



Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2012-342

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Route reference: 2012-29

Ottawa, 22 June 2012

Bell Aliant Regional Communications Inc., (the general partner), as well as limited partner with 6583458 Canada Inc. (the limited partners), carrying on business as Bell Aliant Regional Communications, Limited Partnership
Greater Sudbury, Ontario

Application 2011-1664-0, received 21 December 2011

Public hearing in the National Capital Region

21 March 2012

Regional broadcasting licence for a terrestrial broadcasting distribution undertaking to serve Greater Sudbury, Ontario

*The Commission **approves** an application for a regional broadcasting licence to operate a terrestrial broadcasting distribution undertaking to serve Greater Sudbury.*

The application

1. The Commission received an application by Bell Aliant Regional Communications Inc., (the general partner), as well as limited partner with 6583458 Canada Inc. (the limited partners), carrying on business as Bell Aliant Regional Communications, Limited Partnership (Bell Aliant) for a regional broadcasting licence to operate a terrestrial broadcasting distribution undertaking (BDU) to serve Greater Sudbury. The Commission did not receive any interventions in connection with this application.
2. Bell Aliant is controlled by BCE Inc. pursuant to the Bell Aliant Inc. Securityholders Agreement.
3. Bell Aliant requested authorization to distribute, as part of the basic service, the signals of WBZ-TV (CBS), WHDH-TV (NBC) and WCVB-TV (ABC) Boston, Massachusetts, WUHF-TV (FOX) Rochester, New York and WMED-TV (PBS) Calais, Maine, or alternatively for each signal, the signal of a different affiliate of the same network located in the same time zone as that of the licensed area and included on the *List of non-Canadian programming services authorized for distribution*, as amended from time to time and approved by the Commission.
4. Bell Aliant also indicated its willingness to accept a condition of licence requiring it to provide one or more simple means of accessing described programming, whether in an open or embedded format, that requires little or no visual acuity. It further committed to

meet the requirements regarding customer service and information set out in Broadcasting and Telecom Regulatory Policy 2009-430 (the Accessibility Policy).

Commission's analysis and decisions

5. The Commission notes that the authorization requested by the applicant is consistent with authorizations previously granted by the Commission in similar cases. Accordingly, the Commission **approves** the application by Bell Aliant Regional Communications Inc., (the general partner), as well as limited partner with 6583458 Canada Inc. (the limited partners), carrying on business as Bell Aliant Regional Communications, Limited Partnership for a regional broadcasting licence to operate a terrestrial BDU to serve Greater Sudbury. The licence will be subject to the **conditions** specified therein, as well as to the terms and **conditions of licence** set out in the appendix to this decision.

Other matters

Designation of a head end

6. Bell Aliant indicated that the physical location of its local head end would be in Saint John, New Brunswick. However, for the purposes of regulatory symmetry with other terrestrial BDUs under the *Broadcasting Distribution Regulations* (the Regulations), the Commission requires Bell Aliant to designate a specific location in the licensed area as a local head end.¹ This information must be provided to the Commission no later than 30 days after the date of the decision.

General authorizations for broadcasting distribution undertakings

7. The Commission notes that, under the conditions specified in a BDU's licence, a BDU is also authorized to distribute any service and to undertake any activity authorized in Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2011-522, as amended from time to time, under the terms and conditions set out therein.

Implementation of the Commission's determinations regarding accessibility of services

8. In the Accessibility Policy, the Commission stated its intention to impose on BDUs a number of requirements and expectations pertaining to customer service, access to described video and accessibility of programming. **Conditions of licence**, requirements and expectations to improve accessibility are set out in the appendix to this decision.

9. Further, in Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2010-622, the Commission stated that it intended to impose conditions of licence requiring licensed BDUs that operate

¹ Thus, the regulatory requirements for this applicant in areas distant from Saint John should be consistent with the requirements for undertakings that have their local head ends situated in the licensed area. Such a designation is contemplated by the definition of "local head end" set out in section 1 of the Regulations. For example, section 22 of the Regulations states: "Except as otherwise provided in a condition of its licence, which condition takes effect on or after September 1, 2011, a licensee shall not distribute a 4 + 1 package of programming services that originate outside the time zone in which the licensee's local head end is located unless the licensee also distributes to its subscribers the programming services of at least one television station from each English major ownership group that originate in the same time zone."

community channels to caption 100% of original licensee-produced programming by the end of the licence term. The Commission also indicated that it expected licensed BDUs to ensure that 100% of original access programming on the community channel is captioned by the end of the licence term. Finally, the Commission stated that it intended to impose conditions of licence requiring licensed BDUs that operate a community channel to provide audio description for all information programs and for news programming (that is, the voice-over of key textual, graphic design and still image elements, such as phone numbers, stock information or weather maps that are posted on the screen). **Conditions of licence** and/or expectations to this effect are set out in the appendix to this decision.

