



Broadcasting Notice of Consultation CRTC 2011-187

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Ottawa, 15 March 2011

Call for comments on an extension to the general authorization to down-convert digital-only television signals

The Commission calls for comments on its proposal to extend the general authorization for broadcasting distribution undertakings to down-convert digital-only television signals beyond the digital transition date of 1 September 2011. The deadline for comments is 19 April 2011.

Introduction

1. In *General authorizations for broadcasting distribution undertakings*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2009-546, 31 August 2009, the Commission set out general authorizations that are incorporated by reference into the licences of all broadcasting distribution undertakings (BDUs). These include an authorization for BDUs to distribute down-converted versions of primary upgraded digital over-the-air signals,¹ subject to certain terms and conditions (the down-conversion rules). This particular authorization is set to expire on 1 September 2011, when conventional television in Canada will switch from analog to digital transmission.²

Continued need for down-conversion after 1 September 2011

2. The original motive for the introduction of the down-conversion rules was to avoid disruption among analog and standard definition (SD) BDU subscribers as a result of the U.S. conversion to digital over-the-air transmission in June 2009. However, the Commission notes that after the over-the-air digital transition occurs in Canada, a large number of BDUs will continue to distribute signals in analog, SD and high definition (HD) to best serve their subscribers. Consequently, continuing to permit down-conversion of digital signals after 1 September 2011 will benefit Canadian BDU subscribers, BDUs and the television stations they distribute.
3. The Commission also considers that maintaining the down-conversion rules would help avoid potential disruption among analog and SD BDU subscribers as a result of the analog shutdown in Canada on 31 August 2011. For these reasons, the Commission is of

¹ For the purposes of this notice of consultation, an “upgraded signal” is a digital television service that contains any amount of programming in high definition, and a “primary signal” is the signal that has the highest technical quality when a digital signal is used to transmit more than one program stream.

² See *Determinations regarding certain aspects of the regulatory framework for over-the-air television*, Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2007-53, 17 May 2007.

the view that there is merit in considering the elimination of the expiry date found in the above-noted authorization.

Call for comments

4. In light of the above, the Commission calls for comments on whether or not the expiry date for the general authorization to down-convert digital-only television signals to SD or analog should be removed.
5. The Commission notes that this call for comments in no way affects the date by which conventional over-the-air television stations in Canada must switch from analog to digital transmission, nor does it alter the Commission's policies or regulations with respect to the distribution of such stations, aside from those related to the down-conversion rules.
6. The Commission will accept comments that it receives on or before **19 April 2011**. The Commission cannot be held responsible for postal delays and will not notify a party whose comment is received after the deadline. The comment will not be considered by the Commission and will not be part of the public file.
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
[\[Broadcasting interventions/comments form\]](#)

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 be available on the Commission's website. An electronic version of all comments submitted will be accessible from this list. 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
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