

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

In the Matter of)	
)	
Political Programming and Online)	
Public File Requirements for Low)	MB Docket No. 24-147
Power Television Stations)	
)	MB Docket No. 24-148
Amendment of the Commission’s)	
Rules to Advance the Low Power)	
Television, TV Translator and Class A)	
Television Service)	

**REPLY COMMENTS OF
THE SOCIETY OF BROADCAST ENGINEERS, INC.**

The Society of Broadcast Engineers, Inc. (“SBE”)—the professional organization of television and radio engineers and those in related fields, with over 4,500 members in 116 chapters worldwide—submits these targeted reply comments on certain issues raised by comments filed thus far in response to the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (the “NPRM”)¹ in the above-captioned proceedings. SBE joins previous commenters in applauding the Commission’s efforts to revisit and reconsider the rules governing Class A, low power television (“LPTV”), and TV translator services, particularly by carefully evaluating and updating the technical regulations governing those services. As the Commission moves forward with the technical proceeding, SBE respectfully submits that it should strive to establish and maintain common-sense regulation of these secondary services that simplifies technical and administrative processes for licensees wherever possible, while simultaneously ensuring continued interference protection for existing primary services.

¹*Political Programming and Online Public File Requirements for Low Power Television Stations*, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, MB Docket No. 24-147 and *Amendment of the Commission’s Rules to Advance the Low Power Television, TV Translator and Class A Television Service*, MB Docket No. 24-148, FCC 24-65 (rel. June 10, 2024).

A. Discussion

In service of this goal to maintain straightforward, common-sense regulation of the Class A, LPTV, and TV translator services, SBE supports many of the technical changes suggested by the NPRM and other commenters in this proceeding.

Relocation of Displaced or Channel Sharing Facilities Should Be in Reference to Antenna Location, Rather than Community of License. SBE agrees with the National Association of Broadcasters (“NAB”),² and supports the NPRM’s proposal to measure the permitted distance for relocation of a displaced or channel sharing station based upon its existing antenna location rather than its community of license (“CoL”).³ As the NAB Comments note, the “geographic coordinates are specified on the station license and should form a reliable and easily identified reference point” for distance calculations, while a station’s CoL “can be difficult to obtain, may not be authoritative, and can be subject to dispute.”⁴ Further, as the NPRM notes,⁵ even if the NPRM’s separate proposal to establish standards for Class A, LPTV, and TV translator CoL designations is adopted, the antenna location would *still* provide a more precise basis of measurement for purposes of relocation distance calculations, and would have the added benefit of harmonizing the displacement and channel-sharing rules with the calculation standards for relocation of Class A, LPTV, and TV translator stations through a minor modification.⁶

² *Comments of the National Association of Broadcasters*, MB Dockets 24-147 & 24-148, 10-11 (July 29, 2024) (“NAB Comments”).

³ See NPRM ¶¶ 37-39.

⁴ NAB Comments, 11.

⁵ NPRM ¶ 39.

⁶ See 47 C.F.R. § 74.787(a)(4); NPRM ¶ 37.

All Transmitters in the Same DTS Network Should Be Required to Use the Same Emission Mask. SBE agrees with NAB, and supports the NPRM's proposal to require all transmitters in an LPTV or TV translator DTS network to employ the same emission mask, which mask may be simple, stringent, or full-service, so long as the chosen mask satisfies all necessary technical rules (and contingent on any additional restrictions the Commission may place on permissible emission masks for Channel 14 Class A, LPTV, or TV translator stations).⁷ Harmonizing emission masks across a DTS network will, again, simplify the administration of this particular use of the relevant broadcast service without unnecessarily limiting DTS operators' freedom to select the appropriate mask for their network.⁸

If the Commission Adopts a Default 1 km² Cell Size for Interference Prediction Analysis, Smaller Cell Sizes Should Continue to Be Permitted and/or Waivers Should Be Granted When Adequately Supported. Although SBE takes no position on the NPRM's proposal to establish a default one square kilometer cell size for evaluating interference to Class A, LPTV, and TV translator facilities,⁹ SBE is sympathetic to NAB's desire that stations not be precluded from relying on more granular (and thus, potentially more accurate) calculations.¹⁰

⁷ See NPRM ¶ 65; NAB Comments, 19.

