



Broadcasting Notice of Consultation CRTC 2011-102

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Ottawa, 17 February 2011

Call for comments on measures to control the loudness of commercial messages

The Commission seeks comment on measures that television broadcasters and other elements of the Canadian broadcasting system can implement to control the loudness of commercial messages relative to adjacent programming. The deadline for the receipt of comments is 18 April 2011.

Introduction

1. Over the years, the loudness of commercial messages relative to adjacent programming has been the subject of many complaints. This is due, at least in part, to producers' use of audio processing techniques such as compression to make commercial messages appear to be louder than adjacent programming, even though they are broadcast at the same volume.
2. The perceived loudness of television programming is dependent on a number of factors. These include the nature and content of programming, its peak volume and its dynamic range, among other things. In 2006, based on extensive subjective testing, the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), developed *Recommendation ITU-R BS.1770* (the ITU recommendation), which defines an objective means of measuring the perceived loudness of typical audio in a broadcast environment.
3. In November 2009, the Advanced Television Systems Committee (ATSC), which defines international standards for digital television that are used primarily in North America, developed recommended practice A/85 entitled *Techniques for Establishing and Maintaining Audio Loudness for Digital Television*. This practice builds on the ITU recommendation by defining, among other things, a target loudness level and methods to control the loudness of commercial messages relative to adjacent programming.
4. Other international standard-making bodies have adopted approaches similar to that of the ATSC. The implementation of these approaches in other countries has been accomplished using measures ranging from voluntary initiatives to regulation.

Consultation

5. Given the recent availability of international standards for measuring and controlling the perceived loudness of commercial messages, the Commission seeks comment on the following questions as they relate to the implementation of the ATSC recommended practice in Canada by television programming undertakings, including

conventional television undertakings and specialty services, as well as other elements of the broadcasting system.

- To what extent, and by what means, do broadcasters currently control the loudness of commercial messages?
- What technical changes are required to implement the recommended practices of the ATSC, and to what extent are broadcasters already planning to implement the associated loudness controls? What are the associated costs and practical implications to broadcasters?
- What is the most appropriate timeframe for the implementation of these changes?
- What, if any, regulatory changes are required to ensure the effective control of the loudness of commercial messages relative to adjacent programming?
- To what extent are related technical and regulatory changes applicable to broadcasting distribution undertakings and video-on-demand programming undertakings, particularly as they relate to local availabilities, refreshed commercial messages or dynamic ad insertion?

Call for comments

6. The Commission invites comments on the questions set out above, and will accept comments that it receives on or before **18 April 2011**. The Commission cannot be held responsible for postal delays and will not notify a party whose comment is received after the deadline date. The comment will not be considered by the Commission and will not be part of the public file. Although the Commission is initiating this review using a written process, it may later elect to hold a public hearing on this matter.
7. The Commission will not formally acknowledge comments. It will, however, fully consider all comments, and they will form part of the public record of the proceeding, provided that the procedures for filing set out below have been followed.

Procedure for filing comments

8. Interested parties can file their comments to the Secretary General of the Commission in **only one** of the following formats:

by using the

[\[Broadcasting interventions/comments form\]](#)

or

by mail to

CRTC, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0N2

or

by fax at
819-994-0218

9. Submissions longer than five pages should include a summary.
10. Each paragraph of the submission should be numbered. In addition, where the comment is filed by electronic means, the line *****End of document***** should be entered following the last paragraph of the document, as an indication that the document has not been damaged during electronic transmission.

Important notice

11. All information that parties provide as part of this public process, except information granted confidentiality, whether sent by postal mail, facsimile, e-mail or through the Commission's website at www.crtc.gc.ca, becomes part of a publicly accessible file and will be posted on the Commission's website. This information includes personal information, such as full names, e-mail addresses, postal/street addresses, telephone and facsimile numbers, and any other personal information parties provide.
12. The personal information that parties provide will be used and may be disclosed for the purpose for which the information was obtained or compiled by the Commission, or for a use consistent with that purpose.
13. Documents received electronically or otherwise will be put on the Commission's website in their entirety exactly as received, including any personal information contained therein, in the official language and format in which they are received. Documents not received electronically will be available in PDF format.
14. The information that parties provide to the Commission as part of this public process is entered into an unsearchable database dedicated to this specific public process. This database is accessible only from the web page of this particular public process. As a result, a general search of the Commission's website with the help of either its own search engine or a third-party search engine will not provide access to the information that was provided as part of this public process.
15. The Commission encourages interested parties to monitor the public examination file and the Commission's website for additional information that they may find useful when preparing their comments.

Examination of documents

16. A list of all comments will also be available on the Commission's website. To access the list, select "Lists of interventions/comments" under "Public Proceedings" from the Commission's website.

17. The public may examine public comments and related documents at the following Commission offices during normal business hours.

Location of Commission offices

Toll-free telephone: 1-877-249-2782

Toll-free TDD: 1-877-909-2782

Les Terrasses de la Chaudière
Central Building
1 Promenade du Portage, Room 206
Gatineau, Quebec
J8X 4B1
Tel.: 819-997-2429
Fax: 819-994-0218

Regional offices

Metropolitan Place
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205 Viger Avenue West
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