

Press Release

DATE: April 27, 2016

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California High-Speed Rail Authority Acquires Radio Spectrum for Train Communications

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) hit a major milestone in safety and security this month, receiving final approval to acquire exclusive rights to the radio spectrum needed to operate future communications systems for its trains.

The agreement with Access 700, LLC, a subsidiary of Access Spectrum, LLC, for 44 frequencies covering the lower section of the state, is critical for the development of secure and reliable train communication systems. These systems include features like Positive Train Control (PTC), a state-of-the-art collision avoidance technology that allows trains, tracks and dispatch centers to actively communicate with each other. Radio spectrum is also needed to monitor train conditions and diagnostics and to operate security systems along the high-speed rail system.

Radio spectrum is divided into bands of frequencies that have different properties and characteristics. The Authority purchased Access Spectrum's Upper 700 MHz A Block spectrum because the signal is clear, not susceptible to interference and not shared with other users. As only authorized parties will have access to these frequencies, they are ideal for secure communication between trains, Authority facilities and public safety agencies.

“By obtaining exclusive rights to this spectrum, we will be able to ensure a secure communications network for future high-speed rail operations across California,” said Authority Chief Program Manager Frank Vacca.

“We recognize how difficult it can be to secure unencumbered, exclusive, licensed spectrum covering geography as diverse as the State of California,” said Michael Gottdenker, Chairman & CEO of Access Spectrum. “We are confident that the Authority will put this vital asset to good use.”

The Authority's Board of Directors in February approved the agreement to purchase the 44 frequencies at \$0.70/MHz-pop (2015). The agreement received final approval from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) this month. The Authority has also entered into an agreement to purchase radio spectrum rights (43 frequencies) in the upper geographic area of the state from BPC Spectrum, LLC.

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