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March 22, 2013

TIP OF THE WEEK: Be sure to organize and keep the documents you relied on to prepare and submit your FCC Form(s) 471 (see below). USAC may request one or more of these documents during the review of your application.

Commitments for Funding Year 2012, 2011, and 2010

Funding Year 2012. USAC will release Funding Year (FY) 2012 Wave 36 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) March 26. This wave includes commitments for approved Priority 2 (Internal Connections and Basic Maintenance) requests at 90 percent and denials at 89 percent and below. As of March 22, FY2012 commitments total over \$1.99 billion.

Funding Year 2011. USAC will release FY2011 Wave 85 FCDLs March 27. This wave includes commitments for approved Priority 2 requests at 88 percent and above and denials at 87 percent and below. As of March 22, FY2011 commitments total over \$2.55 billion.

Funding Year 2010. USAC will release FY2010 Wave 110 FCDLs March 25. This wave can include commitments for approved Priority 2 requests at all discount levels. As of March 22, FY2010 commitments total just under \$3.08 billion.

On the day the FCDLs are mailed, you can check to see if you have a commitment by using USAC's [Automated Search of Commitments](#) tool.

Update on PQA

Payment Quality Assurance (PQA) is a program that assesses E-rate payments made during the current year in light of the requirements of the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act (IPERA). Each month, a certain number of recent payments are chosen randomly, and applicants are asked to provide specific information to verify that those payments were made correctly. Note that although only recent payments are chosen for verification, the payments chosen are not limited to recent funding years.

The PQA program was suspended during the FY2013 application filing window, but now that the window has closed, PQA emails have resumed. Each Monday, PQA will send about 60 emails requesting information, and then in May PQA will return to its normal schedule of 60 emailed requests per month.

Emails are sent from the domain name **usac.i-sight.com**. Please check your email and respond promptly if you receive an email from USAC's PQA Program. You will have ten business days to respond, and you can ask for more time if you need it.

For more information on this program, review the [PQA Program](#) document and related links on the USAC website.

How to Use the View 471 Status Tool

If you want to know the status of your FY2013 FCC Form 471, you can look it up using the [View 471 Status Tool](#). This tool provides real-time information on the status of FCC Forms 471 filed for a specific Billed Entity and funding year.

To use this tool, you must enter a Billed Entity Number (BEN), choose a funding year, and click "Search." The first screen you see gives you general information about the results of your search. If you click "Continue" at the bottom of the page, you will then see a list containing the following information for every FCC Form 471 filed for the BEN and funding year you entered:

- Form 471 Application Number (assigned by USAC)
- Applicant Form Identifier (created by the Billed Entity)
- Application Status

Below the list of search results is an Application Status Explanation table that provides information on each of the statuses that can be assigned to an FCC Form 471.

Certified FCC Forms 471 – that is, forms filed online and certified online, filed online and certified on paper, or filed on paper – generally begin with one of two statuses: **Certified - In Window** or **Certified - Out of Window**.

- Paper forms for FY2013 that were postmarked on or before March 14, 2013 and forms filed online and certified (online or on paper) on or before March 14, 2013 will generally show a status of **Certified - In Window**.
- Paper forms for FY2013 that were postmarked after March 14, 2013 and forms certified (online or on paper) after March 14, 2013 will generally show a status of **Certified - Out of Window**.
- Note that the status of some out-of-window FY2013 FCC Forms 471 will be changed to **Certified - In Window** in the near future. For FY2013, these include forms submitted online on or before 11:59 pm EDT on March 14, 2013 and then certified either online or on paper after the filing window closed but on or before the extended certification deadline. (We will discuss this extended deadline in a future SL News Brief. However, if you have not yet certified your form, you should do so as soon as possible.)

FCC Forms 471 in a **Certified - In Window** status remain in that status until they are assigned to an initial reviewer to begin the Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) application review process. Once the form has been assigned to an initial reviewer, its status changes to **Initial Review**.

Your initial reviewer may have questions about your application. If so, he or she will attempt to contact you using the preferred mode of contact you indicated on the FCC Form 471 (Item 6c, 6d, or 6e). If your preferred mode of contact is telephone, the initial reviewer will call you and ask you for a fax number or email address in order to send you written questions and/or requests for information.

After the initial review of an application is complete and the reviewer has recommended a decision on funding, the status of the application changes to **Available for Final Review**. Once the application has been assigned to a final reviewer, the status changes to **Final Review**.

NOTE: The final reviewer reviews the work of the initial reviewer. If the final reviewer discovers a problem – such as a procedure that was not correctly followed – he or she returns the application to the initial reviewer for additional work. If this happens, the status of the form will change back to **Initial Review** and your initial reviewer may contact you again. In other words, because this tool shows real-time status, you should not be concerned if your application moves back to **Initial Review**.

After the final reviewer is satisfied that all procedures have been properly followed and the decision of the initial reviewer is correct, the application may be subject to additional quality checks, and may move to the status **Quality Assurance 1** or **Quality Assurance 2**. As above, if a problem is identified, the form will return to **Initial Review** status for resolution.

Once the review process is complete and USAC has issued a decision in an FCDL, the status of the FCC Form 471 changes to **FCDL Issued - 'xx/xx/xxxx'** where the x's are replaced by the date the FCDL was issued. Note that if some individual funding requests on the application are in an "As Yet Unfunded" or "Under Review" status, one or more subsequent FCDLs may be issued until USAC has issued a funding decision on all the funding requests on the application. If USAC issues more than one FCDL, the date featured on the form's status will be the date of the latest FCDL for that form.

Some applications may be held or deferred. The following statuses indicate that review of an application has been temporarily suspended:

- **Unable to Contact:** USAC has attempted to reach the contact person using the information available on the form and in our database and has been unable to do so. If your application is in this status, you should contact your initial reviewer. If you don't know who your initial reviewer is or are unable to locate his or her contact information, call the Client Service Bureau (CSB) at 1 (888) 203-8100 and ask for assistance.
- **Deferred:** USAC has been unsuccessful in contacting you during the summer or winter periods when extended holiday and break schedules occur or – during one of those periods – you asked us to defer our review. (For more information on these summer and winter periods, successful contacts, and response deadlines, refer to the guidance document [Missing Information](#) posted on the USAC website.) If you feel you should not be in this status, contact your initial reviewer or CSB as described above.
- **Awaiting Applicant Documentation:** USAC has requested information or documentation from you but does not yet have your response. Contact your initial reviewer if you have any questions

about this status.

- **Held for further review and other verification:** USAC needs to collect additional information and/or verify information already provided before a funding decision can be made. In some cases this can happen quickly; in others, the additional work will take some time.

USAC will not review applications that have the following statuses:

- **Canceled:** In general, a form in **Canceled** status was canceled in consultation with the applicant.
- **Incomplete:** A form in **Incomplete** status is either a paper form for which data entry has not been completed or an online form for which the "Submit" button has not yet been pushed. NOTE: Paper forms submitted after the filing window closed generally remain in an **Incomplete** status.
- **Complete:** A form in **Complete** status was submitted successfully online but has not yet been certified. Forms not certified by the extended certification deadline (see above) will generally remain in a **Complete** status.
- **Certified - Out of Window:** A form that remains in **Certified - Out of Window** status was submitted after the filing window closed or certified after the extended certification deadline or both. It will only be considered for funding after all **Certified - In Window** forms have been considered. Except for FY1999, funding has been insufficient to consider funding requests on out-of-window forms.

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USAC | 2000 L Street NW | Suite 200 | Washington, DC 20036

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