potentially affected entities in the identified industries below.

TABLE 1. 2022 U.S. CENSUS BUREAU DATA BY NAICS CODE

Regulated Industry (Footnotes specify potentially affected entities within a regulated industry where applicable)	NAICS Code	SBA Size Standard	Total Firms[24]	Total Small Firms[25]	% Small Firms
Other Communications Equipment Manufacturing[26]	334290	800 employees	310	294	94.84%
Aircraft Manufacturing[27]	336411	1,500 employees	234	209	89.32%
Wireless Telecommunications Carriers (except Satellite)[28]	517112	1,500 employees	1,184	1,081	91.30%
Telecommunications Resellers[29]	517121	1,500 employees	955	847	88.69%
Satellite Telecommunications[30]	517410	$44 million	332	195	58.73%

E. Description of Economic Impact and Projected Reporting, Recordkeeping, and Other Compliance Requirements for Small Entities

8. The RFA directs agencies to describe the economic impact of adopted rules on small entities, as well as projected reporting, recordkeeping and other compliance requirements, including an

[21] *See* U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 Census of Governments –Organization, https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2022/econ/gus/2022-governments.html, tables 1–11.

[22] The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is the standard used by federal statistical agencies in classifying business establishments for the purpose of collecting, analyzing, and publishing statistical data related to the U.S. business economy. *See* www.census.gov/NAICS for further details regarding the NAICS codes identified in this chart.

[23] The size standards in this chart are set forth in 13 CFR 121.201, by six digit NAICS code.

[24] *U.S. Census Bureau*, "*Selected Sectors: Employment Size of Firms for the U.S.: 2022*." Economic Census, ECN Core Statistics Economic Census: Establishment and Firm Size Statistics for the U.S., Table EC2200SIZEEMPFIRM, 2025, "*Selected Sectors: Sales, Value of Shipments, or Revenue Size of Firms for the U.S.: 2022*." Economic Census, ECN Core Statistics Economic Census: Establishment and Firm Size Statistics for the U.S., Table EC2200SIZEREVFIRM, 2025.

[25] *Id.*

[26] Affected Entities in this industry include Radio Frequency Equipment Manufacturers (Non-standard specialized equipment) and Vendors of Infrastructure Development_Network Buildout.

[27] Affected Entities in this industry include Uncrewed Aircraft Radio Equipment Manufacturers.

[28] Affected Entities in this industry include Cellular Radiotelephone Service, Wireless Carriers and Service Providers, and Wireless Telephony.

[29] Affected Entities in this industry include Wireless Resellers.

[30] Affected Entities in this industry include Mobile Satellite Earth Stations.

estimate of the classes of small entities which will be subject to the requirement and the type of professional skills necessary for preparation of the report or record.[31]

9. In the *Report and Order*, the adopted rules exclude UAS operations from the airborne prohibition in the 800 MHz Cellular band. The Commission's actions will permit small and other Cellular Radiotelephone Service licensees to offer their licensed spectrum as platforms for unmanned aircraft operations in addition to their existing conventional wireless service offerings. The adopted rules do not implement new reporting, recordkeeping, or other compliance requirements on small entities. In addition, the adopted rules are also unlikely to incur new compliance costs, or necessitate the hiring of consultants, engineers or other professionals in order for small entities to comply with the adopted rules.

F. Discussion of Steps Taken to Minimize the Significant Economic Impact on Small Entities, and Significant Alternatives Considered

10. The RFA requires an agency to provide "a description of the steps the agency has taken to minimize the significant economic impact on small entities . . . including a statement of the factual, policy, and legal reasons for selecting the alternative adopted in the final rule and why each one of the other significant alternatives to the rule considered by the agency which affect the impact on small entities was rejected."[32]

11. In the *Report and Order*, the amended rules will economically benefit small entities that seek to grow their businesses in the UAS sector. As discussed by commenters in the record, revising the airborne prohibition to permit UAS applications allows licensees, including small entities, to provide additional service offerings in areas such as precision agriculture, utility and pipeline inspection, search-and-rescue operations, wildfire monitoring, and last-mile delivery. Alternatively, we considered maintaining the status quo by continuing to ban all airborne operations in the Cellular Radiotelephone Service. However, the technical premise supporting the original section 22.925 prohibition is no longer necessary to protect modern 800 MHz Cellular wireless networks from airborne drone operations, in light of subsequent technical developments designed to minimize interference from UAS operations. Maintaining such an approach would cause small entities to forego opportunities to support innovative uses for UAS in the band.

G. Report to Congress

12. The Commission will send a copy of the *Report and Order*, including this Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis, in a report to Congress pursuant to the Congressional Review Act.[33] In addition, the Commission will send a copy of the *Report* and *Order*, including this Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis, to the Chief Counsel for the SBA Office of Advocacy and will publish a copy of the *Report and Order*, and this Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (or summaries thereof) in the Federal Register.[34]

[31] 5 U.S.C. § 604(a)(5).

[32] *Id.* § 604(a)(6).

[33] *Id*. § 801(a)(1)(A).

