

## Coalition to Save Our GPS

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



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# FCC-Mandated Working Group Report Documents Pervasive Harmful Interference with GPS

*Coalition Members Say Report Verifies LightSquared Plan Defies Laws of Physics; Call for  
Company to Move Completely Out of Band Adjacent to GPS*

**WASHINGTON, D.C., June 30, 2011** – In response to a report submitted today to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) by an FCC-mandated technical working group on the potential for interference to Global Positioning Systems (GPS) by LightSquared's proposed broadband network, the "Coalition to Save Our GPS" issued the statements below.

The first statement is on behalf of the Coalition. It is followed by statements from representatives of some of the key Coalition members. The statements follow:

***The Coalition:*** "The FCC technical working group report conclusively shows that LightSquared's proposed operations defy the law of physics, and therefore simply will not work. The report findings are starkly clear: The only real solution to the LightSquared interference problem is to move out of the MSS band altogether. That's because going forward with LightSquared's plans, in all of their various shifting iterations, would cause such widespread harmful interference that it would severely cripple GPS, a national utility upon which millions of Americans rely every day and a critically important tool for a wide variety of industries and government operations that is a mainstay of the U.S. economy.

"The FCC working group report only scratches the surface of the widespread disruption LightSquared's proposed operations would cause. There are 500 million GPS receivers in use in the U.S. alone. These receivers in turn are embedded in tens of thousands of complex systems – from aviation navigation systems to law enforcement dispatch, and millions of pieces of complex equipment ranging from agricultural combines to snowplows for precision guidance. While we know that these systems will be interfered with we have frighteningly little idea of the magnitude of the consequences of interference, other than it will be truly extraordinary in scale. To tamper with these systems based on technical guesswork would be a mistake of monumental proportions."

***Jim Kirkland, Vice President and General Counsel to Trimble:*** "LightSquared has been saying since November 2010 that interference to GPS is manageable and technical fixes are available. With the filing of the FCC working group report, all the studies are now in and provide consistent and overwhelming evidence that LightSquared's proposed operations would cause massive interference to every type of GPS device, even devices in outer space. There is no current, existing technology that solves this

interference, only unproven claims of hypothetical future fixes. Yet LightSquared still says the same things it said last fall – interference can be "mitigated" and technical solutions will be available in the future. LightSquared has no credibility left, and no one – except those with an economic stake in the outcome – has come forward to support their technical claims.

“At this point, it could not be clearer that LightSquared gambled on the outcome of these technical tests and lost. The FCC, unfortunately, took LightSquared at its word and pushed for extremely fast track consideration of its proposals. This process has consumed millions of dollars and tens of thousands of hours of the employees of the 42 companies and 15 government agencies and other organizations participating in the test process, as well as substantial government resources in a time of budget cuts. “After all this work had been done, LightSquared last week abruptly proposed to modify the plans it asked the FCC, and all the affected industries, to study last fall. The available evidence in the working group report shows that this new plan won't work either. LightSquared should not be permitted to waste more time and effort on "Plan B." If LightSquared had done its homework in the first place, it should have put this new plan forward initially. It didn't. And it should now bear the consequences. It's time to stop this process and move on.”

**Philip Straub, Vice President for Aviation Engineering, Garmin International, Inc.:** “GPS-enabled devices have brought important advances in aviation safety, particularly for the General Aviation market, which comprises more than 80 percent of the active U.S. fleet. GPS is the primary means of navigation for most of the aircraft. Nearly all military aircraft utilize GPS, as do nearly 80 percent of the cargo planes. And most foreign aircraft that enter U.S. airspace are outfitted with GPS. In recognition of the far-reaching benefits GPS brings to aviation, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has begun implementing the NextGen program, which uses airborne GPS as an enabling technology for a revolutionized Air Traffic Control system.

“It is time to put an end to this dysfunctional testing exercise that has only proven what we have known all along – that operation of LightSquared’s proposed broadband terrestrial network will cause catastrophic harm to the aviation industry and the many other critical sectors that rely on GPS every day. LightSquared’s ‘mitigation’ and ‘solution’ proposals are as impractical as its original plan, and it would be irresponsible to waste any more industry, user, and government time, money, or resources to futilely attempt to find otherwise.”

**Ken Golden, Director of Global Public Relations at John Deere:** “The report affirms John Deere’s position that the LightSquared network, if allowed to proceed, would have a serious impact on our customers and on the agricultural and construction industries in the U.S. The report of the working group demonstrates there is no practical solution to mitigate the interference that would result if the proposal is allowed. It is not acceptable to allow a new network to interfere with these vitally important industries and weaken the strong competitive position of the U.S. in the global economy. Research has shown that losing the use of GPS technology could have a negative impact of \$14 billion to \$30 billion annually for U.S. farmers.”

**Siamak Mirhakimi, General Manager, Caterpillar Electronics & Systems Integration:** “The study group report makes it very clear that if this planned use of spectrum is permitted to proceed its harmful interference with high precision GPS would significantly impact the heavy construction and civil engineering industries. These industries, which employ more than a million people in the U.S., have invested billions of dollars in GPS enabled products. Both depend heavily on high precision GPS technology because of the important benefits it provides: increased productivity, improved job site

safety, faster project completion times and reduced fuel and rework costs. The test results clearly show substantial interference to high precision GPS which in turn will impact our products and customers. Allowing any company to cause interference to the GPS band would be a major step backward, and should be blocked.”

## **Background**

In January, the FCC granted a conditional waiver to LightSquared allowing the dramatic expansion of terrestrial use of the satellite spectrum immediately neighboring that of GPS, causing severe interference to millions of GPS receivers. The FCC's decision has caused serious concern within various government agencies as well as the GPS industry and user community because LightSquared's planned use of the spectrum is dramatically different from the limited "ancillary" ground-based use previously permitted by FCC rules, and is incompatible with GPS.

## **About the Coalition**

The “Coalition to Save Our GPS” is working to resolve a serious threat to the Global Positioning System. The FCC granted a highly unusual conditional waiver for a proposal to build 40,000 ground stations that could cause widespread interference with GPS signals – endangering a national utility which millions of Americans rely on every day. The conditional waiver was granted to a company called LightSquared. Today, more than 100,000 companies and millions of people working in industries like aviation, public safety, agriculture, transportation, as well as in the public sector are represented in the Coalition either independently or through trade associations

[www.SaveOurGPS.org](http://www.SaveOurGPS.org)

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