

June 17, 2004

Marlene Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

RE: Special Submission of MSTV
on the DTV Channel Election and Repacking Process
Ex Parte Submission – MB 03-15

Dear Ms. Dortch:

The CBS Television Network, the Viacom Television Stations Group, the CBS Television Network Affiliates Association, the ABC Television Network, the ABC Owned Television Station Group, the ABC Television Affiliates Association, Fox Television Stations, Inc., Fox Television Affiliates Association, NBC Universal Television Stations, and the NBC Television Affiliates (collectively, the "Broadcast Interests") hereby submit this letter in response to the Special Submission of the Association for Maximum Service Television, Inc. ("MSTV"), on the DTV Channel Election and Repacking Process (the "MSTV Election Plan"). The Broadcast Interests strongly endorse MSTV's five-step plan, which seeks to ensure transparency, order and fairness in the DTV channel election and repacking process.

The Broadcast Interests believe that the MSTV Election Plan represents a structured approach to the selection of final DTV channel assignments and will provide broadcasters with the kind of guidelines necessary to make the DTV transition as orderly as possible. Absent a systematic plan, licensees simply will not have sufficient information to make knowledgeable choices about their channel elections. A multi-step process, such as the MSTV Election Plan, is the only rational way to deal with the highly complex and challenging task of finalizing the DTV table of allotments. Equally important, the MSTV Election Plan will help to ensure optimal DTV service to the viewing public during and after the transition.

While the Broadcast Interests recognize that the Commission may seek public comment regarding the MSTV Election Plan, the Broadcast Interests support MSTV's request that the FCC proceed expeditiously to initiate the first step in the plan even while awaiting comments.¹ A rational and fair channel election process is critically important to the success of the DTV transition, and the challenge of completing so complex a process suggests that there is no time to lose.

For all of these reasons, the Broadcast Interests urge the Commission to act promptly on the MSTV Election Plan and to begin its implementation as expeditiously as possible. Should you have any questions concerning this submission, kindly contact the undersigned.

¹ Of course, the Broadcast Interests agree that implementation of this step should allow for waivers, if needed, as a result of truly extraordinary circumstances, including those resulting from the loss of the World Trade Center.

Respectfully submitted,

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