



Telecom Order CRTC 2026-34

PDF version

Gatineau, 24 February 2026

File numbers: 1011-NOC2025-0010 and 4754-770

Determination of costs award with respect to the participation of the First Mile Connectivity Consortium in the proceeding initiated by Telecom Notice of Consultation 2025-10

Application

1. By letter dated 18 April 2025, the First Mile Connectivity Consortium (FMCC) applied for costs with respect to its participation in the proceeding initiated by Telecom Notice of Consultation 2025-10 (the proceeding). In the proceeding, the Commission sought comments on how it can best implement the retail Internet service subsidy, introduced in Telecom Regulatory Policy 2025-9, which aims to improve the affordability of retail Internet services in the Far North.
2. The Commission did not receive any interventions in response to the application for costs.
3. The FMCC submitted that it had met the criteria for an award of costs set out in section 68 of the *Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission Rules of Practice and Procedure* (the Rules of Procedure) because it represented a group or class of subscribers that had an interest in the outcome of the proceeding, it had assisted the Commission in developing a better understanding of the matters that were considered, and it had participated in a responsible way.
4. In particular, the FMCC submitted that it represents the interests of First Nations broadband service providers operating in rural, remote, and northern regions of the country.¹ The FMCC noted that these providers have been established by members of First Nations communities who reside in remote and isolated regions of the country.
5. The FMCC further submitted that it had assisted the Commission in developing a better understanding of the matters that were considered in the proceeding by providing comments on the unique needs of the organizations it represents and the individuals residing in the regions that

¹ Specifically, the FMCC noted that it represents: First Nations Technology Council, British Columbia; Broadband Communications North, Manitoba; Clear Sky Connections, Manitoba; Keewaytinook Okimakanak K-Net Services, Ontario; Matawa First Nations Management, Ontario; Western James Bay Telecom Network, Ontario; Eeyou Communications Network, Quebec; First Nations Education Council, Quebec; Atlantic First Nations Tech Services, Atlantic Canada; and Mamu Tshishkutamashutau-Innu Education, Newfoundland and Labrador.

these organizations service. The FMCC added that it had conducted interviews with organizations in the Northwest Territories that would be directly impacted by any subsidy focused on the Far North.

6. The FMCC requested that the Commission fix its costs at \$8,585.00,² consisting entirely of consultant fees (29 hours at a rate of \$225 per hour and 17.5 hours at a rate of \$110 per hour). The FMCC's claim with respect to one of its consultants included the federal Goods and Services Tax (GST) on fees. The FMCC filed a bill of costs with its application.
7. The FMCC submitted that Bell Canada and Northwestel Inc. (Northwestel), Quebecor Media Inc. (Quebecor), Rogers Communications Canada Inc. (Rogers), SpaceX Canada Corp., and TELUS Communications Inc. (TELUS) are the appropriate parties to be required to pay any costs awarded by the Commission (the costs respondents).

Commission's analysis

8. The criteria for an award of costs are set out in section 68 of the Rules of Procedure, which reads as follows:
 68. The Commission must determine whether to award final costs and the maximum percentage of costs that is to be awarded on the basis of the following criteria:
 - (a) whether the applicant had, or was the representative of a group or a class of subscribers that had, an interest in the outcome of the proceeding;
 - (b) the extent to which the applicant assisted the Commission in developing a better understanding of the matters that were considered; and
 - (c) whether the applicant participated in the proceeding in a responsible way.
9. In Telecom Information Bulletin 2016-188, the Commission provided guidance regarding how an applicant may demonstrate that it satisfies the first criterion with respect to its representation of interested subscribers. In the present case, the FMCC has demonstrated that it meets this requirement. The FMCC represented community-based First Nations broadband service providers as well as the First Nations residents of rural, remote, and northern regions of Canada that they serve.
10. The FMCC has also satisfied the remaining criteria through its participation in the proceeding. In particular, the FMCC's detailed submissions assisted the Commission in developing a better understanding of the matters that were considered. These submissions were developed through ongoing engagement with member organizations and Northerners and addressed how the retail

² The FMCC originally fixed its costs at \$8,585.50. However, due to a calculation error, the Commission has reduced this amount by \$0.50.

Internet service subsidy could be calculated and how eligibility for the subsidy could be determined. The FMCC also answered questions raised by the Commission in areas where the FMCC and its consultants and colleagues have expertise and direct experience and offered a distinct point of view on consumer and community needs in the Far North. As such, FMCC assisted the Commission in better understanding these issues. Also, FMCC participated responsibly in the proceeding.

