



## Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2005-38

Ottawa, 22 April 2005

### CALL FOR APPLICATIONS TO PROVIDE AN ALL CHANNEL ALERT (ACA) SERVICE

#### THE APPLICATION

The Commission announces that it has received an application for authority to provide an All Channel Alert (ACA) service to broadcasting distribution undertakings (BDUs) across Canada. If the application is approved, the ACA service would broadcast timely local warnings of imminent threats to life or property caused by severe weather disturbances, natural disasters or other emergencies, on behalf of authorized government agencies such as Environment Canada. These alerts would be broadcast on all channels carried by BDUs and would take the form of alphanumeric crawls.

The applicant has requested that the Commission require BDUs to broadcast the emergency alerts on every channel that they carry.

Class 1 cable and multipoint distribution systems (MDS), as well as satellite BDUs, would be required to carry the service pursuant to subsection 9(1)(h) of the *Broadcasting Act*. The ACA service would be optional for Class 2 and 3 undertakings, including licence-exempt systems.

As part of its proposal, the applicant is also seeking authority to charge a monthly wholesale subscriber fee to BDUs carrying the ACA service.

In view of the nature, scope and national implications of the proposal, the Commission has decided to call for competing applications.

#### BACKGROUND

In *Proposal for an "All Channel Alert" system – Denied*, Decision CRTC 2001-123, 23 February 2001 (Decision 2001-123), the Commission denied an application by Pelmorex Communications Inc. (Pelmorex) for amendments to its licence for The Weather Network/MétéoMédia to allow Pelmorex to establish an ACA service to be made available to all BDUs in Canada.

In Decision 2001-123, the Commission considered that an alert system similar to the one that Pelmorex proposed could effectively complement the warnings already provided by broadcasters by making available the official warnings issued by authorized government agencies such as Environment Canada. The Commission was concerned, however, about a number of aspects of the proposal, which were discussed in the decision.

The Commission was of the view, for example, that a more suitable proposal might be developed if there were closer cooperation among broadcasters, representatives of the broadcasting distribution industry and other interested parties in order to resolve the issues identified by the Commission in the decision.

## **INDUSTRY CANADA**

Industry Canada has recently established a Broadcasters' Public Alerting Working Group to provide advice regarding the design/establishment of a Canada-wide integrated network for public alerting and warning.

A preliminary Public Alerting Action Plan was presented to the second Canadian Public Alerting Forum on 2 March 2005 (see <http://spectrum.ic.gc.ca>). This preliminary Action Plan identified two specific objectives:

- The implementation of an initial public alerting system by March 2006, utilizing existing systems already in operation within Canada to the greatest extent possible.
- As a follow-on process, the implementation of a more comprehensive public alerting system over a 5 year period.

## **THE CALL**

The Commission hereby calls for applications from any other party wishing to provide an ACA service.

Persons interested in responding to this call must submit a formal application to the Commission no later than **22 July 2005**. Applicants are also required to submit all necessary technical documentation to the Department of Industry by the same date.

It should be noted that, in making this call, the Commission has not reached any conclusion with respect to whether or not to authorize an ACA service at this time.

Applicants will be required to provide evidence as to the availability of financial resources consistent with the requirements established in the financial projections of the applicant's business plan. For the convenience of applicants, the Commission has available upon request a document entitled *Documentation Required by the Commission to Support the Availability of an Applicant's Proposed Financing*.

Applicants should indicate in their submissions how they will coordinate their proposals with the activities of Industry Canada's Broadcasters' Public Alerting Working Group.

Applicants are free to define the scope of their proposed ACA service. However, applicants who are not proposing a national alerting service should address the following questions in their submissions:

- How will non-participating distribution systems be served?
- How will various suppliers interoperate?

The Commission reminds applicants that they must comply with the eligibility requirements set out in the *Direction to the CRTC (Ineligibility of Non-Canadians)*, SOR/97-192, dated 8 April 1997, as amended by SOR/98-1268, dated 15 July 1998, and the *Direction to the CRTC (Ineligibility to Hold Broadcasting Licences)*, SOR/85-627, dated 27 June 1985, as amended by SOR/97-231, dated 22 April 1997.

The Commission will announce at a later date the public process for considering applications, and where the applications may be examined by the public. As part of that process, the public will be given the opportunity to comment on any application by submitting written intervention(s) to the CRTC.

Notice of each application will also be published in newspapers of general circulation within the area to be served.

Applications filed in response to this call should be forwarded to one of the following Commission offices:

Central Building

Les Terrasses de la Chaudière  
1 Promenade du Portage, Room G-5  
Hull, Quebec K1A 0N2  
Tel: (819) 997-2429 - TDD: 994-0423  
FAX: (819) 994-0218

Toll Free Tel.: 1-877-249-2782  
E-Mail address: [procedure@crtc.gc.ca](mailto:procedure@crtc.gc.ca)

Metropolitan Place

99 Wyse Road, Suite 1410  
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia B3A 4S5  
Tel: (902) 426-7997 - TDD: 426-6997  
FAX: (902) 426-2721

205 Viger Avenue West  
Suite 504  
Montréal, Quebec H2Z 1G2  
Tel: (514) 283-6607

55 St. Clair Avenue East  
Suite 624  
Toronto, Ontario M4T 1M2  
Tel: (416) 952-9096

Kensington Building  
275 Portage Avenue  
Suite 1810  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2B3  
Tel: (204) 983-6306 - TDD: 983-8274  
FAX: (204) 983-6317

Cornwall Professional Building  
2125 - 11th Avenue  
Room 103  
Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 3X3  
Tel: (306) 780-3422  
FAX: (306) 780-3319

10405 Jasper Avenue, Suite 520  
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3N4  
Tel: (780) 495-3224

530-580 Hornby Street  
Vancouver, British Columbia V6C 3B6  
Tel: (604) 666-2111 - TDD: 666-0778  
FAX: (604) 666-8322

Secretary General

*This document is available in alternative format upon request, and may also be examined in PDF format or in HTML at the following Internet site: <http://www.crtc.gc.ca>*