



Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2008-253

Ottawa, 11 September 2008

Groupe Radio Antenne 6 inc.

Alma, Quebec

Application 2008-0098-9, received 22 January 2008

Public Hearing in the National Capital Region

7 July 2008

CFGT Alma – Conversion to FM band

*The Commission **denies** the application by Groupe Radio Antenne 6 inc. for a broadcasting licence to operate a French-language commercial FM radio station in Alma, Quebec, to replace the AM station CFGT Alma.*

Introduction

1. The Commission received an application by Groupe Radio Antenne 6 inc. (Antenne 6) to operate a new, French-language commercial FM radio programming undertaking in Alma, Quebec at 97.7 MHz (channel 249B) with an average effective radiated power (ERP) of 50,000 watts, to replace the AM station CFGT Alma.
2. Antenne 6 currently owns and operates CKYK-FM Alma and CHRL-FM Roberval.
3. The Commission received comments from Astral Media Radio Inc. and an intervention opposing the application from Carl Gilbert. The public record for this proceeding is available on the Commission's website at www.crtc.gc.ca under "Public Proceedings."

Commission's analysis and determinations

4. After reviewing the application, the interventions and the reply to the intervention, the Commission finds that the primary issue to be determined is whether approval of the present application would be consistent with the Commission's Common Ownership Policy.
5. In his intervention, Mr. Gilbert stated that approval of the application by Antenne 6 would give the applicant an undue advantage over the other licensees in Saguenay.
6. Antenne 6 supported its application with technical and economic arguments. According to Antenne 6, even though the 3 mV/m contour of CHRL-FM includes part of Alma, the uneven terrain of the city would cause the marginal signal from that station to reach only a limited number of listeners. In addition, the applicant explained that the advertising revenue of CFGT had fallen recently because its station is the only one in Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean still broadcasting on the AM band.

7. As set out in Public Notice 1998-41 and reaffirmed in Broadcasting Public Notice 2008-24, the Commission's Common Ownership Policy permits the ownership by a licensee of no more than three stations in a given language in markets where fewer than eight commercial stations are operating in that language, with a maximum of two stations in any one frequency band.
8. The Commission notes that the 3 mV/m contour of the proposed station would overlap those of CKYK-FM and CHRL-FM, which the applicant currently operates in the Lac-Saint-Jean-Est market. Should the Commission approve the application, Antenne 6 would control three FM stations in the same language and same market. As this would exceed the limit of two FM stations in the same language that this licensee may hold in that market, approval of Antenne 6's application would require an exception to the Commission's Common Ownership Policy.
9. To promote diversity in radio markets, the Commission considers that it should grant exceptions to the Common Ownership Policy only when a licensee clearly demonstrates that it has explored all other options for solving its technical or financial problems.
10. The Commission notes that the applicant did not demonstrate that the current CFGT signal is deficient in its market. The primary argument put forward by the applicant on this point can be summarized as the generally observed trend of a constant migration of the AM radio audience to the FM band. The Commission also notes that the financial situation of CFGT appears healthy given that the station has shown a profit margin before interest and taxes that is generally well above average for the Quebec and Canadian radio industry over the past five years.
11. The Commission is therefore of the view that Antenne 6 has not presented sufficient technical or economic evidence to justify an exception to the Common Ownership Policy and that it has not explored all possible options for solving the problems it has mentioned.

Conclusion

12. In light of the above, the Commission **denies** the application by Groupe Radio Antenne 6 inc. to operate a new, French-language commercial FM radio programming undertaking in Alma, Quebec, at 97.7 MHz (channel 249B) with an average ERP of 50,000 watts, to replace the AM station CFGT.

Secretary General

Related Documents

- *Diversity of Voices – Regulatory Policy, Broadcasting Public Notice*
CRTC 2008-4, 15 January 2008
- *Commercial Radio Policy, 1998, Public Notice CRTC 1998-41, 30 April 1998*

This decision is available in alternative format upon request, and may also be examined in PDF format or in HTML at the following Internet site: <http://www.crtc.gc.ca>.