



Mr. Claude Doucet
Secretary General
Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC)
Ottawa, ON K1A 0N2

April 1, 2021

**Call for comments – The Canadian Radio-television and
Telecommunications Commission Accessibility Reporting Regulations,
Telecom and Broadcasting Notice of Consultation CRTC 2021-69 (Ottawa,
February 18, 2021) - Reply to Interventions**

1. Canadian Association of the Deaf-Association des Sourds du Canada (**CAD-ASC**), Deaf Wireless Canada Consultative Committee-Comité pour les Services Sans fil des Sourds du Canada (**DWCC-CSSSC**), and Canadian National Society of the Deaf-Blind (**CNSDB**) [collectively, **CAD-ASC et al.**] files its reply in accordance with the procedures set out in CRTC TBNC 2021-69. In these Reply Comments, CAD-ASC et al. make comments on some Interventions on the public records.
2. CADASC et al. acknowledge and reviewed Interventions from Accessible Media Inc (AMI), Allarco Entertainment 2008 Inc., Alliance for Equality of Blinds Canadians (EABC), ARCH Disability Law Centre, Barrier Free Canada, Bell Canada and Bell Mobility, Blue Ant Media Inc., Canadian Association of Broadcasters, Canadian Communication Systems Alliance (CCSA), Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association (CWTA), CNIB Foundation, Media Access (MAC) Community Media Advocacy Centre (CMAC), Competitive Network Operators of Canada (**CNOC**), Confédération des organismes de personnes handicapées du Québec (COPHAN), Council of Canadians with Disabilities, DisAbled Women's Network of Canada (DAWN Canada), Distributel Communications Limited, Independent Broadcast Group, Independent Telecommunications Providers Association (**ITPA**), John Rae, Media Access Canada, National Campus and Community Radio Association, Penny Leclair, Provincial Deaf and Hard of Hearing Coalition, Rogers Communication Canada Inc., Shaw Communications Inc., TekSavvy Solutions Inc., TELUS Communications Inc., and The Forum for Research and Policy in Communications (FRPC).

3. Any failure on CAD-ASC et al.'s part to respond to any given intervention or any issue raised by any participating party should not be viewed as agreement with the said intervention or issue.

Classes of regulated entities and exemptions

4. CAD-ASC supports two individuals: Penny Leclair and John Rae are those who are ACA and everyone who is working for the rights of people with disabilities as they express concerns and barriers. Their experiences are relevant to accessibility issues that are being faced by Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing Canadians.
5. Therefore, we do insist that we completely understand small companies' concerns but every single entity is accountable to contribute to a barrier-free Canada. We don't support the exceptions but we support to work together to find solutions.
6. For the reason above, CAD-ASC disagrees with submissions by Allarco, CCSA, the ITPA, and Blue Ant that the exemptions outlined by the CRTC for smaller regulated entities should be expanded, with no obligations placed on the entities in these categories. Everyone must be accountable and contribute to a barrier free Canada.

Timing of publication

7. CAD-ASC is in agreement with ARCH, whereas in paragraph d. "Regulated entities have known that they will need to develop accessibility plans and progress reports since the ACA became law, which was nearly two years ago. They have known the CRTC would pass a regulation by July 10, 2021." So yes, in this phase, the entities should have been provided much shorter timelines. CAD-ASC et al. suggests the CRTC that it should be one year for the initial plans, because they had plenty of time since 2019.

Requests for alternative formats

8. In their interventions from Bell Canada, CWTA, Rogers, and Tbaytel suggested that CRTC should allow regulated entities to restrict on how many members of the public may request alternate formats of accessibility plans, progress reports and descriptions of the feedback process, or provide feedback through the feedback process. In the response to this, CAD-ASC strongly disagrees as it could be viewed as a barrier to accessibility for DBBHH individuals which goes against the purpose of the Accessible Canada Act (ACA). We should always allow people with disabilities to decide their accessibility needs for requesting alternative formats.
9. In reflection of the previous point, CAD-ASC et al. agrees with Accessible Media Inc ("AMI")'s intervention, point #2, which reinforces the following: whereas the

documents are not only “accessible to all Canadians and putting accessibility at the forefront, instead of just when “resources become available.”

10. CAD-ASC et al. supports CNIB on page 6 with its CTA reference 4(2) If a person with a disability makes a request referred to in any of paragraphs 1(b) to (d), the transportation service provider must provide the information in the requested format without delay. The wording is appropriate to put in the CRTC regulations with, instead of “transportation service provider,” replace with “regulated entities.”
11. Additionally CAD-ASC et al. supports CNIB on page 7 whereas “timing of delivery of alternative format documents is not open to interpretation” and that regulated entities need to familiarize themselves with the process of creating these alternative formats. It is our view that the companies need to take the steps to obtain and have the resources readily available when the requirements go into force.
12. This includes being ready and prepared to provide ASL and LSQ translation services as an alternative format, which are supported by ARCH (para. h) and supported in CCD in their (para. h) submissions. **CAD-ASC et al. re-emphasizes that American Sign Language and langue des signes quebecoise are to be mandatory alternative formats.** Without this, unnecessary barriers are put in place for Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of hearing Canadians, which would be contradictory to the purpose of the Accessible Canada Act.

Other comments

13. In AMI’s point 3, CAD-ASC agrees that it believes the Commission is in keeping with the principles for implementing the Act, including that “ persons with disabilities must be involved in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services and structures.” Once again, not only the entities, but also the CRTC need to have persons who are Deaf or persons with disabilities working internally and consultations are taking place with development of policies, laws, programs and services.
14. Related to DHH Coalition’s intervention, CAD-ASC et al would like to take steps to clarify that this coalition, despite the name, does not represent Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Canada. CAD-ASC et. al asks DHH Coalition to revise their misleading name and their misleading representation and advise all joint intervention that this coalition, which consists of the 3 organizations: Ontario Association of the Deaf (**OAD**), Newfoundland & Labrador Association of The Deaf (**NLAD**), Deafness Advocacy Association of Nova Scotia (**DAANS**), that these organizations only represent Deaf and Hard of Hearing of the specific provinces, which are Ontario, Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia respectively. Provincial DHH Coalition has no

access to any information in other provinces, and cannot speak on behalf of Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing individuals across the country because Provincial DHH Coalition cannot represent the remaining provinces across the country on a national level.

15. In the end, CAD-ASC would like to express their full support to ARCH, CCD, CNIB's intervention and comments.

16. CAD-ASC et al. appreciates the Commission's consideration of its Reply to Interventions and looks forward to its positive response. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact all of us.

Regards,

Wissam Constantin, Vice President
Canadian Association of the Deaf-
Association des Sourds du Canada
wissam@cad.ca

Lisa Anderson, Acting Chair
Deaf Wireless Canada
Consultative Committee
regulatory@deafwireless.ca

Megan McHugh, President
Canadian National Society of the Deaf-Blind
mchugh.mm@gmail.com

Cc Scott Hutton, CRTC
Stephen Millington, CRTC
Steven Harroun, CRTC
CRTC Parties to TBNC 2021-69

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