

Coalition to Save Our GPS

Uniting to Protect GPS - A National Utility for More than 30 Years



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The following may be attributed to Jim Kirkland, Vice President and General Counsel of Trimble, a founding member of the Coalition to Save Our GPS:

“Mr. Ahuja’s recent public statements prove that LightSquared will truly say anything in its desperation to save its ill-conceived plan. Mr. Ahuja says that the ‘GPS industry’ has been wrong on every occasion. This is the exact opposite of the truth. The GPS industry told the FCC last fall that LightSquared’s plans would cause massive interference. LightSquared said they wouldn’t. The FCC study group results proved that the GPS industry was right, and LightSquared’s plans would cause massive interference. So LightSquared changed its plans in June, and declared that this would solve the interference. The GPS industry said that this was not proven and that there was still substantial evidence of interference. So LightSquared this month yet again changed its plan, and said that this was the solution. Within the last three weeks, both the FCC and the NTIA disagreed and concluded that more testing is necessary. Two weeks ago, a highly-decorated four-star general, the Department of Defense issue expert on this subject, testified under oath that LightSquared’s plans posed a serious threat to national security, and, repeatedly, was scornfully dismissed as ‘misinformed’ by Phil Falcone, the head of the New York hedge fund that controls LightSquared.

“Anyone paying attention to this debacle knows that LightSquared has been wrong at every turn on the interference issue. LightSquared is also completely in the wrong in claiming that it has had the right to build its network since 2003 – in fact, the FCC’s orders say nothing of the sort. So LightSquared’s claim that the GPS industry should have designed its equipment differently starting then is based only on LightSquared’s own, self-serving, revisionist history.

“LightSquared’s claim on this point is particularly egregious relative to high-precision receivers. These receivers were designed to use LightSquared’s spectrum to take advantage of LightSquared’s own services, and LightSquared was happy to get this revenue at the time. Now that LightSquared has decided to change to high-powered terrestrial use LightSquared is trying to avoid responsibility for paying to replace any receivers that would be rendered obsolete if it moves forward with its plans.

“Massive PR campaigns and glossy ads can’t make false statements true. At the end of the day, this is all about money for LightSquared. It doesn’t want to pay the costs of replacing expensive GPS equipment bought with the hard-earned money of farmers and small businesses, so it blames the GPS industry for interference. And it doesn’t want the American public and taxpayers to know that if LightSquared’s plans are allowed to go forward, it will receive a \$10 billion windfall increase in the value of its spectrum, according to its own consultants’ estimates. That’s our nation’s spectrum, originally awarded for free to a LightSquared predecessor. It is also clear at this point that LightSquared keeps repeating the

same misinformation in order to cover its own lack of due diligence in identifying and dealing responsibly with the GPS interference issue from day one.

“Throughout this process, the GPS industry has sought to be as cooperative as possible in helping arrive at a factual, engineering-based understanding of the interference problems that would be caused if LightSquared’s plans were to be implemented. Engineers and issues experts from throughout the industry joined together to participate in the extensive tests of LightSquared’s original proposal, and the industry stands ready to assist in whatever manner is most helpful for future testing.

“LightSquared should do what the FCC and NTIA have said and prove through more testing that it can actually solve interference and that replacement equipment will actually work. And where it can’t solve the interference, it should pay the full costs of any transition process and any replacements required. It’s time for LightSquared to stop the misinformation campaign and do the hard work needed so that this country can have both broadband and GPS.”

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