



Press Release

2024 State of Spectrum

PAULINA ENCK | MARCH 19, 2024

As broadband providers and equipment manufacturers continue to develop and deploy next-generation wireless technologies, the need for additional radio spectrum — frequencies at which all radios operate — has never been greater. In a new insight, Director of Technology and Innovation Policy Jeffrey Westling explains the current spectrum allocations in the lower mid-band, discusses the setback of U.S. spectrum policy at the World Radio Conference, and considers suggested paths forward.

Key points:

- New developments in both 5G networks and next-generation Wi-Fi require access to mid-band spectrum frequencies over which to operate, but currently most mid-band frequencies are controlled by federal agencies, particularly the Department of Defense.
- The lack of commercial mid-band spectrum could impact global harmonization of the U.S. spectrum management approach as the World Radio Conference recently embraced China's approach to allocating portions of the 6 GHz band for 5G; this development highlights that the U.S. approach – which has this band allocated to unlicensed technologies such as Wi-Fi and Bluetooth – may not be the preferred internationally.
- Congress and the Biden Administration should work quickly to free up additional government-controlled spectrum in the lower mid-band for commercial use and embrace a balanced approach to spectrum policy to ensure all uses have the bandwidth necessary.

[Read the analysis](#)