



## Telecom Order CRTC 2026-91

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Gatineau, 15 May 2026

*File numbers: 1011-NOC2025-0010 and 4754-817*

### **Determination of costs award with respect to the participation of the Public Interest Advocacy Centre in the additional process initiated by Telecom Notice of Consultation 2025-10**

#### **Application**

1. By letter dated 21 November 2025, the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) applied for costs with respect to its participation in the additional process initiated by Telecom Notice of Consultation 2025-10 (the proceeding). In that notice of consultation, 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. The additional process was initiated by Commission requests for information (RFIs) seeking comments and replies to responses. PIAC participated in this additional process and filed a supplemental application for costs.
2. The Commission did not receive any interventions in response to the application for costs.
3. PIAC 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, PIAC submitted that it represents the interests of all Canadian consumers, including those in the Far North, and notably low-income and vulnerable consumers. It added that it advocates for increased competition and affordability.
5. PIAC further submitted that it had assisted the Commission in developing a better understanding of the matters that were considered in the proceeding by providing responses to RFIs on the implications of the subsidy on low-income and vulnerable consumers, especially with regard to subscriber eligibility and the amount of the subsidy. It also provided analysis on potentially requiring providers to offer certain plans or packages.
6. PIAC requested that the Commission fix its costs at \$5,295.65, consisting entirely of legal fees (0.7 hours for external counsel at a rate of \$250 per hour, 7.25 days for in-house counsel at a rate

of \$600 per day, and 3.25 days for an articling student at a rate of \$235.00 per day). PIAC's claim included the Ontario Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) on fees less the rebate to which PIAC is entitled in connection with the HST. PIAC filed a bill of costs with its application.

7. PIAC made no submissions as to the appropriate parties to be required to pay any costs awarded by the Commission (the costs respondents). PIAC suggested that the responsibility for payment of costs should be divided among the costs respondents on the basis of their gross revenues or another similar factor.

### **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, PIAC has demonstrated that it meets this requirement. PIAC represented the interests of all Canadian consumers, including those in the Far North, and notably low-income and vulnerable consumers who are less likely to be able to afford reliable telecommunications services and could benefit from a retail Internet service subsidy.
10. PIAC has also satisfied the remaining criteria through its participation in the proceeding. In particular, PIAC's detailed submissions, especially regarding redirecting a portion of the funds collected under the National Contribution Fund for the Broadband Fund towards the retail Internet service subsidy in the Far North and its support for the proposition that mobile wireless data services be considered eligible for the subsidy, assisted the Commission in developing a better understanding of the matters that were considered. Also, PIAC participated responsibly in the proceeding.
11. The rates claimed in respect of legal 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 PIAC 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 Inc. (Northwestel); Iristel Inc., on behalf of itself and its affiliate Ice Wireless Inc.; Quebecor Media Inc., on behalf of its affiliates Freedom Mobile Inc. and Videotron Ltd.; Rogers Communications Canada Inc., including Groupe Shaw Group and Shaw Telecom G.P. (Rogers); SpaceX Canada Corp.; SSi Micro Ltd., doing business as SSi Canada; and TELUS Communications Inc. (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.<sup>1</sup>
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:<sup>2</sup>

<b>Company</b>	<b>Proportion</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Rogers <sup>3</sup>	41.03%	\$2,172.80
TELUS	35.51%	\$1,880.49
Bell Canada, on behalf of	23.46%	\$1,242.36

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<sup>1</sup> TORs consist of Canadian telecommunications revenues from local and access, long distance, data, private line, Internet, and wireless services.

<sup>2</sup> In this order, the Commission has used the TORs of the costs respondents based on their most recent audited financial statements.

<sup>3</sup> 2024 TORs now include Groupe Shaw Group and Shaw Telecom G.P. within Rogers' TORs.

itself and Northwestel <sup>4</sup>		
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### Directions regarding costs

17. The Commission approves the application by PIAC 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 PIAC at \$5,295.65.
19. The Commission directs that the award of costs to PIAC be paid forthwith by Rogers Communications Canada Inc., TELUS Communications Inc., and Bell Canada, on behalf of itself and Northwestel 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
- *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

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<sup>4</sup> 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.

- *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*