

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554**

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| In re Application of |) | |
| |) | |
| Roswell Interarts Organization |) | Facility I.D. No. 86395 |
| For Renewal of License for |) | NAL/Acct. No. MB-200741410351 |
| FM Translator Station K276ED |) | FRN: 0015279979 |
| Roswell, New Mexico |) | File No. BRFT-20060714ACG |
| |) | |

**MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER
AND
NOTICE OF APPARENT LIABILITY FOR FORFEITURE**

Adopted: July 2, 2007

Released: July 5, 2007

By the Associate Chief, Media Bureau:

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Commission has before it the captioned application of Roswell Interarts Organization (the "Licensee"), for renewal of its license for FM translator Station K276ED, Roswell, New Mexico (the "Station"). In this *Memorandum Opinion and Order and Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture* ("NAL") issued pursuant to Sections 309(k) and 503(b) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended (the "Act"), and Section 1.80 of the Commission's Rules (the "Rules"),¹ by the Associate Chief, Media Bureau, by authority delegated under Section 0.283 of the Rules,² we find that the Licensee apparently willfully violated Section 73.3539 of the Rules,³ by failing to timely file a license renewal application for the Station, and willfully and repeatedly violated Section 301 of the Act,⁴ by engaging in the unauthorized operation of the Station after its authorization had expired. Based upon our review of the facts and circumstances before us, we conclude that the Licensee is apparently liable for a monetary forfeiture in the amount of five hundred dollars (\$500), and we grant the captioned K276ED renewal application.

II. BACKGROUND

2. Section 73.3539(a) of the Rules requires that applications for renewal of license for broadcast stations must be filed "not later than the first day of the fourth full calendar month prior to the expiration date of the license sought to be renewed."⁵ An application for renewal of K276ED's license should have been filed by June 1, 2005, four months prior to the Station's October 1, 2005, license expiration date,⁶ but was not. In fact, the Licensee did not file the Station's renewal application until July

¹ 47 U.S.C. §§ 309(k), 503(b); 47 C.F.R. § 1.80.

² See 47 C.F.R. § 0.283.

³ See 47 C.F.R. § 73.3539.

⁴ See 47 U.S.C. § 301.

⁵ 47 C.F.R. § 73.3539(a).

⁶ See 47 C.F.R. §§ 73.1020, 73.3539(a).

14, 2006, more than ten months after the Station's license had expired. Thereafter, on July 20, 2006, the Licensee filed a request for Special Temporary Authorization ("STA") for K276ED to continue Station operations pending consideration of the late-filed renewal application.⁷ The staff granted the STA request on August 3, 2006, and the STA expired on February 3, 2007.⁸ A second request for STA was filed on February 16, 2007,⁹ and was granted by the staff on March 5, 2007.¹⁰ That authorization expires on September 5, 2007. In its STA request, the Licensee explains that it is a small, nonprofit entity that does not employ regular communication counsel and therefore inadvertently overlooked the requirement that it file a license renewal application for the Station.¹¹

III. DISCUSSION

3. *Proposed Forfeiture.* In this case, the Licensee has failed to timely file a license renewal application for the Station, as required by Section 73.3539(a) of the Rules. Moreover, it continued operating the Station for more than ten months after its license had expired on October 1, 2005, before filing the appropriate renewal application, and seeking an STA to so operate, in violation of Section 301 of the Act. It also continued station operations for two weeks after the expiration of its first STA before seeking additional authority to operate, also in violation of Section 301 of the Act. Although the Licensee explains that the failure to timely file was inadvertent and that the Station suspended operations pending grant of the STA Request,¹² broadcast licensees are obligated to comply fully with the Rules, including timely filing the Station's renewal application and maintaining in effect the Station authorization.¹³ It did not do so.

3. This *NAL* is issued pursuant to Section 503(b)(1)(B) of the Act. Under that provision, any person who is determined by the Commission to have willfully or repeatedly failed to comply with any provision of the Act or any rule, regulation, or order issued by the Commission shall be liable to the United States for a forfeiture penalty.¹⁴ Section 312(f)(1) of the Act defines willful as "the conscious and deliberate commission or omission of [any] act, irrespective of any intent to violate" the law.¹⁵ The legislative history to Section 312(f)(1) of the Act clarifies that this definition of willful applies to both Sections 312 and 503(b) of the Act,¹⁶ and the Commission has so interpreted the term in the Section 503(b) context.¹⁷ Section 312(f)(2) of the Act provides that "[t]he term 'repeated,' when used with

⁷ BLSTA-20060720ABU (the "STA Request").

