



Broadcasting Information Bulletin CRTC 2016-59

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References: 2015-96 and 2015-514

Ottawa, 17 February 2016

Coming into force of requirements for a small entry-level basic service and flexible packaging options

The Commission reminds licensed broadcasting distribution undertakings of the new requirements to offer and promote a small entry-level basic service and flexible packaging options coming into force on 1 March 2016.

Introduction

1. This information bulletin summarizes the new requirements coming into force on 1 March 2016 to maximize choice for Canadians in the selection and packaging of their television services.

The new requirements

2. In Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2015-96, the Commission announced that licensed broadcasting distribution undertakings (BDUs) would be required to offer:
 - a small entry-level basic service; and
 - all discretionary services on a pick-and-pay basis, as well as in small, reasonably priced packages that can take the form of either a build-your-own-package option or small pre-assembled packages.
3. The Commission also stated that it would require the entry-level basic service to be promoted in a like manner to the BDU's first-tier offering so that customers are aware of its availability, price and content.
4. In Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2015-514, the Commission revised the *Broadcasting Distribution Regulations* (the Regulations) to implement the requirements to offer an entry-level basic service and flexible packaging options.
5. Specifically, the Regulations were amended to require all licensed terrestrial and direct-to-home (DTH) BDUs to provide to their subscribers by 1 March 2016 a basic service offering that:
 - is priced at no more than \$25 (not including equipment) per month;
 - prioritizes Canadian television services by including:

- local and regional Canadian television stations and provincial or territorial educational services required under sections 17 and 46 of the Regulations for terrestrial and DTH BDUs respectively,
 - services designated by the Commission under section 9(1)(h) of the *Broadcasting Act* for mandatory distribution on the basic service, and
 - in the case of terrestrial BDUs, the community channel and the proceedings of the provincial legislature in one or both official languages, if offered;
- may also include:
 - in the case of terrestrial BDUs, other Canadian over-the-air (OTA) stations where fewer than 10 local or regional stations are available over the air (to an overall maximum of 10 Canadian OTA stations),
 - any local radio station, and
 - one set of U.S. 4+1 signals;¹ and
 - may not include any further services beyond those set out above.
6. The Regulations were also amended to require licensed BDUs to provide all Canadian and non-Canadian discretionary programming services they offer as follows:
- during the period beginning on 1 March 2016 and ending on 30 November 2016, either on a stand-alone basis or in packages of up to 10 services; and
 - on or after 1 December 2016, both on a stand-alone basis and in packages of up to 10 services.

Secretary General

Related documents

- *Amendments to the Broadcasting Distribution Regulations to implement determinations in the Let's Talk TV proceeding*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2015-514, 19 November 2015
- *Let's Talk TV – A World of Choice – A roadmap to maximize choice for TV viewers and to foster a healthy, dynamic TV market*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2015-96, 19 March 2015

¹ “U.S. 4+1 signals” refers to a set of signals that provide the programming of the four U.S. commercial networks (CBS, NBC, ABC, FOX) and the non-commercial PBS network.