

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Fiscal Year 2021 Agency Report

1. Please provide a summary of your agency's activities undertaken to carry out the provisions of OMB Circular A-119, "Federal Participation in the Development and Use of Voluntary Consensus Standards and in Conformity Assessment Activities" and the National Technology Transfer and Advance Act (NTTAA). The summary should contain a link to the agency's standards-specific website(s) where information about your agency's standards and conformity assessment related activities are available.

Summary

The FCC references many standards in support of the Commission's regulatory responsibilities. These standards, referenced in the FCC rules, range from referencing measurement methods and conformity assessment procedures to radio carriage requirements for oceangoing vessels to promote safety of life. In addition, standards are used to promote compatibility between radios and to achieve coordination among Commission licensees. In all cases, the Commission, through its public rulemaking process, has proposed and adopted voluntary consensus standards (e.g., ANSI, IEEE, 3GPP, etc.) under which licensees and permittees must operate and under which it carries out conformity assessment activities.

Voluntary Consensus Standards Examples

For example: In the Hearing Aid Compatibility Report and Order (WT Docket No. 07-250) the Commission set a date of March 31, 2011 for the standards development organization, Accredited Standards Committee C63® - Electromagnetic Compatibility, to update the standard used to determine if a digital wireless phone is capable of operating effectively with hearing aids based on certain performance measurement standards contained in the 2007 version of ANSI C63.19, "American National Standard for Methods of Measurement of Compatibility between Wireless Communication Devices and Hearing Aids" (ANSI C63.19-2007). The applicability of this edition of the standard is limited to those air interfaces and frequency bands (800-950 MHz and 1.6-2.5 GHz) for which technical standards are stated in the standard governing wireless hearing aid compatibility. On February 16, 2021, the Commission adopted a Report and Order (FCC 21-28, WT Docket No. 20-3), effective June 4, 2021, updating its rules (§ 20.19 Hearing aid-compatible mobile handsets) to incorporate and use of the latest Hearing Aid Compatibility standard (ANSI C63.19-2019), providing a two-year transition period to the exclusive use of the updated standard. The updated standard increased the requirement to cover air interfaces frequency bands 614 MHz to 6 GHz, and added a volume control requirement to accommodate people with hearing loss, including those who do not use hearing aids.

Another example is the successful use of the Telecommunications Industry Association Telecommunications System Bulletin 10-F, "Interference Criteria for Microwave Systems." This standard, referenced within several Commission rule parts has become the cornerstone for applicants and licensees to successfully coordinate the use of microwave communications systems.

Also, on October 2, 2017 the European standard for wireless microphones ETSI EN 300 422-1 V1.4.2 (2011-08): "Electromagnetic compatibility and Radio Spectrum Matters (ERM); Wireless Microphones in the 25 MHz to 3 GHz frequency range; Part 1: Technical characteristics and methods of measurement, was incorporated by reference in Section 15.38 of the FCC rules. This standard is used for the evaluation of the out-of-band emissions of wireless microphones.

When making measurements to demonstrate compliance with the FCC rules it is required to use the appropriate measurement methods as specified in the applicable section of the FCC rules. For example, for Part 15 devices see Section 15.31 for a list of required measurement standards. Other measurement procedures that have been found acceptable by the Commission, in accordance with Section 2.947, may also be used. See Measurement Procedures and 47 CFR Section 2.947.

Conformity Assessment.

Radio Frequency (RF) devices are required to be properly authorized under 47 CFR Part 2 prior to being marketed or imported into the United States. The Office of Engineering and Technology (OET) administers the equipment authorization program under the authority delegated to it by the Commission. This program is one of the principal ways the Commission ensures that RF devices used in the United States operate effectively without causing harmful interference and otherwise comply with the Commission's rules. All RF devices subject to equipment authorization must comply with the Commission's technical requirements prior to importation or marketing. See Equipment Authorization Approval Guide

2. Please list the government-unique standards (GUS) your agency began using in lieu of voluntary consensus standards during FY 2021. Please note that GUS which are still in effect from previous years should continue to be listed, thus the total number in your agency's report will include all GUS currently in use (previous years and new as of this FY): 0