⁸ *Letter to Harry C. Martin, Esq.*, Reference 1800B3 (Chief, Audio Division, Media Bureau, Apr. 7, 2005).

⁹ BELSTA- 20070216AAZ.

¹⁰ *Letter to Anne Goodwin Crump, Esq.*, Reference 1800B3 (Chief, Audio Division, Media Bureau, Mar. 5, 2007).

¹¹ STA Request, Exhibit 38.

¹² *See* Application, Exhibit 30.

¹³ *See, e.g. Hemmingford Media, Inc.*, Forfeiture Order, 14 FCC Rcd 2940, 2941-2 (CIB 1999) (responsibility for complying with terms of the station license "rests solely and exclusively with the licensee") (citing *Empire Broadcasting Corp.*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 25 FCC 2d 68 (1970)).

¹⁴ 47 U.S.C. § 503(b)(1)(B). *See also* 47 C.F.R. 1.80(a)(1).

¹⁵ 47 U.S.C. § 312(f)(1).

¹⁶ *See* H.R. Rep. No. 97-765, 97th Cong. 2d Sess. 51 (1982).

¹⁷ *See Southern California Broadcasting Co.*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 6 FCC Rcd 4387, 4388 (1991).

reference to the commission or omission of any act, means the commission or omission of such act more than once or, if such commission or omission is continuous, for more than one day.”¹⁸

5. The Commission's *Forfeiture Policy Statement* and Section 1.80(b)(4) of the Rules establish a base forfeiture amount of \$3,000 for the failure to file a required form.¹⁹ The guidelines also specify a base forfeiture amount of \$10,000 for construction and/or operation without an instrument of authorization for the service.²⁰ In determining the appropriate forfeiture amount, we may adjust the base amount upward or downward by considering factors enumerated in Section 503(b)(2)(D) of the Act, including “the nature, circumstances, extent and gravity of the violation, and, with respect to the violator, the degree of culpability, any history of prior offenses, ability to pay, and such other matters as justice may require.”²¹

6. In this case, the Licensee failed to timely file the K276ED renewal application and continued Station operations for more than ten months after the Station's license expired on October 1, 2005, before filing the appropriate renewal application, and for an additional 6 days before filing a request for STA to so operate. Additionally, the Licensee continued operating the station for approximately two weeks after its initial STA had expired before seeking additional STA to operate the Station. Nevertheless, because it had previously been licensed to operate FM translator Station K276ED, the latter transgressions are not comparable to "pirate" wireless operations, which typically have been subject to forfeitures of approximately \$10,000. Taking into account these facts and all of the factors required by Section 503(b)(2)(D) of the Act and the *Forfeiture Policy Statement*, we will reduce the forfeiture from the base amount to two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) for each violation. Thus, we propose a forfeiture in the total amount of five hundred dollars (\$500).

7. *License Renewal Application.* In evaluating an application for license renewal, the Commission's decision is governed by Section 309(k) of the Act.²² That section provides that if, upon consideration of the application and pleadings, we find that (1) the station has served the public interest, convenience, and necessity; (2) there have been no serious violations of the Act or the Rules; and (3) there have been no other violations which, taken together, constitute a pattern of abuse, we are to grant the renewal application.²³ If, however, the licensee fails to meet that standard, the Commission may deny the application – after notice and opportunity for a hearing under Section 309(e) of the Act – or grant the application “on terms and conditions that are appropriate, including a renewal for a term less than the maximum otherwise permitted.”²⁴

8. We find that the Licensee's violations of Section 73.3539 of the Rules and Section 301 of the Act do not constitute “serious violations” warranting designation for evidentiary hearing. Moreover,

¹⁸ 47 U.S.C. § 312(f)(2).

¹⁹ See *Forfeiture Policy Statement and Amendment of Section 1.80(b) of the Rules to Incorporate the Forfeiture Guidelines*, Report and Order, 12 FCC Rcd 17087, 17113-15 (1997) (“*Forfeiture Policy Statement*”), recon. denied, 15 FCC Rcd 303 (1999); 47 C.F.R. § 1.80(b)(4), note to paragraph (b)(4), Section I.

²⁰ A broadcast station requires an authorization from the Commission to operate. See 47 U.S.C. § 301.