[34] *Id*. § 604(b).

STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN BRENDAN CARR

Re: *Unleashing American Drone Dominance; Spectrum Rules and Policies for the Operation of Unmanned Aircraft Systems; Facilitating Opportunities for Advanced Air Mobility*, GN Docket No. 26-74; WT Docket No. 22-323; WT Docket No. 24-629, Report and Order (October 29, 2026).

Earlier this month, I had the opportunity to visit with a company called Dracoe in the Sandhills of Aberdeen, North Carolina, alongside Chairman Richard Hudson. Dracoe is veteran-owned company that got its start just last year. Today, it is building American-made drones and components near Fort Bragg. As we toured the manufacturing floor and test range, the team explained how it pairs low-cost drones with software to create realistic targets for counter-drone training. This gives our troops the chance to train for the threats they will face on the modern battlefield. And by bringing manufacturing, development, and training together, Dracoe can use what it learns on the range to improve what it builds in the factory.

Dracoe credited President Trump's call for American drone dominance as key to catalyzing the support and investment necessary to open up its production facilities. And it is that same call for American drone dominance that has led the FCC to take actions across the board—from encouraging the domestic onshoring of drone manufacturing, to protecting our supply chain from the security risks of drone equipment produced by our adversaries, to providing clarity so that federal and state law enforcement can protect the homeland from drone threats.

Another central element of the FCC's drone dominance agenda is opening up large swaths of spectrum to spur a competitive marketplace for drone connectivity. After all, virtually all drones need spectrum access—whether to deliver video or data to the ground, or to support mission-critical safety functions. And that demand is poised to increase as commercial drone traffic scales.

So today, we open up nearly 50 megahertz of low-band spectrum in the 800 MHz Cellular band for drone connectivity. For decades, this spectrum was trapped here on the ground. Aerial use of the band was locked behind outdated technical rules drafted in the 1990s, long before drone technology was viable. By fixing these rules, we give drone operators a new source of spectrum and open up new business models for aerial connectivity.

But today's decision is hardly the last word on bringing spectrum abundance to drones. After all, our proposal to modernize our rules for Supplemental Coverage from Space or SCS, which we just approved, also explores whether licensed wireless spectrum can be leased to satellite operators for drone connectivity. And earlier this year, we kickstarted a larger inquiry on drone connectivity in traditional satellite bands. That's just a small part of what's to come. In fact, we will be voting next month on a series of regulatory reforms to open up more spectrum for nationwide drone networks, in-flight broadband, and counter-UAS detection.

For their work on this item, I thank Joel Taubenblatt, Linda Chang, Ian Davis, Stacy Ferraro, Kari Hicks, and Roger Noel.

STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER OLIVIA TRUSTY

Re: *Unleashing American Drone Dominance; Spectrum Rules and Policies for the Operation of Unmanned Aircraft Systems; Facilitating Opportunities for Advanced Air Mobility*, GN Docket No. 26-74, WT Docket Nos. 22-323 and 24-629, Report and Order (Oct. 29, 2026).

On September 6, police officers in St. Paul, Minnesota received a 911 call requesting help for a child who was struggling to swim out of a nearby pond. The police immediately deployed a drone to the scene, which, upon arrival transmitted the exact location and status of the child to the first responders enroute. Two minutes later, the responding officers reached the pond and were able to pull the young child from the water to safety.

This rescue incident underscores the enormous potential of drone technology.

I saw this potential firsthand during a recent visit to Skydio – an American drone manufacturer based in San Mateo, California. There, engineers are building drones capable of autonomous flight that are equipped with sensing features that, in addition to helping first responders assess danger and reach emergencies faster, can inspect the integrity of buildings and bridges, support military operations, and even help farmers grow more food with fewer resources.

Indeed, drones can help solve real problems for real people – making our communities safer, our economy more productive, and essential services more accessible. Skydio's ingenuity demonstrates that American companies can compete – and win – in this growing industry.

But the right market conditions must accompany great engineering to achieve a strong, globally competitive drone industry in the United States. That means adopting policies that encourage innovators to design, manufacture, and operate drones here at home. And that means access to spectrum, which drones rely on to fly safely, transmit video, and stay connected to their operators.

Until now, a rule adopted 35 years ago, has barred airborne operations in the 800 MHz Cellular band. Today's Report and Order removes that restriction, opening 50 megahertz of nationwide, low-band spectrum for drone use and creating opportunities for partnerships between drone operators and wireless carriers.

Access to this spectrum can help expand the use of drones for search and rescue, wildfire monitoring, farming, and infrastructure inspections. The benefits are particularly promising for rural communities, where low-band spectrum's ability to carry signals over long distances can help drones serve areas that are otherwise difficult to reach.

Today's action also advances President Trump's Executive Order on Unleashing American Drone Dominance. And, it is part of the Commission's broader effort to strengthen domestic drone manufacturing, support trusted supply chains, and reduce our reliance on foreign adversaries.

I look forward to our continued work ahead to help American drone companies bring their technology into more communities across the country.

I thank the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau for its work on this important item.