



## Telecom Order CRTC 2016-406

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Ottawa, 13 October 2016

*File number: Tariff Notice 7501*

### **Bell Canada – Destandardization of certain residential home phone services**

#### **Application**

1. The Commission received an application from Bell Canada, dated 3 June 2016, in which the company proposed revisions to destandardize certain services or portions of services for residential customers described in its General Tariff.
2. Bell Canada stated that it is currently in the process of migrating its residential customer base to a new billing platform. The company indicated that it wants to simplify the number of billing elements on the new platform as it is being developed. Bell Canada submitted that service alternatives exist, as set out in the Appendix to this order.
3. Bell Canada proposed that, as an exception to usual destandardization practices, customers of destandardized services would be permitted to retain their service, even if they move, since these services would be maintained in the current billing system. However, if a customer changes or removes one of the destandardized services, they would be moved to the new billing platform and provided service options from the newer suite of services.
4. Bell Canada indicated that it notified affected customers of its proposal and provided a copy of that notice.
5. The Commission received five interventions from customers regarding Bell Canada's application. These customers raised concerns regarding the cost of the new services, including the Home Phone Lite Package; the loss of landline services and offers for seniors; as well as the intervention process for tariff applications.
6. The public record of this proceeding, which closed on 8 August 2016, is available on the Commission's website at [www.crtc.gc.ca](http://www.crtc.gc.ca) or by using the file number provided above.

#### **Bell Canada's reply to the interventions**

7. Bell Canada stated that it had received several other inquiries seeking clarification and information regarding its application, that it had responded by providing further information, and that it had no further contact with those customers.

8. Bell Canada submitted that it had filed its application in compliance with Telecom Information Bulletin 2010-455-1.
9. Bell Canada reiterated that current customers could retain their existing services, even if they move. The company confirmed that the price for the Home Phone Lite Package for a new subscriber would be slightly higher now, but that this price was significantly less than the maximum Commission-approved rate. Bell Canada stated that new customers would be offered the same functionality as current customers.
10. Bell Canada submitted that its proposal would help it move forward with a simpler product line on its new billing platform while enabling current customers to continue to enjoy their existing services at the same rates and charges.

### **Commission's analysis and determinations**

11. Bell Canada's identified service alternatives enable customers to choose from a list of eligible features. For example, the Home Phone Lite/Basic/Choice Packages offer a phone line with a certain number of features and the option of a second line at a reduced rate. Customers also have the option of subscribing to other calling features if desired. However, as a result of Bell Canada's proposal, customers would have to subscribe to a long distance plan outside of the bundle, or use other long distance services provided by competitors, which they could have done previously.
12. Bell Canada's Home Phone Lite Package has an approved rate range, and the company has the flexibility to charge a rate within this range for new subscribers.
13. The migration of customers to a new billing platform is generally a significant undertaking. A reduction in the number of services supported on the new billing platform will significantly reduce complexity and development work.
14. Bell Canada's application meets the requirements set out in Telecom Information Bulletin 2010-455-1, in which the Commission set out its procedures for dealing with applications to destandardize and/or withdraw tariffed services.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, the company has informed affected customers of its proposal to destandardize the services, including how they may file comments with the Commission. Bell Canada also addressed customers' concerns, and has allowed its customers to retain their services, even if they move.
15. In light of the above, the company's proposal to destandardize the services or portions of the services set out in the Appendix is reasonable. Accordingly, the Commission **approves** Bell Canada's application, effective the date of this order. The Commission **directs** Bell Canada to issue revised tariff pages<sup>2</sup> within **10 days** of the date of this order.

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<sup>1</sup> This bulletin summarizes the Commission's related determinations set out in Telecom Decision 2008-22 and is incorporated by reference in section 59 of the *Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission Rules of Practice and Procedure*.

<sup>2</sup> Revised tariff pages can be submitted to the Commission without a description page or a request for approval; a tariff application is not required.

Secretary General

**Related documents**

- *Approval processes for tariff applications and intercarrier agreements*, Telecom Information Bulletin CRTC 2010-455, 5 July 2010; as amended by Telecom Information Bulletin CRTC 2010-455-1, 19 February 2016
- *Mandatory customer contract renewal notification and requirements for service destandardization/withdrawal*, Telecom Decision CRTC 2008-22, 6 March 2008

## Appendix to Telecom Order CRTC 2016-406

### Bell Canada's proposal to destandardize certain services or portions of services

Tariff item	Name	Proposed destandardized element	Substitute service available
2170	Calling Features Bundles	All residential elements	Item 2165 – Calling Features, plus items 2231, 2232, and 2233
2220	Consumer Solutions	Entire item	
2221	Flex Bundles	Entire item	
2222	Flexibility 4 Bundle	Entire item	
2226	Home Phone Basic Package	Entire item	Item 2231 – Home Phone Lite Package; Item 2232 – Home Phone Basic Package; Item 2233 – Home Phone Choice Package; Item 70 – Rate Schedules for Primary Exchange (Local) Service; or other residential access service options, such as wireless or voice over Internet Protocol services.
2227	Home Phone Choice Package	Entire item	
2231	Home Phone Lite Package	Unlimited Canada/U.S. long distance and associated network charge only	Default per-minute long distance calling plan as described in item 2231, 2232, or 2233; or  a different forborne long distance plan, including unlimited calling options.
2232	Home Phone Basic Package		
2233	Home Phone Choice Package		

2234	Home Phone Complete Package	Entire item	Item 2231 – Home Phone Lite Package; Item 2232 – Home Phone Basic Package; Item 2233 – Home Phone Choice Package; Item 70 – Rate Schedules for Primary Exchange (Local) Service; or other residential access service options, such as wireless or voice over Internet Protocol services.
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