



PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission
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MEDIA BUREAU EXTENDS DEADLINE FOR TELEVISION BROADCAST STATIONS TO MAKE RETRANSMISSION CONSENT/ MUST CARRY ELECTIONS ON CABLE AND SATELLITE SYSTEMS IN CERTAIN DESIGNATED MARKET AREAS EFFECTED BY HURRICANE RITA

Pursuant to Sections 76.64 and 76.66 of the Commission's rules, television broadcast stations seeking cable television or satellite carriage are required to elect between retransmission consent or must carry status by October 1, 2005 in their designated market areas (DMAs).

Because of the impact of Hurricane Rita and pursuant to section 1.3 of the Commission's rules, the Media Bureau finds good cause to extend this deadline until November 15, 2005 in the Alexandria, Lake Charles, and Lafayette, Louisiana and Beaumont-Port Arthur, Texas designated market areas (DMAs). For the same reason, those portions of Commission rules 76.64(f) and 76.66(c),(d) that affect broadcast stations' default carriage status in the absence of an affirmative carriage election by October 1, 2005 are waived for covered broadcasters that make an election by November 15, 2005. Although subject to review at a later date, at this time, the January 1, 2006 deadline for cable and satellite operators to commence carriage of television stations located in the above DMAs pursuant to this election is not being extended.

This extension does not affect the rights of any stations who have already exercised their carriage elections or of any cable or satellite operators who have already entered into carriage agreements. We remind broadcasters, cable operators and satellite carriers of their obligation to negotiate retransmission consent in good faith in accordance with Section 325(b)(3)(C) of the Communications Act and Section 76.65 of the Commission's rules. Lastly, we strongly encourage the parties to expiring retransmission consent agreements in these DMAs to agree to extensions during the emergency's aftermath to maintain the flow of vital information to the public.

For additional information on this matter, please contact Ronald Parver at (202) 418-7200.

Action by the Acting Chief, Media Bureau.