PUBLIC NOTICE

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MEDIA BUREAU RELEASES UPDATED VERSION OF "THE PUBLIC AND BROADCASTING" AND ANNOUNCES THAT BROADCAST INFORMATION SPECIALISTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INQUIRIES

In its recent Report on Broadcast Localism and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, the Commission concluded that the record in the localism proceeding (MB Docket No. 04-233) revealed a substantial need for greater public understanding of broadcaster obligations, and of the procedures by which the Commission enforces those obligations. The Commission expressed its desire to better educate members of the public about the tools available to them, should they believe that their local broadcast stations are not fulfilling their service obligations. To that end, the Commission directed the Media Bureau to update "The Public and Broadcasting," a publication that all broadcasters must maintain in their public inspection files.[1] The Commission also stated that it would establish a contact point within the agency for public inquiries about broadcast matters.

In response to these Commission directives, today, the Media Bureau has released an updated version of "The Public and Broadcasting."[2] Including links to places on the FCC's website that offer additional relevant information as to the matters discussed, this publication provides an overview of the FCC's regulation of broadcast radio and television licensees, describes how broadcast stations are authorized, and explains the various rules and policies relating to broadcast programming and operations with which stations must comply, including the obligation to serve their local communities. It also explains how members of the public can become involved in assessing whether local broadcast stations are complying with these requirements. The publication is also intended to make the public aware of FCC procedures and the tools at their disposal, in the event that they conclude that any of their local stations do not meet these responsibilities.

The FCC's rules require that all broadcast stations keep in their public inspection files, at all times, a copy of the most recent version of "The Public and Broadcasting."[3] In addition, licensees must provide a copy of the publication to any member of the public who requests one.[4] With the release today of the new version of "The Public and Broadcasting," each broadcast licensee must replace the existing copy in its station public inspection file with the updated version, and provide copies of that version to any member of the public that requests one. The Media Bureau will periodically update "The Public and

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[1] *See Broadcast Localism*, MB Docket No. 04-233, Report on Broadcast Localism and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC 07-218, ¶ 18 (rel. Jan. 24, 2008) (the "Localism Report").

[2] The revised publication can be accessed at http://www.fcc.gov/mb/audio/decdoc/public_and_broadcasting.html. Copies can also be obtained by calling the FCC toll-free at 1-(888)-225-5322 (1-(888)-CALL FCC) (Voice) or 1-(888)-835-5322 (1-(888)-TELL FCC) (TTY).

[3] 47 C.F.R. §§ 73.3526(e)(8) (commercial stations) and 73.3527(e)(7) (noncommercial educational stations).

[4] *Review of the Commission's Rules Regarding the Main Studio and Local Public Inspection Files of Broadcast Television and Radio Stations*, Report and Order, 13 FCC Rcd 15691, 15702, ¶ 24 (1998).

Broadcasting" to reflect pertinent developments in the law, providing the date of the update on the front cover of the publication. Licensees should check the Commission's website for the current version (at http://www.fcc.gov/mb/audio/decdoc/public_and_broadcasting.html) when they undertake regular updates of their public files.

Moreover, effective today, two Broadcast Information Specialists, one in the Media Bureau's Audio Division and one in its Video Division, will serve as contact points for the public, accessible via toll-free telephone numbers, by facsimile, or by e-mail. These individuals will be available to provide information to members of the public who may wish to become involved in the Commission's processes. They will answer questions about how to do so, including inquiries about our complaint or petitioning procedures or the filing and status of the license renewal, modification or assignment or transfer application for a particular station. The Broadcast Information Specialists can be contacted as noted below:

- If the inquiry relates to a radio station:
  Toll-Free: (866) 267-7202 (Voice) or (877) 479-1433 (TTY)
  Fax: (202) 418-1411
  E-Mail: radioinfo@fcc.gov

- If the inquiry relates to a television station:
  Toll-Free: (866) 918-5777 (Voice) or (866) 787-6222 (TTY)
  Fax: (202) 418-2827
  E-Mail: tvinfo@fcc.gov

If the inquiry relates to both a radio and a television station, or is general in nature, either Specialist may be contacted.

As the Commission observed in its Localism Report:

> The Commission must do its part to educate and mobilize members of the public to become actively involved in ensuring, and assisting us in ensuring, that the stations licensed to serve them do so in the best possible manner. We urge members of the public to become actively involved in this process and to communicate with their local broadcasters as to how their stations can better do so. Only if this dialogue occurs can broadcasters translate those communicated needs into meaningful programming that can make a difference.[5]

The additional resources announced today are designed to provide assistance to those members of the public who wish to participate in this important process.

For further information, contact William D. Freedman, Media Bureau, at (202) 418-1415 or at william.freedman@fcc.gov. Press inquiries should be directed to Mary Diamond, Media Bureau, at (202) 418-2388.

By the Chief, Media Bureau

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[5] Localism Report at ¶ 143.