

# LightSquared gets extension for GPS test results

June 16 2011, By JOELLE TESSLER , AP Technology Writer

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Federal regulators have granted a Virginia company called LightSquared a two-week extension to report on recent tests that aimed to determine whether its proposed high-speed wireless broadband network would cripple GPS systems around the country.

A technical working group created to study the extent of potential interference from LightSquared's proposed network was to report its findings on Wednesday to the [Federal Communications Commission](#).

Mandated by the [FCC](#), the group is controlled by LightSquared but includes representatives from GPS equipment makers and users, including a number of federal agencies that rely on GPS technology.

LightSquared asked for an extension to July 1 to file the [test results](#) amid growing concern that its proposed network would jam [GPS systems](#) used for everything from aviation and military operations to [public safety](#) and consumer [navigation devices](#).

The delay raises fresh questions about whether the FCC will allow LightSquared to proceed with its plan to build a new nationwide fourth-generation wireless network that would compete with super-fast systems being rolled out by AT&T and Verizon.

GPS equipment makers and users fear that the new network could jam their systems because LightSquared would use airwaves right next to those set aside for GPS. They warn that sensitive satellite receivers -

designed to pick up relatively weak signals - could be overwhelmed when LightSquared starts sending high-powered signals from as many as 40,000 transmitters on the ground.

Although the FCC gave LightSquared approval in January to build the system, the agency said it would not allow the network to be turned on until GPS interference problems are resolved. It required LightSquared, GPS equipment makers and GPS users to establish the technical working group to study the matter. The group conducted extensive interference tests using LightSquared equipment in Las Vegas last month.

In a filing with the FCC late Wednesday, LightSquared said it needs more time to study and compile the results into a final report because the working group had to conduct more tests than it expected.

The delay angered other companies participating in the group, including GPS equipment makers Trimble Navigation Ltd. and Garmin Ltd. They say LightSquared is simply trying to stall the release of tests results that reveal serious problems.

"The working group results show massive interference to GPS," said Jim Kirkland, Trimble vice president and general counsel. "Delay will not change these results. It is disappointing that LightSquared has misused its control of the study group process filing process to delay this filing."

Last week, a working group of the National Executive Committee for Space-Based Positioning, Navigation, and Timing - a federal organization that advises and coordinates among federal agencies that rely on GPS technology - released results from a series of tests conducted by various government agencies in New Mexico in April that found potential for widespread GPS interference.

RTCA, a nonprofit group that advises the Federal Aviation

Administration, also recently released the results of its own [interference](#) tests, which found that LightSquared's use of airwaves closest to the GPS spectrum would cause a "complete loss of GPS receiver function" over large metropolitan areas.

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Citation: LightSquared gets extension for GPS test results (2011, June 16) retrieved 10 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-06-lightsquared-extension-gps-results.html>

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