



Telecom Order CRTC 2025-198

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Gatineau, 7 August 2025

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Determination of interim costs award with respect to the participation of the Deaf Wireless Canada Consultative Committee in the proceeding initiated by Broadcasting and Telecom Notice of Consultation 2025-94

Summary

The Commission is an administrative tribunal with quasi-judicial functions responsible for regulating the Canadian communications sector. To make decisions in the public interest, the Commission encourages people with a diversity of perspectives to participate in its proceedings.

In this order, the Commission approves interim costs for the Deaf Wireless Canada Consultative Committee to support its participation in Broadcasting and Telecom Notice of Consultation 2025-94. In that proceeding, the Commission is gathering views on how it can better support people, including public interest groups, to participate in its proceedings. Any applicants that receive interim costs will still be required to file for final costs to confirm that the amounts were spent.

Awarding interim costs provides groups who represent the public interest with funding up front, which can help support their participation and encourage broader participation from those who might otherwise not participate.

Background

1. In Broadcasting and Telecom Notice of Consultation 2025-94, the Commission created a simplified process for the award of costs to encourage broader participation. All costs applications are being reviewed and processed using the telecommunications costs process.
2. Applicants must demonstrate that they meet most of the criteria for interim costs awards set out in section 63 of the *Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission Rules of Practice and Procedure*. Specifically, they must show that they will represent a group or class of subscribers that has an interest in the outcome of the proceeding and that they can assist the Commission in developing a better understanding of the matters to be considered. They must also undertake to participate in the proceeding in a responsible way. However, applicants do not need to show that they have insufficient financial resources to participate effectively in the proceeding without these costs.

3. The Commission named the following parties as the most likely parties to be required to pay any interim costs awarded by the Commission (costs respondents):
 - Bell Canada;
 - Cogeco Connexion Inc.;
 - Quebecor Media Inc.;
 - Rogers Communications Canada Inc. (Rogers);
 - Saskatchewan Telecommunications; and
 - TELUS Communications Inc. (TELUS).

Application

4. The Deaf Wireless Canada Consultative Committee (DWCC) applied for interim costs with respect to its participation in Broadcasting and Telecom Notice of Consultation 2025-94 (the proceeding). In the proceeding, the Commission is gathering views on how it can better support people, including public interest groups, to participate in its proceedings.
5. The DWCC submitted that it meets the simplified criteria for interim costs set out in Broadcasting and Telecom Notice of Consultation 2025-94.
6. The DWCC is a not-for-profit-organization with an interest in and focus on telecommunications and wireless issues. The DWCC submitted that it represents the interests of Deaf, Deafblind, and Hard-of-Hearing (DDBHH) Canadians, which are a particular, specific, and distinct group. The DWCC also explained that its mandate is to advocate for accessible wireless communications equality for DDBHH Canadians.
7. The DWCC submitted that it will represent DDBHH Canadians by researching and analyzing the group's historical involvement in the Commission's public proceedings, engaging with DDBHH community stakeholders, and evaluating the public record through an accessibility lens. The DWCC also noted that it has a strong interest in the development of a regulatory policy that would make it easier for consumers to participate in public proceedings while also ensuring fair, equal, and accessible participation by DDBHH Canadians. Such a policy would include funding to support the participation of DDBHH Canadians in the proceedings.
8. The DWCC requested that the Commission fix its interim costs at \$22,940.00, consisting of \$15,600 for consultant, research, and analyst fees and \$7,340.00 for interpretation services.
9. The DWCC claimed that these interim costs will enable it to hire a five-person team for a period of 5 months that will conduct the required research and prepare its submissions.
10. The DWCC submitted that responsibility for payment should be shared proportionately among all costs respondents based on their telecommunications

operating revenues (TORs) as is the Commission's practice; however, if residual funds are available through the Broadcasting Participation Fund (BPF), the DWCC would welcome partial compensation from that source as well.

Answer

11. TELUS filed an intervention, dated 23 June 2025, in response to the applications submitted by the Canadian Anti-Monopoly Project, the DWCC, and the Public Interest Advocacy Centre. TELUS did not object to the DWCC's eligibility for interim costs or the amount claimed. It did, however, argue that the Commission should call on the BPF to review costs and provide up to 50% of the claimed amount because the proceeding concerns both telecommunications and broadcasting. Rogers also replied and did not object to the DWCC's interim costs application.