²¹ 47 U.S.C. § 503(b)(2)(D); see also *Forfeiture Policy Statement*, 12 FCC Rcd at 17100; 47 C.F.R. § 1.80(b)(4).

²² 47 U.S.C. § 309(k).

²³ 47 U.S.C. § 309(k)(1). The renewal standard was amended to read as described by Section 204(a) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-104, 110 Stat. 56 (1996). See *Implementation of Sections 204(a) and 204(c) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (Broadcast License Renewal Procedures)*, Order, 11 FCC Rcd 6363 (1996).

²⁴ 47 U.S.C. §§ 309(k)(2), 309(k)(3).

we find no evidence of violations that, when considered together, evidence a pattern of abuse.²⁵ Further, we find that FM translator Station K276ED served the public interest, convenience, and necessity during the subject license term. We will therefore grant the license renewal application below.

IV. ORDERING CLAUSES

9. Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED, pursuant to Section 503(b) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, and Section 1.80 of the Commission's Rules, that Roswell Interarts Organization is hereby NOTIFIED of its APPARENT LIABILITY FOR FORFEITURE in the amount of five hundred dollars (\$500) for its apparent willful violation of Section 73.3539 of the Commission's Rules and willful and repeated violation of Section 301 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.

10. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED, pursuant to Section 1.80 of the Commission's Rules, that, within thirty (30) days of the release date of this *NAL*, Roswell Interarts Organization SHALL PAY the full amount of the proposed forfeiture or SHALL FILE a written statement seeking reduction or cancellation of the proposed forfeiture.

11. Payment of the proposed forfeiture must be made by check or similar instrument, payable to the order of the Federal Communications Commission. The payment must include the *NAL*/Acct. No. and FRN No. referenced above. Payment by check or money order may be mailed to Federal Communications Commission, at P.O. Box 358340, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15251-8340. Payment by overnight mail may be sent to Mellon Bank/LB 358340, 500 Ross Street, Room 1540670, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15251. Payment by wire transfer may be made to ABA Number 043000261, receiving bank Mellon Bank, and account number 911-6106.

12. The response, if any, must be mailed to Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, 445 12th Street, S.W., Washington D.C. 20554, ATTN: Peter H. Doyle, Chief, Audio Division, Media Bureau, and MUST INCLUDE the *NAL*/Acct. No. referenced above.

13. The Commission will not consider reducing or canceling a forfeiture in response to a claim of inability to pay unless the respondent submits: (1) federal tax returns for the most recent three-year period; (2) financial statements prepared according to generally accepted accounting practices ("GAAP"); or (3) some other reliable and objective documentation that accurately reflects the respondent's current financial status. Any claim of inability to pay must specifically identify the basis for the claim by reference to the financial documentation submitted.

14. Requests for full payment of the forfeiture proposed in this *NAL* under the installment plan should be sent to: Associate Managing Director-Financial Operations, 445 12th Street, S.W., Room 1-A625, Washington, D.C. 20554.²⁶

15. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED, pursuant to Section 309(k) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, that the license renewal application of Roswell Interarts Organization for FM translator Station K276ED, Roswell, New Mexico (File No BRFT-20060714ACG) IS GRANTED.

²⁵ For example, we do not find here that the Licensee's Station operation "was conducted in an exceedingly careless, inept and negligent manner and that the Licensee is either incapable of correcting or unwilling to correct the operating deficiencies." *See Heart of the Black Hills Stations*, Decision, 32 FCC 2d 196, 198 (1971). Nor do we find on the record here that "the number, nature and extent" of the violations indicate that "the licensee cannot be relied upon to operate [the station] in the future in accordance with the requirements of its licenses and the Commission's Rules." *Heart of the Black Hills Stations*, 32 FCC 2d at 200. *See also Center for Study and Application of Black Economic Development*, Hearing Designation Order, 6 FCC Rcd 4622 (1991), *Calvary Educational Broadcasting Network, Inc.*, Hearing Designation Order, 7 FCC Rcd 4037 (1992).

²⁶ *See* 47 C.F.R. § 1.1914.

16. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that copies of this *NAL* shall be sent, by First Class and Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, to Roswell Interarts Organization, the applicant, P.O. Box 2271, Roswell, New Mexico 88202-2271, and to its counsel, Anne Goodwin Crump, Fletcher, Heald & Hildreth, P.L.C. 1300 N. 17th Street, Eleventh Floor, Arlington, Virginia 22209.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Christopher L. Robbins
Associate Chief, Media Bureau