



Broadcasting Information Bulletin CRTC 2009-384

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Streamlining of certain filing requirements for broadcasting distribution undertakings

The Commission announces streamlining measures applicable to broadcasting distribution undertakings' requirements for filing distribution grids, service area maps and financial information.

Introduction

1. Consistent with its objective of reviewing its current procedures in order to adapt them to the new realities of the communications industry, the Commission announces streamlining measures regarding broadcasting distribution undertakings' (BDUs) requirements for filing distribution grids, service area maps and financial information.

Distribution grids

2. BDUs are currently required to file a distribution grid or grids, i.e., the channel lineup, when submitting an application for a new (individual or regional) broadcasting licence or for licence renewal (individual or regional). The Commission considers that replacing the current requirement with one that requires BDUs to provide a website address where a BDU's distribution grid is listed, according to the licensed location, would reduce the amount of information filed by BDUs while increasing the information available to the public and broadcasters. Making programming information available online would be useful to the Commission in monitoring compliance and to customers wanting to know which programming services are available. Accordingly, effective immediately, the Commission adopts the following streamlining measures:
 - When filing an application for licence renewal (individual or regional), an existing BDU must provide a website address where its distribution grid(s) is/are listed, according to the licensed location. Distribution grids must contain the call sign and location or service name, which programming services are offered as part of the basic service and which ones are offered as a discretionary service, as well as the channel on which each programming service is distributed.
 - Each existing BDU must post its distribution grid or grids on its website and provide its website address to the Commission by 22 December 2009.
 - A new entrant BDU must still file a proposed distribution grid or grids when applying for a new BDU licence. In addition, a new entrant BDU must now provide a website address where its distribution grid(s) is/are posted at the same time it informs the Commission that it is ready to commence operation.

- Distribution grids must be posted at a location on the BDU's website that is easily accessible to the Commission, broadcasters and the public.

Service area maps

3. BDUs are currently required to file two original paper copy versions of a map showing the proposed service area or the changes to an existing service area using a 1:50,000 NTS topographical map. The Commission also encourages applicants to submit the service area maps in a geographical information system (GIS) compatible file format.
4. The Commission considers that replacing the current requirement with one that requires BDUs to file electronic service area maps for applications dealing with service areas will benefit members of the public who wish to consult applications online. In this regard, the Commission notes that other documents are already being filed electronically by BDUs using Epass, which has been available since 2005.
5. In the Commission's view, allowing for a wide array of acceptable file formats also benefits BDUs by affording them flexibility in creating and submitting electronic maps. The Commission therefore considers that requiring BDUs to file maps in a standard image file format (e.g., GIF, JPEG, TIFF, BMP) in a PDF file format or in a GIS-compatible file format (.tab or .mid/.mif) is appropriate. The Commission further notes that the supporting software for image and PDF file formats is widely available, which not only facilitates the creation of service area maps by BDUs but also the viewing of maps by the public and the industry. Accordingly, effective immediately, the Commission adopts the following streamlining measures:
 - Existing and new entrant BDUs must file a service area map that reflects the boundaries of the service area in one of the following formats:
 - standard image (e.g., GIF, JPEG, TIFF, BMP);
 - PDF file format;
 - GIS-compatible file format, electronically or on a CD-ROM.

A map provided in a standard image or PDF file format must be in a scale that readily permits precise identification of the boundaries of the service area and depicts the location in relation to its surrounding areas. This map must provide a level of detail comparable to that contained in the paper map previously required by the Commission (1:50,000 NTS topographical map).

A map provided in a GIS-compatible file format must be created using a map datum of NAD83. The Commission will only accept the following GIS-compatible file extensions:

- MapInfo format (.tab);
 - MapInfo Interchange format (.mid/.mif).
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- Should a signal distribution-related complaint arise at any given time during the licence term, the Commission may require that a BDU submit a current service area map in a GIS-compatible file format, following the specifications set out above. In such instances, BDUs must file service area maps, following a request by the Commission, within the time frame established by the Commission at that time.
 - Existing and new entrant BDUs are encouraged to post their service area maps on their respective websites.

Financial information

6. Before 1995, when the Commission licensed only one cable operator to serve a specific geographic area, applicants were required to file detailed financial data demonstrating the financial viability of the proposed undertaking. With the introduction of a competitive and open-entry licensing approach, the Commission's focus shifted to determining whether a potential applicant possessed the financial ability to launch the service.
7. Parties applying for a new BDU licence are currently required to file details on the financial operations of the proposed BDU, including establishment costs, sources of financing, a summary of projected revenues and expenses (business plan), a pro forma statement of changes in financial position, a statement of pre-operating costs and financial statements. The Commission is now of the view that the extensive information required to assess capacity to launch is too onerous a requirement for this limited purpose. The Commission therefore considers it appropriate to eliminate all financial information requirements, noted above, from the application form, including the sources of financing. Accordingly, effective immediately, the Commission adopts the following streamlining measure:
 - Applicants for a licence to operate a new BDU are no longer required to provide any financial information.

Conclusion

8. The Commission has amended the applicable application forms, which are available on the Commission's website.

Secretary General

Related documents

- *Application to renew a broadcasting licence for a distribution undertaking (Form #123)*
- *Application to obtain a broadcasting licence to operate a distribution undertaking (Form # 124)*
- *Application to renew a broadcasting licence for an INDIVIDUAL cable distribution undertaking OR Application to obtain a REGIONAL broadcasting licence for cable distribution undertakings (Form # 136)*

This document 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>.