

DOW, LOHNES & ALBERTSON, PLLC  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

WASHINGTON, D.C.

M. ANNE SWANSON  
DIRECT DIAL 202-776-2534  
aswanson@dlslaw.com

1200 NEW HAMPSHIRE AVENUE, N.W. • SUITE 800 • WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036-6802  
TELEPHONE 202-776-2000 • FACSIMILE 202-776-2222

  
**ORIGINAL**  
ONE SAVANNAH DRIVE • SUITE 1800  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30346-2108  
TELEPHONE 770-901-8800  
FACSIMILE 770-901-8874

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May 7, 2003

MAY - 7 2003

**VIA HAND DELIVERY**

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Marlene H. Dortch, Esquire  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

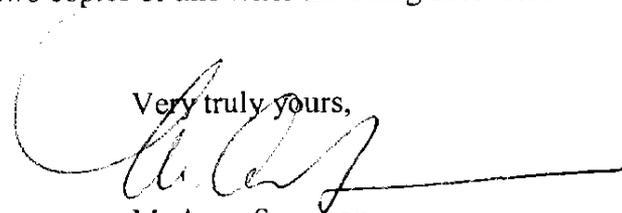
**Re: Notification of Ex Parte Communication**  
**MB Docket Nos. 02-277, 01-235, 96-197, 01-317, and 00-244**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

This is to advise you, in accordance with Section 1.1206 of the FCC's rules, that on May 5, 2003, George Mahoney, General Counsel and Secretary of Media General, Inc., and I met with Commissioner Kevin J. Martin and his media legal advisor, Catherine C. Bohigian, to discuss the FCC's proposed use of a diversity "index"; Media General, Inc.'s concern over any FCC modification of the newspaper/broadcast cross-ownership rule that would provide relief only in large markets; the public interest benefits of convergence that would be lost in smaller markets if the FCC were to take such an approach; the legal infirmities involved in any action short of complete elimination of the newspaper/broadcast cross-ownership rule; and Media General's letter of April 22, 2003, to Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy and the studies included therein. The attached materials were submitted during the meeting.

As required by section 1.1206(b), two copies of this letter are being submitted for each of the above-referenced dockets.

Very truly yours,

  
M. Anne Swanson

*Enclosures*

cc w/o encl. (by telecopy):

The Honorable Kevin J. Martin  
Catherine C. Bohigian, Esquire

## MEDIA GENERAL

1. *Tampa News Increases.* Over the last decade, WFLA-TV has been continually expanding its news line-up and has made the following increases in local news and programming:

August 1992:	Debut of “NewsWatch 8 Weekend Morning Edition” (Sat. & Sun., 9 am – 9:30 am)
	Debut of “NewsWatch 8 Weekend Edition @ Noon” (Sat. & Sun., one-half hour)
September 1994:	Debut of “NewsWatch 8 Sunrise” (M-F, 5:30 am – 6 am)
October 1997:	Expansion of Saturday’s “NewsWatch 8 Weekend Edition @ Noon” (Sat., noon – 1 pm)
May 1998:	Expansion of Sunday’s “NewsWatch 8 Weekend Edition” (at various times on Sundays over the next four months: Sun. 9 am – 10 am, then noon – 1 pm, then 9 am – 10 am)
June 1998:	Debut of “NewsWatch 8 Midday” (M-F, 11 am – 11:30 am)
September 1999:	Debut of “NewsChannel 8 Today” (M-F, 5 am – 5:30 am)
January 2001:	Expansion of “NewsWatch 8 Midday” to two half-hours (M-F, 11 am – noon)
August 2001:	Debut of locally-produced “Daytime” in lieu of “NewsWatch 8 Midday” (M-F, 11 am – noon) (“Daytime” is local variant of “Today” with some paid programming inserts)
June 2002:	Relaunch of “NewsWatch 8 Midday” (M-F, 11 am – noon) and move of “Daytime” to M-F, 10 am – 11 am
2. *Tampa Personnel Additions.* The competitive benefits and successes that flow from convergence have allowed WFLA-TV to expand its news operations and increase the number of full-time professionals, even over the last year despite the very serious advertising recession and general economic downturn.
3. *News and Programming Increases in Other Markets.* Media General’s other five convergence markets present similar experiences.