Commission's analysis

12. The Commission considers that the DWCC demonstrated that it meets the streamlined criteria set out in Broadcasting and Telecom Notice of Consultation 2025-94. More specifically, the DWCC represents a broad range of views and the interests of DDBHH Canadians, which will contribute to a better understanding of the matters being considered by the Commission.
13. Moreover, the DWCC has proposed to use the interim funds it receives to:
 - research and analyze the historical involvement of DDBHH organizations in Commission proceedings,
 - develop formal submissions (intervention and reply),
 - evaluate the public record from an accessibility lens, and
 - engage with DDBHH community stakeholders, which includes the use of interpretive services.
14. The rates claimed for interim costs are generally in accordance with the rates established in the *Guidelines for the Assessment of Costs* as set out in Telecom Regulatory Policy 2010-963. The Commission finds that the total interim amount claimed by the DWCC should be allowed.
15. The Commission notes that the DWCC must be able to collect any awarded interim costs in a timely manner to participate effectively in the proceeding. Given the circumstances, the Commission considers it appropriate to limit the interim costs respondents to those previously identified in paragraph 3.
16. Regarding TELUS's proposal to have BPF provide 50% of the costs in the proceeding, the Commission determined that it would be more efficient from an administrative standpoint to rely exclusively on the telecom costs regime to determine how to award interim costs. While the Commission has split costs between the BPF and its own telecom costs award process for combined proceedings

in the past, it is not necessary to do so in the proceeding because the issues are so intertwined.

17. Consistent with its practice, the Commission considers it appropriate to allocate the responsibility for payment of costs among costs respondents based on their TORs as an indicator of the relative size and interest of the parties involved in the proceeding.¹
18. As set out in Telecom Order 2015-160, the Commission considers \$1,000 to be the minimum amount that a costs respondent should be required to pay due to the administrative burden that small costs awards impose on both the applicant and costs respondents.
19. Accordingly, the Commission finds that the responsibility for payment of interim costs should be allocated as follows:²

Company	Proportion	Amount
Rogers ³	38.43%	\$8,815.96
TELUS	32.62%	\$7,482.40
Bell Canada	21.70%	\$4,978.90
Quebecor Media Inc.	7.25%	\$1,662.74

20. The DWCC will need to apply for final costs at the end of the proceeding. This means that the DWCC will be required to demonstrate how it assisted the Commission in developing a better understanding of the matters to be considered, account for the amount claimed using written documentation, and demonstrate that it spent the funds provided responsibly. At that time, the Commission will consider how to allocate costs amongst costs respondents most appropriately. The costs respondents will bear the costs of any reallocation as appropriate.

¹ TORs consist of Canadian telecommunications revenues from local and access, long distance, data, private line, Internet, and wireless services.

² In this order, the Commission has used the 2023 TORs of the costs respondents based on their most recent audited financial statements.

³ The Commission notes that since the 2023 TORs were reported, ownership transactions have changed the makeup of Rogers. As a result, Shaw Group's and Shaw Telecom G.P.'s TORs have been added to Rogers'.

Directions regarding costs

21. The Commission approves the application by the DWCC for interim costs with respect to its participation in the proceeding.
22. Pursuant to subsection 56(1) of the *Telecommunications Act*, the Commission fixes the costs to be paid to the DWCC at \$22,940.00.
23. The Commission directs that the award of interim costs to the DWCC be paid forthwith by Rogers Communications Canada Inc., TELUS Communications Inc., Bell Canada, and Quebecor Media Inc. according to the proportions set out in paragraph 19.
24. The DWCC is directed to file an application for final costs no later than 30 days after the close of the record in the proceeding.

Secretary General

Related documents

- *Call for comments – A new approach to funding public interest participation in Commission proceedings*, Broadcasting and Telecom Notice of Consultation CRTC 2025-94, 12 May 2025
- *Determination of costs award with respect to the participation of the Ontario Video Relay Service Committee in the proceeding initiated by Telecom Notice of Consultation 2014-188*, Telecom Order CRTC 2015-160, 23 April 2015
- *Revision of CRTC costs award practices and procedures*, Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2010-963, 23 December 2010