

FCC License Fees

ISSUE SUMMARY

The National Association of Broadcasters is pushing back against the FCC's proposed 2019 fees for radio stations and seeks a new notice with a better explanation of the planned increases.

Here's why:

In a phone call this month with several officials of the FCC's Office of Managing Director, two NAB executives characterized the planned increases as "remarkable," according to a notice of ex parte communication summarizing the conversation. NAB says the increased fees "will be an unexpected and substantial burden for many broadcasters" who are already facing increased competition from digital outlets.

It said for example that regulatory fees for some FM stations would increase from \$8,350 to \$10,075, while some AM stations would see an increase from \$2,975 to \$3,550, with proportional increases for other stations.

NAB questions the data the commission provided to justify the fee hikes. While acknowledging the commission's larger total budget, which is up 5.2% from 2018, the association says this does not adequately "explain or justify" the fee change.