10. The Commission notes that it may impose further conditions of licence respecting accessibility matters five years into the licence term, if deemed appropriate.

Mandatory distribution of 9(1)(h) services

11. The Commission reminds the applicant that it is required to distribute within its licensed area all services licensed for mandatory carriage as part of the basic service of distribution undertakings pursuant to section 9(1)(h) of the *Broadcasting Act*.

Employment equity

12. Because the licensee is subject to the *Employment Equity Act* and files reports concerning employment equity with the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development, its employment equity practices are not examined by the Commission.

Secretary General

Related documents

- *General authorizations for broadcasting distribution undertakings*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2011-522, 24 August 2011
- *Community television policy*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2010-622, 26 August 2010
- *Accessibility of telecommunications and broadcasting services*, Broadcasting and Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2009-430, 21 July 2009

**This decision is to be appended to the licence.*

Appendix to Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2012-342

Terms, conditions of licence, requirements, expectations and encouragement relating to the regional broadcasting licence to operate a terrestrial broadcasting distribution undertaking to serve Greater Sudbury

Terms

The operation of this undertaking will be regulated pursuant to the *Broadcasting Distribution Regulations* and all related policies.

A licence will be issued once the applicant has:

- informed the Commission in writing that it is prepared to commence operations. The undertaking must be operational at the earliest possible date and in any event no later than 24 months from the date of this decision, unless a request for an extension of time is approved by the Commission before **22 June 2014**. In order to ensure that such a request is processed in a timely manner, it should be submitted at least 60 days before that date.
- filed, at the same time it informs the Commission that it is ready to commence operations, a website address where its distribution grid is posted.

The licence will expire 31 August 2018.

Conditions of licence

1. The licensee is authorized to distribute, as part of the basic service, the signals of WBZ-TV (CBS), WHDH-TV (NBC) and WCVB-TV (ABC) Boston, Massachusetts, WUHF-TV (FOX) Rochester, New York and WMED-TV (PBS) Calais, Maine, or alternatively for each signal, the signal of a different affiliate of the same network located in the same time zone as that of the licensed area and included on the *List of non-Canadian programming services authorized for distribution*, as amended from time to time and approved by the Commission.
2. The licensee shall provide one or more simple means of accessing described programming, whether in an open or embedded format, that requires little or no visual acuity.
3. The licensee shall caption 100% of original licensee-produced programming on its community channel by the end of the licence term.
4. The licensee shall provide audio description for all the key elements of information programs, including news programming on its community channel (that is, the voice-over of key textual, graphic design and still image elements, such as phone numbers, stock information or weather maps that are posted on the screen).

Requirements

The licensee is required to designate, as a local head end, a specific location in the licensed area and to provide this information to the Commission no later than 30 days after the date of the decision.

The licensee is required to promote information on all of its disability-specific services and products, in the accessible manner(s) of its choice.

The licensee is required to incorporate an easy-to-find home page link to the special needs/disability sections of its website, if its website includes such sections.

The licensee is required to make the information on its website accessible to the point of providing reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities by 23 July 2012 (examples of what the Commission considers to be reasonable accommodations are listed in paragraph 66 of *Accessibility of telecommunications and broadcasting services*, Broadcasting and Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2009-430, 21 July 2009).

Where customer service functions on its website are not accessible, the licensee is required to ensure that persons with disabilities will not incur a charge or otherwise be disadvantaged if they use an alternate avenue of customer service.

The licensee is required to make accessible any customer service functions that are available solely over its website by 23 July 2012.

The licensee is required to make its general call centers accessible to the point of providing reasonable accommodation to persons with disabilities by:

- a) training customer service representatives in handling enquiries from persons with disabilities and familiarizing them with the service provider's products and services for persons with disabilities; and
- b) making its Interactive Voice Response systems accessible.

Expectations

The Commission expects the licensee to ensure that subscribers are able to identify programming with described video in the electronic program guide.

The Commission expects the licensee to make information available in alternative formats to subscribers regarding, among other things, the programming and services offered and the channel line-up.

The Commission expects the licensee to ensure that 100% of original access programming aired on its community channel is captioned by the end of the licence term.

Encouragement

The Commission encourages the licensee to ensure that its set-top boxes are accessible to subscribers with vision and fine motor skill disabilities.