11. The rates claimed in respect of consultant fees are in accordance with the rates established in the *Guidelines for the Assessment of Costs*, as set out in Telecom Regulatory Policy 2010-963. The Commission finds that the total amount claimed by the FMCC was necessarily and reasonably incurred and should be allowed.
12. This is an appropriate case in which to fix the costs and dispense with taxation, in accordance with the streamlined procedure set out in Telecom Public Notice 2002-5.
13. The Commission has generally determined that the appropriate costs respondents to an award of costs are the parties that have a significant interest in the outcome of the proceeding in question and have participated actively in that proceeding. The Commission considers that the following parties had a significant interest in the outcome of the proceeding and participated actively in the proceeding: Bell Canada and Northwestel; Iristel Inc., on behalf of itself and its affiliate Ice Wireless Inc.; Quebecor, on behalf of its affiliates Freedom Mobile Inc. and Videotron Ltd.; Rogers, including Groupe Shaw Group and Shaw Telecom G.P.; SpaceX Canada Corp.; SSi Micro Ltd., doing business as SSi Canada; and TELUS.
14. The Commission considers that, consistent with its practice, it is appropriate to allocate the responsibility for payment of costs among costs respondents based on their telecommunications operating revenues (TORs) as an indicator of the relative size and interest of the parties involved in the proceeding.³
15. However, as set out in Telecom Order 2015-160, the Commission considers \$1,000 to be the minimum amount that a costs respondent should be required to pay, due to the administrative burden that small costs awards impose on both the applicant and costs respondents.
16. Accordingly, the Commission finds that the responsibility for payment of costs should be allocated as follows:⁴

³ TORs consist of Canadian telecommunications revenues from local and access, long distance, data, private line, Internet, and wireless services.

⁴ In this order, the Commission has used the TORs of the costs respondents based on their most recent audited financial statements.

Company	Proportion	Amount
Rogers ⁵	36.17%	\$3,104.95
TELUS	31.30%	\$2,687.32
Bell Canada, on behalf of itself and Northwestel ⁶	20.69%	\$1,775.84
Quebecor	11.84%	\$1,016.89

Directions regarding costs

17. The Commission approves the application by the FMCC for costs with respect to its participation in the proceeding.
18. Pursuant to subsection 56(1) of the *Telecommunications Act*, the Commission fixes the costs to be paid to the FMCC at \$8,585.00.
19. The Commission directs that the award of costs to the FMCC be paid forthwith by Rogers Communications Canada Inc.; TELUS Communications Inc.; Bell Canada, on behalf of itself and Northwestel Inc.; and Quebecor Media Inc. according to the proportions set out in paragraph 16.

Secretary General

Related documents

- *Call for comments – Implementing a retail Internet service subsidy in the Far North*, Telecom Notice of Consultation CRTC 2025-10, 16 January 2025, as amended by Telecom Notice of Consultation CRTC 2025-10-1, 6 March 2025
- *Telecommunications in the Far North*, Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2025-9, 16 January 2025

⁵ 2024 TORs now include Groupe Shaw Group and Shaw Telecom G.P. within Rogers' TORs.

⁶ Consistent with its general approach articulated in Telecom Costs Order 2002-4, the Commission makes Bell Canada responsible for payment on behalf of itself and Northwestel. The Commission leaves it to Bell Canada and Northwestel to determine the appropriate allocation of the costs among themselves.

- *Guidance for costs award applicants regarding representation of a group or a class of subscribers*, Telecom Information Bulletin CRTC 2016-188, 17 May 2016
- *Determination of costs award with respect to the participation of the Ontario Video Relay Service Committee in the proceeding initiated by Telecom Notice of Consultation 2014-188*, Telecom Order CRTC 2015-160, 23 April 2015
- *Revision of CRTC costs award practices and procedures*, Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2010-963, 23 December 2010
- *New procedure for Telecom costs awards*, Telecom Public Notice CRTC 2002-5, 7 November 2002
- *Action Réseau Consommateur, the Consumers' Association of Canada, Fédération des associations coopératives d'économie familiale and the National Anti-Poverty Organization application for costs - Public Notice CRTC 2001-60*, Telecom Costs Order CRTC 2002-4, 24 April 2002