

A "roadmap" for successfully meeting and complying with the [FCC's January 1, 2013 narrowband deadline](#) for all Part 90 business, educational, utility, industrial, public safety, and local and state government two way radio system licensees currently operating legacy "wideband" (25 KHz) voice or data/SCADA radio systems in the 150-174 MHz (VHF) and 421-512 MHz (UHF) bands

**1) Verify** that your company or organization has a current and valid FCC Part 90 radio station license

A license is required to legally operate any Part 90 VHF or UHF radio system. This license may have been issued directly to your company or organization or, in those cases where your company or organization pays for air-time from a third party repeater service provider, to them. If you are unable to verify that a current license for your system exists, you should contact a local professional radio/wireless communications system vendor, reputable and qualified FCC licensing assistance service, or an FCC certified frequency coordinator immediately for assistance in avoiding any loss of use of your radio system or any penalties for unauthorized or illegal operation.

**2) Conduct a full inventory of all radios in your system**, including all portable (hand-carried) radios, all mobile (in-vehicle) radios, all dispatcher-used radios, all wireless data or SCADA radios, and all on or off-site base or repeater radios. **It is very important to list the specific makes and model numbers of all radios inventoried.** It might also be wise to note the serial numbers of each for internal tracking purposes.

**3) Contact a local professional two way radio service vendor for assistance** in determining which models are capable of simply being re-programmed for narrowband operation and which models are not. **Any radio that cannot be re-programmed to narrowband operation will need to be replaced.**

LMR radios manufactured after 1997 should be "narrowband" ready; however, it is recommended that **all** currently used radios in a system be verified as being "narrowband" capable.

**4) Initiate the internal business process of budgeting for and procuring** any new narrowband capable replacement radios as may be necessary.

**Any new radios procured should *not* be programmed for narrowband operation at this time.**

Operating in "mixed mode" - i.e. using both "wideband" and "narrowband" radios on the same system frequency - is **not** recommended, particularly in data or SCADA systems. If at all possible, any new narrowband radios procured should continue to operate in the "wideband" mode until the actual switch from "wideband" to "narrowband" operation is made.

**5) Develop a "wideband"-to-"narrowband" system conversion plan** that reflects well-coordinated logistical and implementation strategies needed to accommodate **a)** the replacement and installation of any new narrowband capable off-site base or repeater station radio(s) needed in advance and **b)**, the actual reprogramming of all radios in a system as close to simultaneously as possible to assure minimal disruption to normal radio communication operations.

**Licensees whose radio systems are interoperable with external agency or organization radio systems should coordinate their conversion activities and plans with those agencies or organizations to insure that radio interoperability capabilities are factored into any narrowbanding conversion plan.**

It is highly recommended that your company or organization work closely with a professional two way radio service vendor during the development of any system conversion plan to insure there will be "no surprises" during the actual "narrowbanding" cutover.

**6) Schedule and coordinate with your radio service vendor as soon as possible** dates and times for the actual system conversion (or cutover), making certain that all radio users have been advised in advance and are aware of the process. Also make sure that all hand-held and mobile radios are readily available for reprogramming at pre-scheduled times.

**7) The final step in the "narrowbanding" process** is to modify your FCC radio station license to remove any "wideband" emission designators, replacing them with the correct "narrowband" emission designators. This would also be an opportunity to make any other changes or updates to a license that

may be required. It is strongly recommended that you employ the services of a reputable and qualified FCC licensing assistance firm, FCC certified frequency coordinator, or professional two way radio communications service company to help you with this process.

Do **not** wait until the last minute to begin or complete the "narrowbanding" process - by doing so, you will be risking not only the use of your current radio frequency(s), but the benefits enjoyed and the investment you have made in your radio system equipment as well. **Non-compliance may result in the cancellation of your license(s) by the FCC.**