

Date: Friday, January 30, 2015

Subject: FCC Issues Public Notice to Update List of Nonbroadcast Networks Subject to Video Description Requirements

The FCC's rules require multichannel video programming distributor (MVPD) systems (such as cable and satellite providers) that serve 50,000 or more subscribers to provide 50 hours of video description per calendar quarter (about four hours per week) during prime time or children's programming on each of the top five nonbroadcast networks. The FCC updates the list of top five nonbroadcast networks that are subject to the video description requirements every three years. The top five nonbroadcast networks that have been subject to the video description requirements since July 1, 2012 are USA, the Disney Channel, TNT, Nickelodeon, and TBS.

On January 7, 2015, the FCC's Media Bureau issued a Public Notice announcing the top 10 nonbroadcast networks based on 2013-2014 ratings: USA Network, ESPN, Turner Network Television (TNT), TBS Network, History, Disney Channel, Fox News Channel, Nickelodeon, A&E Network, and FX.

A nonbroadcast network may request an exemption within 30 days after publication of the Public Notice, if it believes it should be excluded from the list of top five networks because it does not air at least 50 hours of prime time programming that is not live or near-live (recorded less than 24 hours before its first airing) per calendar quarter.

On January 28, 2015, ESPN requested an exemption.

The Media Bureau will evaluate requests for exemption and announce the list of top five nonbroadcast networks that will be subject to the video description requirements. This new list of top five networks will take effect beginning July 1, 2015. For example, if ESPN is excluded and no other network files a request for exemption, the top five nonbroadcast networks would be USA, TNT, TBS, History, and the Disney Channel.

For further information, contact Maria Mullarkey at (202) 418-2120 or Maria.Mullarkey@fcc.gov.

Links to the Public Notice:

Word: https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-15-18A1.doc

PDF: https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-15-18A1.pdf

Text: https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-15-18A1.txt

Link to the ESPN request for exemption:

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=60001017386>