WSLS(TV), Roanoke, VA

- ▶ Station's overall staff has grown by two individuals.
- ▶ News department staff has increased by nine.

WJHL(TV), Tri-Cities, TN/VA

- ▶ Full-time staff has increased from 74 to 88 employees.

WBTW(TV), Florence, SC

- ▶ Overall employee count has increased by two.

WRBL(TV), Columbus, GA

- ▶ Has added one additional staff person in newsroom and will add another two in September 2003 with debut of new 5:30 p.m. newscast.

WMBB(TV), Panama City, FL

- ▶ News staff has increased by three, but overall station has experienced decrease of three employees, so staff levels have remained constant with convergence, despite overall economic downturn.

**STUDIES/FACTUAL EVIDENCE IN  
OMNIBUS MEDIA OWNERSHIP DOCKET  
THAT SUPPORT COMPLETE ELIMINATION OF  
THE NEWSPAPER/BROADCAST CROSS-OWNERSHIP RULE**

I. “Diversity”/Localism

A. Specifically Directed to Newspaper/Broadcast Cross-Ownership

1. *FCC Staff Study of 1973 Television Station Annual Programming Report, Second Report and Order*, 50 FCC 2d at 1078 n.26 and Appendix C.
2. *Non-Entertainment Programming Study*, Appendix A to Comments of A.H. Belo Corporation in MM Docket No. 98-35, filed Jul. 21, 1998.
3. D. Pritchard, *A Tale of Three Cities: “Diverse and Antagonistic” Information in Situations of Newspaper/Broadcast Cross-Ownership*, 54 FED. COM. L.J. 31 (Dec. 2001).
4. S.R. Lichter, Ph.D., *Review of the Increases in Non-Entertainment Programming Provided in Markets with Newspaper-Owned Non-Entertainment Programming Provided in Markets with Newspaper-Owned Television Stations*, Appendix 5 to Media General Comments in MM Docket Nos. 01-235 and 96-197, filed Dec. 3, 2002.
5. J.K. Gentry, Ph.D., *The Public Benefits Achievable from Eliminating the FCC’s Newspaper/Broadcast Cross-Ownership Rule*, Dec. 2001, Appendix 4 to Media General Comments in MM Docket Nos. 01-235 and 96-197, filed Dec. 3, 2001.
6. Media General’s review of broadcast, print, cable, wireless cable, DBS, and Internet sites available in each of its convergence markets. Appendices 9-14 to Media General Comments in MM Docket Nos. 01-235 and 96-197, filed Dec. 3, 2002, and Appendices 9-14 to Media General Comments in MB Docket Nos. 2-277, *et al.*, filed Jan. 2, 2003.
7. D. Pritchard, *Viewpoint Diversity in Cross-Owned Newspapers and Television Stations: A Study of News Coverage of the 2000 Presidential Campaign*, FCC Media Ownership Working Group, 2002-2, Sept. 2002.
8. T.C. Spavins, *et al.*, *The Measurement of Local Television News and Public Affairs*, undated (FCC-commissioned study released Oct. 1, 2002).
9. J.K. Gentry, Ph.D., *Statement*, Appendix 3 to Media General Comments in MB Docket Nos. 02-277, *et al.*, filed Jan. 2, 2003.
10. *Selected Press Accounts of Cutbacks in Local Television Newscasts: November 1998 through October 2002*, Attachment B to Appendix 3 to Media General Comments in MB Docket Nos. 02-277, *et al.*, filed Jan. 2, 2003.

