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September 16, 2016

**TIP OF THE WEEK:** When filing the FCC Form 498, applicants may cause their form to be rejected by confusing the entries for their bank account number and bank routing number. Check the captions on these fields carefully to make sure you are providing the correct information in each field.

## Commitments for Funding Years 2016 and 2015

**Funding Year 2016.** USAC is scheduled to release Funding Year (FY) 2016 Wave 13 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on September 19. This wave includes commitments for approved applications for all service types and at all discount levels. As of September 16, FY2016 commitments total over \$520.6 million.

On the date the FCDLs are issued, you can access your FCDL notification from the **Notifications** section of your landing page in the E-rate Productivity Center (EPC).

**Funding Year 2015.** USAC will release FY2015 Wave 64 FCDLs on September 22. This wave includes commitments for approved requests for all service types and at all discount levels. As of September 16, FY2015 commitments total over \$3.31 billion.

The day after the wave runs, you can check to see if you have a commitment by using USAC's [Automated Search of Commitments](#) tool. FCDLs for FY2015 will continue to be printed and mailed to applicants and service providers, and emailed to service providers who have signed up to receive electronic notifications.

## USAC Unveils FRN Status Tool

USAC has created a tool to display information about funding request numbers (FRNs) for FY2016 and future funding years. This tool, called the [FRN Status Tool](#), has a look and feel similar to that of the [Data Retrieval Tool \(DRT\)](#), but it provides more choices of information that can be retrieved than the current DRT.

This tool will be rolled out in two phases:

- The first phase follows the "Standard Report" format of the current DRT – a specific set of fields that is always returned based on the search criteria selected. This is the version of the [FRN Status Tool](#) that is available now.
- The second phase will follow the "Select Data Points" format in the current DRT, which allows the user to select one, some, or all of the fields from a menu of specific fields – again, based on the search criteria selected. This version is currently under development and should be available in the near future.

Below are the steps for performing a "Standard Report" search in the FRN Status Tool. Note that the search results are always returned at the FRN level, one line per FRN.

## **I. Required criteria**

- Choose a funding year (currently only FY2016 has data)
- Enter at least one of the following high-level search criteria:
  - State
  - BEN (Billed Entity Number)
  - CRN (Consultant Registration Number)
  - SPIN (Service Provider Identification Number, also known as the service provider 498 ID)
- Select at least one FRN service type (the default is that all are selected)
  - Voice
  - Data Transmission and/or Internet Access
  - Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections
  - Internal Connections
  - Managed Internal Broadband Services
- Select at least one applicant type (the default is that all are selected)
  - School
  - School district
  - Library
  - Library system
  - Consortium

## **II. Optional Criteria**

If you want to further limit your search, enter one or more of the following:

- 471 Application Number
- FRN
- Wave Number
- Appeal Wave Number

## **Format**

- Choose whether you want your results in Excel or XML feed.
- Then click "Create Standard Report."

The standard report returns the following fields for each FRN that meets the criteria you indicated above:

1. 471 Application Number
2. 471 Review Status
3. FRN
4. FRN Status
5. BEN
6. Billed Entity Name
7. Type of 471 Application
8. FRN Service Type
9. Applicant State
10. SPIN
11. Service Provider Name

12. CRN
13. 486 Service Start Date
14. Fund Year
15. Wave Number
16. Appeal Wave Number
17. Original Requested Amount
18. Committed Amount
19. Total Disbursement Amount

Remember that, this early in the funding year, some of the fields may be blank (e.g., total disbursement amount).

You can also find [instructions on using the FRN Status Tool](#) on the USAC website.

### **FCC Releases FY2017 Eligible Services List**

On September 12, 2016, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued an Order releasing the Eligible Services List (ESL) for FY2017 ([DA 16-1023](#)). Note that Appendix B of the Order has a list of frequently asked questions regarding classification of connections as Category One or Category Two, and Appendix C contains the Eligible Services List itself.

### **Using the RAL Modification Process to Update the Quantity of Circuits or Lines**

USAC is requesting that applicants who entered "1" for the circuit or line count on the FCC Form 471 when, in reality, there was more than that, correct the quantity by filing a RAL modification now to speed up the review process of the application. Applicants filing an FRN line item in FY2016 for data transmission and/or Internet access were asked to indicate the number of circuits or lines that were included in that line item. (We are referring specifically to the entry in the "Monthly Quantity" field on the "Cost Calculation for New FRN Line Item" page in the FCC Form 471.)

Some applicants, rather than calculate a cost per circuit or line, simply entered "1" for the monthly quantity and the total amount of their monthly bill for the "Monthly Recurring Unit Cost." However, if the cost for a single circuit or line appears unreasonable – which it may under this scenario – Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) must reach out to the applicant to verify that the information provided is correct.

In general, the process of reaching out must occur twice:

- First, PIA must reach out and verify the correct number of circuits or lines.
- Second, PIA must redo the calculation that results in the total eligible recurring costs and reach out again to the applicant to verify that the recalculation is correct.

If you are in this situation, PIA requests that you file a Receipt Acknowledgment Letter (RAL) modification to correct your FRN line item. Doing this will provide PIA with the correct information and obviate the need for PIA to verify this data.

To file a RAL modification, follow these steps:

1. Log in to your EPC account.
2. From your organization's landing page, search for the appropriate FCC Form 471 in the **FCC Forms** section at the bottom of the page. Click the appropriate form number to access the form.

3. Click the "Related Actions" menu on the left-hand side and choose "Submit Modification Request (RAL)."
4. Click the button labeled "Application," then the sub-category "Funding Request Details."
5. Click the box to the left of the FRN you want to modify, then click "View Line Items."
6. Click the box to the left of the FRN line item you want to modify, then click "Edit Line Item."
7. Under the Cost Calculation section, edit your entries as appropriate. If the value for your Total Eligible Recurring Costs is correct and you then modify the entry for the Monthly Unit, note that you must also modify the entry for the Monthly Unit Recurring Cost so that the result of the new calculation matches the result of the original calculation. Then click "Continue."
8. You now see the original entry and your modification. If your modification is correct, click "Finish & Submit Request." If it is not, you can click the "Discard Request" button and try again.

For calculations that do not match exactly – for example, if you requested one circuit for \$7,000 but you really wanted six circuits for a total cost of \$7,000.00, you should adjust your calculation to come as close as possible to the original total without exceeding it. In this example, you would modify your Monthly Unit entry to "6" and your Monthly Unit recurring cost entry to "1166.66" which results in a Total Eligible Recurring Costs value of \$6,999.96.

### **Last Week in "File Along with Me":**

- "File Along with Me" is a blog that covers the E-rate Program application process step-by-step, and serves as a schedule you can follow to manage your application. Ready to join us? [Read the Blog](#)

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