



# PUBLIC NOTICE

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
1919 M STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554

DA 96-2040

News media information 202/418-0500 Fax-On-Demand 202/418-2830 Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov> [ftp.fcc.gov](ftp://ftp.fcc.gov)

Released: December 9, 1996

## FCC REGULATES RADAR TRANSMITTERS, BUT NOT RADAR DETECTORS

The FCC continues to receive many inquiries about regulations governing police radar, radar detectors, and other radar devices used to measure the speed of an object. This Notice explains the scope of FCC regulation over these devices. It updates and supersedes the Public Notice on the same subject dated August 1, 1985.

*Radar units* are transceivers, *i.e.* they both transmit and receive a signal, and operate under rules for the Radiolocation Service contained in Part 90 of the FCC's Rules. As such, they are type-accepted and authorized by the FCC under Parts 2 and 90 of the FCC's Rules. Part 90 specifies the frequencies and technical standards for radar units, but does not address how radar units are to be operated as devices to measure an object's speed. Also, the FCC Rules do not contain provisions concerning the calibration of radar units, the reliability of the readings, or operator capability requirements.

Radar units are used by police and other public safety agencies to measure vehicle speeds. Under Part 90 of the rules, licensees in the Public Safety Radio Services (such as state or local government entities), that already have a FCC license for a radio communications system, may operate radar units without obtaining a separate license for them. Radar units may also be used under Part 90 by non-public safety entities such as professional baseball teams, tennis clubs, automobile and boat racing organizations, private transportation firms, railroads, etc., to measure the speed of objects or vehicles. Non-public safety users, however, are required to obtain a Part 90 license from the Commission for use of radar units. Additionally, many public safety agencies also operate unattended, low-power, transmit-only radar units under Part 15 of the FCC's Rules.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is the federal agency concerned with the enforcement of highway speed limits and with the operation of unattended, drone police radars as enforcement tools. Information on NHTSA regulations concerning high-power drone radar use can be obtained from the Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh St., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590.

*Radar jammers* are transmitters tuned to interfere with ("jam") a radar signal. The intentional use of jammers is considered "malicious interference" and is strictly prohibited by the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, as well as by FCC Rules. Anyone using a jammer risks such penalties as losing an FCC license, paying a fine, or facing criminal prosecution.

-more-

*Radar detectors* are radio receivers tuned to receive radar signals and are used by motorists to provide a warning of any radar activity in the vicinity. In this regard, the FCC regulations pertaining to receivers do not address the subject of radar detectors. The use of radar detectors by members of the public, therefore, does not constitute in itself a violation of FCC Rules. Some jurisdictions, however, have local regulations or statutes concerning the use of radar detectors. Inquiries about such statutes should be directed to local law enforcement authorities.

In summary, the FCC Rules regulate radar transmitting units but provide limited regulation over receivers, with the subject of radar detectors not being specifically addressed in the FCC Rules.

For more information about the subject of this notice, contact the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Private Wireless Division, at (202) 418-0680.

-FCC-