11. Statement of Robert W. Decherd, Chairman of the Board, President and Chief Executive Officer, Belo Corporation, attached to Comments of A.H. Belo Corporation in MB Docket Nos. 02-277, *et al.*, filed Jan. 2, 2003.
12. Statement of J. Stewart Bryan, III, Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer, Media General, Inc., Appendix C to Media General Reply Comments in MB Docket Nos. 02-277, *et al.*, filed Feb. 3, 2003.
13. Media General's evidence of increased provision of local news and information at each of its co-owned convergence properties and evidence of increased staffing at all but one of its convergence TV stations. Employment held constant at exception. Section II.A. in Media General Reply Comments in MB Docket Nos. 02-277, *et al.*, filed Jan. 2, 2003.
14. Media General's letters from non-profit community groups, noting convergence has helped them spread their messages more effectively. Appendix A to Media General Comments in MB Docket Nos. 02-277, *et al.*, filed Feb. 3, 2003.
15. Columbia University School of Journalism, Project for Excellence in Journalism, *Does Ownership Matter in Local Television News: A Five-Year Study of Ownership and Quality*, Feb. 17, 2003, *ex parte* submission in MB Docket Nos. 02-277, *et al.*, filed Feb 26, 2003.
16. J. Hausman, *Statement of Jerry A. Hausman*, undated, Exhibit 2 to Media General Letter to Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy, Apr. 22, 2003.
17. J. Rosse, *Critique of "Consumer Substitution Among the Media,"* Apr. 16, 2003, Exhibit 1 to Media General Letter to Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy, Apr. 22, 2003.
18. Discussion of Nielsen Consumer Survey in Media General Letter to Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy, April 22, 2003.

B. Related and Supportive

1. S.T. Berry and J. Waldfogel, *Do Mergers Increase Product Variety? Evidence from Radio Broadcasting*, 66 THE QUARTERLY J. OF ECONOMICS 1009 (Aug. 2001).
2. *Selected Media "Voices" by Designated Market Area*, Exhibit 1 to Comments of Hearst-Argyle Television, Inc. in MM Docket Nos. 01-235 and 96-196, filed Dec. 3, 2001.
3. Media General's evidence of locally originated cable programming available in its convergence markets. Section II.B. and Appendix B in Media General Reply Comments in MB Docket Nos. 02-277, *et al.*, filed Jan. 2, 2003.
4. D. Pritchard, *The Expansion of Diversity: A Longitudinal Study of Local Media Outlets in Five American Communities*, Appendix 5 to Media General Comments in MB Docket Nos. 02-277, *et al.*, filed Jan. 2, 2003.

II. Competition

- A. Economists Incorporated, *Structural and Behavioral Analysis of the Newspaper-Broadcast Cross-Ownership Rule*, July 1998, Appendix B to Comments of Newspaper Ass'n of America in MM Docket No. 98-35, filed Jul. 21, 1998.
- B. S.M. Besen and D.P. O'Brien, *An Economic Analysis of the Efficiency Benefits from Newspaper-Broadcast Station Cross-Ownership*, July 21, 1998, Exhibit B to Comments of The Chronicle Publishing Co., Inc. in MM Docket No. 98-35, filed Jul. 21, 1998. Also submitted as Exhibit B to Comments of Gannett Co., Inc. in MM Docket No. 98-35, filed Jul. 21, 1998.
- C. R.D. Blair, *An Economic Analysis of the Cross-Ownership of WBZL and the Sun Sentinel, July 1, 1998*, attachment to Comments of Tribune Company in MM Docket No. 98-35, filed Jul. 21, 1998.
- D. Economists Incorporated, *Horizontal and Vertical Structural Issues and the Newspaper-Broadcast Cross-Ownership Ban*, Appendix IV to Comments of Newspaper Ass'n of America in MM Docket Nos. 01-235 and 96-197, filed Dec. 3, 2001.
- E. Economists Incorporated, *Behavioral Analysis of Newspaper-Broadcast Cross-Ownership Rules in Medium and Small Markets*, Appendix A to Media General Reply Comments in MM Docket Nos. 01-235 and 96-197, filed Feb. 15, 2002.
- F. C.A. Bush, *On the Substitutability of Local Newspaper, Radio and Television Advertising in Local Business Sales*, Sept. 2002, FCC Media Bureau Staff Research Paper, 2002-10.