⁸ SBE takes no position on the proposal to require "full service" or "stringent" emission masks for stations operating on TV channel 14. See NPRM ¶¶ 59-61.

⁹ See NPRM ¶ 69.

¹⁰ See NAB Comments, 20-22. SBE notes that there may be confusion regarding the NPRM's proposal on this point, given the NPRM's narrative use of "maximum permitted" as compared to the actual text of the proposed revisions to 47 C.F.R. § 74.793(b). Compare NPRM ¶ 69 & n.256, with *id.* at pp. 69-70 (text of proposed revision to 47 C.F.R. § 74.793). SBE's comments here focus solely on the text of the proposed revisions to 47 C.F.R. § 74.793(b) as written on pages 69 and 70 of the NPRM. To the extent the NPRM additionally proposes to preclude the use of more precise data in conducting interference analysis, SBE joins NAB's comments in opposing such a limitation.

Therefore, if the Commission chooses to adopt a default 1 km² cell size, SBE respectfully believes the Commission should make clear in the revised text of 47 C.F.R. § 74.793(b) and any other applicable rules that smaller cell sizes will continue to be permitted and/or that adequately supported requests to waive any such default 1 km² cell size will be entertained.¹¹

SBE Favors Clearer Regulatory Distinctions Between the LPTV and TV Translator Services, But Takes No Position on the NPRM’s Associated Proposals to Eliminate Current Flexibility for Stations in Those Services. SBE supports the NPRM’s efforts to better define the regulatory distinctions between LPTV and TV translator services, and agrees with NAB that stations continuously rebroadcasting another station (other than the limited categories of permitted origination for TV translators, such as 30 seconds per hour for financial support and PSAs)¹² should be classified as TV translators, while stations originating some local content should be classified as LPTV stations.¹³ SBE takes no position on the NPRM’s specific proposals to require the modification of stations’ call signs to reflect their service categorization, or to limit the frequency at which stations may change their designation from LPTV to TV translator or vice versa.¹⁴

¹¹ See NPRM ¶ 69, n.256; *id.* at pp. 69-70 (text of proposed revision to 47 C.F.R. § 74.793). For example, the Commission could repurpose the existing text of 47 C.F.R. § 73.616(d)(1) for inclusion in revised § 74.793, such as the following bolded text: “The 2 km cell size specified in § 73.620(b) is not permitted for Class A, LPTV, TV translator, DRT, and DTDRT stations, and if not specified in the application, the 1 km cell size will be assumed. **Applicants may request the use of a cell size of 0.5 km per side.**”

¹² Compare 47 C.F.R. § 74.790(f), with *id.* §§ 74.701(f) & (k).

¹³ See NAB Comments, 18.

¹⁴ See NPRM ¶¶ 52-58.

The Commission Should Carefully Reevaluate Permissible Maximum Power Levels for LPTV Stations. SBE agrees with various commenters that the Commission should investigate and reassess the current power limits set for Class A, LPTV and TV translator stations, though respectfully submits that such investigation would be better served in a separate proceeding where all services, including full-power TV stations, can be assessed holistically.¹⁵ Indeed, the Commission's recent actions to reexamine the current regulatory frameworks governing all classes of television service¹⁶—including this very proceeding—could be used as means to examine whether modifying current power limitations would allow stations to provide better service to their communities while maintaining necessary interference protections.

Conclusion

SBE once again commends the Commission for this review and update of Class A, LPTV, and TV translator regulations, and supports many of the proposed changes to technical rules that would provide straightforward, common-sense regulation of these services.

¹⁵ See *Comments of LPTV Broadcasters Association, Inc.*, MB Docket Nos. 24-147 & 24-148, 19-20 (July 29, 2024); *Comments of Advanced Television Broadcasting Alliance*, MB Docket Nos. 24-147 & 24-148, 11-12 (July 29, 2024).

¹⁶ See generally, e.g., Amendment of Part 73 of the Commission's Rules to Update Television and Class A Television Broadcast Station Rules, and Rules Applicable to All Broadcast Stations, MB Docket No. 22-227; Update of Parts 74 of the Commission's Rules Related to Low Power Television and Television Translator Stations, MB Docket No. 22-261.

Respectfully submitted,

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