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§ 90.219 Use of signal boosters.

This section contains technical and operational rules allowing the use of signal boosters in the Private Land Mobile Radio Services (PLMRS). Rules for signal booster operation in the Commercial Mobile Radio Services under part 90 are found in § 20.21 of this chapter.

- (a) **Definitions.** The definitions in this paragraph apply only to the rules in this section.

Class A signal booster. A signal booster designed to retransmit signals on one or more specific channels. A signal booster is deemed to be a Class A signal booster if none of its passbands exceed 75 kHz.

Class B signal booster. A signal booster designed to retransmit any signals within a wide frequency band. A signal booster is deemed to be a Class B signal booster if it has a passband that exceeds 75 kHz.

Coverage area of a PLMRS station. All locations within the normal reliable operating range (service contour) of a PLMRS station.

Deploy a signal booster. Install and/or initially adjust a signal booster.

Distributed Antenna System (DAS). A network of spatially separated antenna nodes connected to a common source via a transport medium that provides wireless service within a geographic area or structure.

Operate a signal booster. Maintain operational control over, and responsibility for the proper functioning of, a signal booster.

Signal booster. A device or system that automatically receives, amplifies, and retransmits signals from wireless stations into and out of building interiors, tunnels, shielded outdoor areas and other locations where these signals would otherwise be too weak for reliable communications. Signal booster systems may contain both Class A and Class B signal boosters as components.

- (b) **Authority to operate.** PLMRS licensees for stations operating on assigned channels higher than 150 MHz may operate signal boosters, limited to the service band for which they are authorized, as needed anywhere within the PLMRS stations' service contour, but may not extend the stations' service contour.

- (1) PLMRS licensees may also consent to operation of signal boosters by non-licensees (such as a building owner or a signal booster installation contractor) within their service contour and across their applicable frequencies, but must maintain a reasonable level of control over these operations in order to resolve interference problems.

- (i) Non-licensees seeking to operate signal boosters must obtain the express consent of the licensee(s) of the frequencies for which the device or system is intended to amplify. The consent must be maintained in a recordable format that can be presented to an FCC representative or other relevant licensee investigating interference.
 - (ii) Consent is not required from third party (unintended) licensees whose signals are incidentally retransmitted. However, signal booster operation is on a non-interference basis and operations may be required to cease or alter the operating parameters due to a request from an FCC representative or a licensee's request to resolve interference.
- (2) [Reserved]
- (c) **Licensee responsibility; interference.** PLMRS licensees that operate signal boosters are responsible for their proper operation, and are responsible for correcting any harmful interference that signal booster operation may cause to other licensed communications services. Normal co-channel transmissions are not considered to be harmful interference. Licensees are required to resolve interference problems pursuant to § 90.173(b). Licensees shall act in good faith regarding the operation of signal boosters and in the resolution of interference due to signal booster operation. Licensees who are unable to determine the location or cause of signal booster interference may seek assistance from the FCC to resolve such problems.
- (d) **Deployment rules.** Deployment of signal boosters must be carried out in accordance with the rules in this paragraph.
- (1) Signal boosters may be used to improve coverage in weak signal areas only.
 - (2) Signal boosters must not be used to extend PLMRS stations' normal operating range.
 - (3)
 - (i) Except as set forth in paragraph (d)(3)(ii) of this section, signal boosters must be deployed such that the radiated power of each retransmitted channel, on the forward link and on the reverse link, does not exceed 5 Watts effective radiated power (ERP).
 - (ii) Railroad licensees may operate Class A signal boosters transmitting on a single channel with up to 30 Watts ERP on frequencies 452/457.9000 to 452/457.96875 MHz in areas where communication between the front and rear of trains is unsatisfactory due to distance or intervening terrain barriers.
 - (4) Class B signal boosters may be deployed only at fixed locations; mobile operation of Class B signal boosters is prohibited after November 1, 2014.
 - (5) Class B signal booster installations must be registered in the FCC signal booster database that can be accessed at the following URL: www.fcc.gov/signal-boosters/registration.
 - (6) Good engineering practice must be used in regard to the radiation of intermodulation products and noise, such that interference to licensed communications systems is avoided. In the event of harmful interference caused by any given deployment, the FCC may require additional attenuation or filtering of the emissions and/or noise from signal boosters or signal booster systems, as necessary to eliminate the interference.
 - (i) In general, the ERP of intermodulation products should not exceed -30 dBm in 10 kHz measurement bandwidth.

- (ii) In general, the ERP of noise within the passband should not exceed -43 dBm in 10 kHz measurement bandwidth.
- (iii) In general, the ERP of noise on spectrum more than 1 MHz outside of the passband should not exceed -70 dBm in a 10 kHz measurement bandwidth.
- (7) Signal booster passbands are limited to the service band or bands for which the operator is authorized. In general, signal boosters should utilize the minimum passband that is sufficient to accomplish the purpose. Except for distributed antenna systems (DAS) installed in buildings, the passband of a Class B booster should not encompass both commercial services (such as ESMR and Cellular Radiotelephone) and part 90 Land Mobile and Public Safety Services.
- (e) **Device Specifications.** In addition to the general rules for equipment certification in § 90.203(a)(2) and part 2, subpart J of this chapter, a signal booster must also meet the rules in this paragraph.
 - (1) The output power capability of a signal booster must be designed for deployments providing a radiated power not exceeding 5 Watts ERP for each retransmitted channel.
 - (2) The noise figure of a signal booster must not exceed 9 dB in either direction.
 - (3) Spurious emissions from a signal booster must not exceed -13 dBm within any 100 kHz measurement bandwidth.
 - (4) A signal booster must be designed such that all signals that it retransmits meet the following requirements:
 - (i) The signals are retransmitted on the same channels as received. Minor departures from the exact provider or reference frequencies of the input signals are allowed, *provided that* the retransmitted signals meet the requirements of § 90.213.
 - (ii) There is no change in the occupied bandwidth of the retransmitted signals.
 - (iii) The retransmitted signals continue to meet the unwanted emissions limits of § 90.210 applicable to the corresponding received signals (assuming that these received signals meet the applicable unwanted emissions limits by a reasonable margin).
 - (5) On or after March 1, 2014, a signal booster must be labeled to indicate whether it is a Class A or Class B device, and the label must include the following advisory
 - (1) In on-line point-of-sale marketing materials,
 - (2) In any print or on-line owner's manual and installation instructions,
 - (3) On the outside packaging of the device, and
 - (4) On a label affixed to the device:

"WARNING. This is NOT a CONSUMER device. It is designed for installation by FCC LICENSEES and QUALIFIED INSTALLERS. You MUST have an FCC LICENSE or express consent of an FCC Licensee to operate this device. You MUST register Class B signal boosters (as defined in 47 CFR 90.219) online at www.fcc.gov/signal-boosters/registration. Unauthorized use may result in significant forfeiture penalties, including penalties in excess of \$100,000 for each continuing violation."

[78 FR 21564, Apr. 12, 2013, as amended at 83 FR 61097, Nov. 27, 2018]