



Canadian Deaf-Blind Collective for VRS (CDBC.VRS)
% Canadian National Society of the Deaf-Blind
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November 17, 2023

Mr. Claude Doucet
Secretary-General
Canadian Radio-telecommunications and
Telecommunications Commission (CRTC)
sec-gen@crtc.gc.ca

Reference: [1011-NOC2021-0102](#)

Dear Secretary-General,

Call for comments – Review of Video Relay Services, Telecom Notice of Consultation CRTC 2021-102 (Ottawa, March 11, 2021) - Cost Application Procedural Document.

1. The **Canadian National Society of the Deaf-Blind (CNSDB)** participates in this proceeding with the **Deaf-Blind Planning Committee (DBPC)** as the “**Canadian Deaf-Blind Collective,**” or “**CDBC.VRS.**”
2. The CDBC.VRS has eight (8) members who have participated on their team for the TNC 2021-102 proceeding. Additionally, it should be noted that between the CDBC.VRS and DWCC team for the Reply Phase have 17 members that we have to track and account for in this cost application.

Correspondence

3. On November 10th, the CDBC.VRS sent an e-mail to CRTC requesting an extension of the January 15, 2024 deadline.
4. The CDBC.VRS acknowledges the email from Veronique Lehoux on November 14, 2023, with the acceptance of our request for an extension based on compassionate grounds.
5. CDBC.VRS would like to express its gratitude and appreciation for the understanding and compassion of the CRTC in allowing the extra time for the team lead to go through and verify the records of the Deaf-Blind participants.

6. However, the CDBC.VRS, through the Deaf-Blind Planning Committee's e-mail, received an email and procedural request letter from the Canadian Deaf Grassroots Movement (CDGM).

Our Response

7. First, once again, we need to remind the parties on the record that the official email for our Collective is cdbc.vrs@gmail.com. The Collective's email should have been included in the email from the CDGM.
8. Secondly, we are dismayed to see the coldness and the disregard that the CDGM members have for the challenging and compassionate situation we are in, needing assistance due to our visual disabilities. Additionally, there was absolute indifference and a lack of acknowledgement of the sorrowful experience of the team's lead.
9. We need to elaborate on the reason for our request to show the uniqueness of the rationale. The CDBC.VRS team lead is a Deaf woman whose adult daughter had passed away within the past month. This Deaf senior has been working with hearing family members and friends in various related end-of-life decisions while dealing with grief and loss. It has been overwhelming, and many other tasks have been put on hold, including the enormous task of preparing for the CRTC 2020-102 Cost Application.
10. The CDBC.VRS has hundreds of documents that it has to go through, with the 17 people involved in the reply phase. Also, to further clarify, to accommodate the Deaf-Blind to participate in this Reply phase equally, many documents were created individually customized to each Deaf-Blind person's accessibility needs to collect their views, responses and perspectives for specific questions or responses to certain documents.
11. Even the DWCC members tried to assist with the CDBC.VRS cost application, working on the sighted members' portions, but they could only go so far, and now it's up to the team lead to help the Deaf-Blind members with their hour timesheet records and verify the meeting dates and times and hours spent on all the documents.

Conclusion

12. In conclusion, the CDBC.VRS believes the CDGM wishes to "piggyback" on the CDBC.VRS requested extension. The CDBC.VRS members are outraged at the oppression that CDGM is exhibiting in its letter. There is a lack of consideration for the exceptional accessibility needs of the Deaf-Blind.
13. CDBC.VRS disagrees with the CDGM's request, as no clear fundamental rationales for their extension were expressed compared to that of the CDBC.VRS group.
14. We believe that sighted Deaf people should recognize their privileges, follow CRTC rules, and stay with the **December 4, 2023 deadline** as the first cost application deadline.

Closing

15. Once again, CDBC.VRS appreciates the CRTC's compassionate understanding of their unusual situation, which is out of their control.
16. If you have any concerns or questions, please contact **Megan McHugh or Terri Nolt** at the **separate emails** in our signatures below **and** the shared email address CDBC.VRS@gmail.com.

Thank you,



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



Terri Nolt, Chair
Deaf-Blind Planning Committee
(British Columbia)
dbpc2.0@gmail.com

[cc list follows]

cc: Suzanne Laforest, Canadian Administrator of VRS (CAV-ACS)
Jennifer Porteous, CRTC
Nanao Kachi, CRTC
Megan McHugh, CNSDB
Terri Nolt, DPBC

Cc continued:

Richard Belzile, Canadian Association of the Deaf (CAD-ASC)
Jeffrey Beatty, Deaf Wireless Canada Consultative Committee (DWCC)
DHH Coalition, Donald Prong, Ontario Association of the Deaf (OAD)
Myles Murphy, Newfoundland and Labrador Association of the Deaf (NLAD)
Elliott Richman, Deafness Advocacy Association of Nova Scotia (DAANS)
Sarah Stadnicki, Ontario Video Relay Services Committee (OVRSC)
Kimberly Wood, Canada Deaf Grassroots Movement (CDGM)
Ursula Grant, Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association (CWTA/CTA)
Telus Regulatory
Rogers Regulatory
Bell Regulatory

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