III. Internet-Related

- A. U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, *A Nation Online: How Americans Are Expanding Their Use of the Internet*, Feb. 2002, available at <http://www.ntia.doc.gov/ntiahome/dn/html/anationonline2.htm> (last visited May 1, 2003).
- B. J.B. Harrigan, *Getting Serious Online*, Pew Internet & American Life Project, at 3, 15 (March 3, 2002), available at <http://www.pewinternet.org/reports/toc.asp?Report=55> (last visited Apr. 30, 2003).
- C. Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, *Internet Sapping Broadcast News Audience*, available at <http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?ReportID=36> (last visited Apr. 30, 2003).
- D. *Surveying the Digital Future -- Year Three*, UCLA Center for Communications Policy, Feb. 2003, available at <http://www.ccp.ucla.edu/pages/internet-report.asp> (last visited May 1, 2003).

**ATTACHMENT 1**  
**SELECTED PRESS ACCOUNTS OF CURTAILMENTS IN LOCAL TELEVISION NEWSCASTS**  
**NOVEMBER 1998 THROUGH JANUARY 2003**

<b>Market</b>	<b>Station</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Source</b>
Anchorage, AK	KTVA (CBS)	Announced in April 2000 that it would eliminate noon newscasts.	11
Binghamton, NY	WIVT (ABC)	Cancelled locally produced morning news show in June 2002, and replaced it with regionally produced morning news show.	34
Boston, MA	WSBK (UPN)	Cancelled early evening newscasts in 1998, leaving only a 10 p.m. newscast, which is rebroadcast from WBZ-TV (CBS).	2
Boston, MA	WMUR-TV (ABC)	Cancelled 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. newscasts in May 2001.	19
Charlotte, NC	WBTV (CBS)	Cancelled 6:30 p.m. newscast in September 2001.	22
Chattanooga, TN	WDSI (Fox)	Cancelled morning and noon newscasts and added 4 p.m. newscast in January 2001.	15
Chattanooga, TN	WTVC-TV (ABC)	Cancelled weekend morning newscasts in February 2001.	16
Chicago, IL	WBBM-TV (CBS)	Cancelled one hour 6 p.m. newscast in early 1999. Replaced it with a half hour 4:30 p.m. newscast, which thereafter was cancelled in July 2000. Cancelled Saturday morning newscasts in December 1998.	3, 8
Cleveland, OH	WUAB (IND)	Cancelled 11:30 a.m. newscast in January 1999.	4
Cleveland, OH	WEWS (ABC)	Cancelled 5 a.m. newscast in June 1999.	6
Detroit, MI	WKBD (UPN)	Cancelled local 10 p.m. newscast in November 2002 and replaced with one produced by other station in market.	35
Detroit, MI	WWJ-TV (CBS)	Cancelled 11 p.m. half hour local newscast in November 2002.	35
Duluth, MN	KDLH (CBS)	Cancelled noon newscast in November 1998.	1
Evansville, IN	WEVV (CBS)	Cancelled local newscasts in late 2001	29
Green Bay, WI	WLUK-TV (Fox)	Cancelled 10 p.m. newscast in March 2001.	17
Greensboro, NC	WXLV-TV	Cancelled morning and weekend newscasts in late 2000.	13

