

NEWS

Federal Communications Commission
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December 7, 1979 - BC

COMMISSION RELAXES MONITORING POINT POLICY FOR AM DIRECTIONAL STATIONS

The Commission's Broadcast Bureau, in a letter to the Association of Federal Communications Consulting Engineers dated December 6, announced major changes in its policy regarding assignment of monitoring point limits to AM directional broadcast stations. Bureau Chief Richard J. Shiben stated his hope that these changes would eliminate the need for many stations to conduct costly antenna proofs and file applications with the Commission.

In response to suggestions made by the Association, the Bureau adopted the use of a relaxed "direct ratio" method of assigning monitor point limits. These limits are used by AM directional stations to monitor adjustment of their radiation patterns. The Bureau also announced that it would cease lowering these limits based on "partial proof" measurements, a practice which often resulted in inadequate tolerances for wintertime operation. A suggestion which would have reduced the number of directions in which measurements are required when conducting antenna proofs was declined because it would adversely affect the Bureau's ability to accurately assess adjustment of radiation patterns.

Shiben stated that ". . . the current mandatory use of type-approved antenna monitors by directional stations and the widespread use of approved sample systems permit these changes in policy at this time without endangering in any way the technical integrity of our AM broadcasting system. Nonetheless, because of the significance of these changes, we intend to proceed on an experimental basis for at least a year, gaining the benefit of practical experience, before permanently adopting them."

Copies of the letter are available from the Broadcast Facilities Division, Room 302, 1919 "M" Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20554 (Telephone Number: 202-632-6485).