

## **Operation of Wireless Microphones (and similar devices) in the USA**

Under the FCC rules in effect since June 12, 2010 the operation of wireless microphones (and similar devices) in the 700 MHz band is prohibited. Also effective from January 2010 is a prohibition against manufacture, import, service, marketing, sale, lease or shipment of such equipment for deployment in the USA.

### **Why did the FCC make this rule?**

Certain wireless microphones have operated on frequencies which are reassigned to public safety communications. When this equipment was first designed, the frequencies used were in between the frequencies assigned to TV-stations for broadcasting their programs. With the completion of the digital television (DTV) transition on June 12 of 2009, TV-stations no longer use the frequencies between 698 and 806 MHz (the 700 MHz band) for broadcast. These frequencies have now been assigned to public safety entities, such as police, fire and emergency services, and by commercial providers of wireless services, such as wireless broadband services.

The wireless microphones (and similar devices) that had been operating in the old TV broadcast channels can cause harmful interference to these public safety and wireless consumer services. Therefore, all users of wireless microphones (and similar devices) that operate in the 700 MHz band – including licensed users under Part 74 and unlicensed users - have to stop operating in this band.

The FCC is only prohibiting the use of wireless microphones (and similar devices) that operate in the 700 MHz band. You may continue the use wireless microphones (and similar devices) operating on all other TV-broadcast frequencies.

### **What is a 'similar device' to a wireless microphone?**

Equipment that is a 'similar device' to a wireless microphone is also known as equipment for a 'low power auxiliary station'. Typically these devices can transmit over a distance of 100 meters or less. Examples include wireless intercoms, wireless 'in-ear-monitors' ('IEM'), wireless audio instrument links and wireless cueing equipment (aka "IFB").

### **What happens if someone does not stop using a 700 MHz band wireless microphone?**

Using the 700 MHz wireless microphone (or similar device) could be extremely dangerous and could even be life threatening. Police and fire departments, and other public safety groups use frequencies in the 700 MHz band. Interference from wireless microphones can affect the ability of public safety groups to receive information over the air and respond to emergencies. Harmful interference to these communications could put you or public safety personnel in grave danger. In addition, use of your microphone can cause unlawful interference to consumer services provided using the 700 MHz band.

Operation of wireless microphones in violation of these rules may subject the user to substantial monetary forfeitures, in rem arrest action against the offending radio equipment and criminal sanctions, including imprisonment. Because any operation in violation of these rules creates a danger of interference to important radio communications services and may subject the operator to severe penalties, this advisory emphasizes the importance of complying strictly with these legal requirements.

For more detailed information visit the website of the Federal Communications Commission at [www.fcc.gov/cgb/wirelessmicrophones/](http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/wirelessmicrophones/)