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|  | Federal Communications Commission  Washington, D.C. 20554 |

December 31, 2018

**VIA ECFS ELECTRONIC DELIVERY**

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554  
  
Re: Measuring Broadband America Program (Fixed Collaborative), GN Docket No. 12-264  
  
Dear Ms. Dortch,  
  
On December 20, 2018, Members of the Commission Staff met with representatives of broadband providers, public interest groups, companies, and other organizations for the last collaborative meeting of the year to discuss plans pertaining to the fixed Measuring Broadband America (MBA) program.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Walter Johnston, Chief, EMCD/OET welcomed all the collaborative members and announced that he was officially retiring from the FCC and that this was his last meeting with the group. He thanked everyone and said that it had been a pleasure working with SamKnows, the FCC staff, the ISPs and all the participants in the MBA collaborative. He had enjoyed working with the MBA collaborative and had found the interactive nature of the collaborative to be fruitful. He stated that ISPs had often contacted him to discuss thorny issues they faced with respect to the MBA program, and he valued their recommendations when formulating policy decisions with respect to the program. He remembered that when he had started the MBA program the typical speeds offered by the ISPs were around 8 Mbps. In contrast, ISPs were now offering Internet access speeds in excess of 100 Mbps. Mr. Johnston noted that broadband service and the Internet had matured to the point where it is now considered a critical part of the economy; and that, going forward, this is only likely to increase with the introduction of 5G services and IoT.

Following this brief farewell speech Mr. Johnston proceeded with a roll call of all the participants in the room as well as those on the teleconference bridge. He then introduced Ms. Roxanne Robinson, Global Head of Client Services at SamKnows to present the agenda for the meeting.[[2]](#footnote-2)

1. **7th and 8th MBA Reports:**

Mr. Johnston expressed his relief that the 7th and 8th MBA reports had finally been published by the FCC the previous week. A question was raised about the reports not being linked on the MBA site. Mr. Johnston pointed out that the latest reports were now on the MBA website and that the website often gets updated periodically. In response to another question on whether the FCC planned to publish the MBA report as a part of the marketplace report on a bi-annual basis in accordance with the Ray Baum Act, Mr. Johnston mentioned that the plan going forward is to continue making the reports available, at least, on a yearly basis. Mr. Johnston noted that the possibility of creating short quarterly reports along with quarterly release of raw data had been discussed within the Commission and is under consideration. A quarterly release of data and summarized reports would address criticism that the yearly reports and data are often out of date at the time of publication and do not reflect more recent results from MBA test activity. Mr. Johnston hastened to add that the decision regarding whether to release quarterly reports is far from settled and is still under internal discussion. Mr. Johnston emphasized that any decision made by the FCC would be shared and discussed with the MBA collaborative before being implemented.

1. **Confirmed reporting dates:**

In the previous collaborative meeting (November 29) SamKnows stated that it had tentatively set the time frame of 25 September to 25 October 2018 inclusive as the period under which the MBA data would be validated and then used to create the charts for the ninth MBA Report. These dates were confirmed by Ms. Robinson, who requested the ISPs to let her know if they had any concerns with the use of this time frame. Mr. Johnston reminded the carriers that according to MBA policy any new set of dates would be considered only if an ISP shows inconsistencies or problems with the network that was beyond the ISP’s control during the chosen time frame. If there were any such problems, it would be helpful if the carriers bring this to the notice of SamKnows sooner than later.

1. **MBA website feedback:**

At the request of Mr. Johnston, Ms. Robinson briefly introduced Ms. Stacie Djordjevic as the newest member of the SamKnows staff. Ms. Djordjevic is taking on the role of account manager for the FCC MBA project. Ms. Djordjevic expressed her pleasure at meeting everyone in person. Ms. Djordjevic mentioned that she has contacted ISPs to inform them that SamKnows is creating a new webpage aimed at improving the panelist recruitment process. This new web page will provide panelists with more details about the whiteboxes, give a better idea of how participation in the MBA program allows participants to view performance metrics of their own network as well as helping to measure broadband service performance of major ISPs at a national level. Ms. Djordjevic requested the ISPs check the updated design and contents of the proposed website and send SamKnows any feedback they may have before the first week of January. Mr. Johnston asked the ISPs to note that, unlike last year where we had a slow start because of issues with SamKnows contract renewal, the aim is to start early this year in terms of panelist recruitment efforts. As pointed out in previous meetings SamKnows is committed to increasing the number of panelists per measured tier to a minimum of 100. Achieving this goal will require close cooperation between the FCC, SamKnows and the ISPs.

1. **2019 next steps:**

Ms. Robinson presented the timeline for important events in the MBA program January-February of 2019. Ms. Robinson noted that she had sent and received back confirmation of the ISP speed tiers to be validated and she expressed her thanks to the ISPs for their timely response. SamKnows will be processing these and if needed, will contact ISPs with questions about any panelist’s speed tier. In addition, she reiterated that SamKnows expects feedback on the new panelist recruitment website by January 4, 2019. SamKnows expects to have the final export of the data files as well as completion of the Unit Profile by January 11, 2019. The Recruitment website is expected to go live on January 1, 2019. The ISP speed tier weighting data (based on the subscribership of each tier to the ISP’s total subscriber numbers) is scheduled to be processed by January 18 and the first draft of charts for the Ninth MBA report will also be created at that time. The final draft of charts should be ready by February 1.

Mr. Johnston concluded the meeting by thanking all the attendees for their active participation and wishing everyone a wonderful holiday season and a happy new year. He wished the MBA program and all the participants the very best for the future.

Sincerely,  
  
/s/ Rajender Razdan  
  
Rajender Razdan, Electronics Engineer,  
Electromagnetic Compatibility Division/OET  
Federal Communications Commission

1. A list of attendees is attached to this filing in GN Docket No. 12-264. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. SamKnows presentation is attached to this filing in GN Docket No. 12-264. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)