<b>Market</b>	<b>Station</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Source</b>
Greensboro/ Winston/Salem, NC	WXLV-TV (ABC)	Cancelled local newscasts in January 2002	27
Hattiesburg, MS	WHLT-TV (CBS)	Cancelled all newscasts and eliminated news department in May 2001.	18
Jacksonville, FL	WJXX (ABC)	Cancelled all locally produced newscasts in January 2000; now re-broadcasts newscasts from WTLV-TV (NBC).	10
Kingsport, TN	WKPT (ABC)	Announced in February 2002 that it would cancel locally produced weekday newscasts and brief updates and replace them with re-broadcast newscasts from WJHL-TV (CBS), Johnson City, TN.	28
Los Angeles, CA	KCBS (CBS)	Cancelled 4 p.m. newscast in 2001.	21
Los Angeles, CA	KCOP (UPN)	Announced in July 1999 that it would cancel 7:30 p.m. newscast.	7
Marquette, MI	WBUP WBKP (ABC)	Cancelled local newscast in March 2002	31
Miami, FL	WAMI-TV (IND)	Cancelled only newscast and eliminated news department in December 2000.	14
Miami, FL	WTVJ (NBC)	In February 2002, cancelled midmorning newscast and added 4:00 p.m. newscast, which was subsequently cancelled.	26
Minneapolis, MN	KSTC-TV (IND)	Cancelled both weekday morning and 6:30 p.m. newscasts in October 2001.	23
Minneapolis, MN	KSTP (ABC)	Cancelled morning weekend newscasts in October 2001.	23
New York, NY	WCBS-TV	Cancelled 4:00 p.m. newscast in January 2002	25
Odessa/ Midland, TX	KOSA-TV (CBS)	Cancelled morning newscasts in November 1998.	1
Orlando, FL	WESH (NBC)	Eliminated 4:30 p.m. newscast in April 2000.	9
Raleigh/ Durham, NC	WKFT (IND)	Cancelled hourly local news briefs in December 2002.	32
Sacramento, CA	KMAX-TV (UPN)	Cancelled evening newscast in 1998.	2
San Antonio, TX	KVDA-TV (Telemundo)	Cancelled morning and 5 p.m. newscasts in July 2001.	20
Seattle, WA	KSTW(TV) (UPN)	Cancelled all newscasts and eliminated news department in December 1998.	2
St. Louis, MO	KDNL-TV (ABC)	Cancelled all newscasts and eliminated news department in September 2001.	24
Tallahassee, FL	WTWC (NBC)	Cancelled all newscasts and eliminated news department in November 2000.	24

<b>Market</b>	<b>Station</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Source</b>
Tampa, FL	WTOG (UPN)	Cancelled 10 p.m. newscast and eliminated news department in 1998.	5
Topeka, KS	KTKA-TV (ABC)	Cancelled all four local newscasts in April 2002.	33
Twin Falls, ID	KMVT (CBS)	Announced in February 2002 that it would cancel 5:00 p.m. newscast	30
Utica, NY	WUTR(TV) (ABC)	Cancelled locally produced morning news show in June 2002, and replaced it with regionally produced morning news show.	34
Washington, DC	WUSA (CBS)	Cancelled 90 minutes of evening newscasts, added 9 a.m. newscast, in September 2000.	12
Watertown, NY	WWTI(TV) (IND)	Cancelled locally produced morning news show in June 2002, and replaced it with regionally produced morning news show.	34

## KEY TO SOURCES

Source	News Article
1	"Benedek Slashes Costs, Staffs," <i>Electronic Media</i> , Nov. 16, 1998 at 1; interview with station news staff, February 13, 2003.
2	Monica Collins, "Clickers of Sweeps and Cable Rates," <i>The Boston Herald</i> , Nov. 15, 1998 at 5.
3	Dan Trigoboff, "A Day of Rest. WGN Cancels Saturday Morning Newscast," <i>Broadcasting &amp; Cable</i> , Dec. 21, 1998 at 28.
4	Roger Brown, "Poor Ratings Sink Channel 43 Midday Newscast," <i>The Plain Dealer</i> , Dec. 22, 1998 at 4E.
5	Eric Deggans, "WTTA Might Add Late-Night News," <i>St. Petersburg Times</i> , Mar. 18, 1999 at 2B.
6	Tom Feran, "Wenz Hires Sommers To Do Midday Show," <i>The Plain Dealer</i> , June 9, 1999 at 2E.
7	Cynthia Littleton, "KCOP Dropping Newscast," <i>Daily Variety</i> , July 12, 1999 at 5.
8	Phil Rosenthal, "More Bad News for Ch. 2," <i>Chicago Sun-Times</i> , Aug. 16, 2000, at 57.
9	"Chatter," <i>The Stuart News/Port St. Lucie News</i> , Apr. 16, 2000 at P6.
10	Eileen Davis Hudson, "Market Profile," <i>Mediaweek</i> , May 15, 2000; interview with station news staff, February 13, 2003.
11	"Inside Alaska Business," <i>Anchorage Daily News</i> , Apr. 20, 2000 at 1E.
12	"Local Media," <i>Mediaweek</i> , Oct. 2, 2000.
13	Jeremy Murphy, "Local Media—Los Angeles Radio Stations: ESPN Radio Picks Up Biggest Affiliate," <i>Mediaweek</i> , Nov. 27, 2000.
14	Dan Trigoboff, "Station Break," <i>Broadcasting &amp; Cable</i> , Dec. 11, 2000 at 33.
15	Barry Courter, "Fox 61 Moves To Be First With News," <i>Chattanooga Times/Chattanooga Free Press</i> , Jan. 21, 2001 at B1.
16	Barry Courter, "Public Gives Locher A Boost," <i>Chattanooga Times/Chattanooga Free Press</i> , Feb. 9, 2001 at H5.
17	Tim Cuprisin, "Green Bay Fox Station Cancels 10 p.m. News," <i>Milwaukee Journal Sentinel</i> , Mar. 8, 2001 at 8B.
18	Kathryn S. Wenner, "News Blackout," <i>American Journalism Review</i> , May 2001, at 12.
19	Denis Paiste, "'Chronicle' Coming to WMUR," <i>The Union Leader (Manchester NH)</i> , May 30, 2001 at A2.
20	"News roundup," <i>San Antonio Express-News</i> , July 4, 2001 at 2B.
21	Dan Trigoboff, "Station Break," <i>Broadcasting &amp; Cable</i> , Aug. 6, 2001 at 26.
22	Mark Washburn, "WBTV Replaces News Director to Boost Ratings," <i>The Charlotte Observer</i> , Aug. 14, 2001 at 1D.
23	Jeremy Murphy, "Local Media TV Stations," <i>Mediaweek</i> , Nov. 5, 2001; interview with station news staff, February 13, 2003.
24	Dan Trigoboff, "KDNL's St. Louis Blues; KDNL Television in St. Louis, Missouri, Axes News Department," <i>Broadcasting &amp; Cable</i> , Oct. 8, 2001 at 22.
25	Chris Pursell, "Stations Scrambling to Slot New Strips," <i>Electronic Media</i> , Dec. 31, 2001 at 3.

## KEY TO SOURCES

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|----|---|
| 26 | Tom Jicha, "WTVJ Shifts Newscasts to Late Afternoon," <i>Sun-Sentinel (Fort Lauderdale, FL)</i> , Feb. 6, 2002 at 3E; interview with station news staff, Feb. 11, 2003.                                   |
| 27 | Dan Trigoboff, "Station Break," <i>Broadcasting &amp; Cable</i> , Jan 7, 2002 at 40.  |
| 28 | Dan Trigoboff, "Station Break," <i>Broadcasting &amp; Cable</i> , Jan. 21, 2002 at 36; interview with station news staff, February 13, 2003.  |
| 29 | Michael Schneider, "Local Newscasts Fall Victim to Cost Cuts," <i>Variety</i> , Jan. 28-Feb. 8, 2002 at 21.   |
| 30 | Lorraine Cavener, "Twin Falls, Idaho, TV Station Drops Early-Evening Newscast," <i>Times-News</i> , Feb. 2, 2002.   |
| 31 | Associated Press, "Upper Peninsula Television Station Cancels Local News," <i>Associated Press</i> , March 29, 2002.  |
| 32 | Business North Carolina, "WKFT, Eastern, Eliminates Local News Segment," <i>Business North Carolina</i> , March 1, 2002.  |
| 33 | Kansas City Star, "Station Drops Local News," <i>Kansas City Star</i> , April 24, 2002; Dan Trigoboff, "The News Not Out of Topeka," <i>Broadcasting &amp; Cable</i> , April 22, 2002.                    |
| 34 | William LaRue, "Clear Channel Consolidating Some Staff," <i>The Post-Standard</i> , July 6, 2002.   |
| 35 | John Smyntek, "Channel 50's Exodus Aids Channel 7's News," <i>Detroit Free Press</i> , December 4, 2002; Dan Trigoboff, "CBS Drops News in Detroit," <i>Broadcasting &amp; Cable</i> , November 25, 2002. |