



Telecom Order CRTC 2025-206

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Reference: 2020-256

Gatineau, 14 August 2025

Public record: 1011-NOC2019-0191

Broadband Fund – Change request – Broadband Communications North Inc.’s Manitoba satellite project – August 2025

Summary

Canadians need reliable, affordable, and high-quality Internet and cellphone services for every part of their daily lives.

Through its Broadband Fund, the Commission contributes to a broad effort by federal, provincial, and territorial governments to address the gap in connectivity in underserved rural, remote, and Indigenous communities across Canada.

With this order, the Commission conditionally approves an extension of funding for Broadband Communications North Inc. to cover satellite operational costs until 31 March 2026 in order to serve eight eligible satellite-dependent communities in Manitoba: Barren Lands, Bloodvein, Gods River, Lac Brochet, Poplar River, Pukatawagan, Shamattawa First Nation, and Tadoule Lake.

Background

1. In Telecom Regulatory Policy 2018-377, the Commission set out objectives and governing frameworks for the Broadband Fund. In the Application Guide appended to Telecom Notice of Consultation 2019-191, which initiated the first call for Broadband Fund applications, the Commission defined a material change as including a major change in the cost or scope of a project or in the nature or location of a project.
2. Broadband Communications North Inc. (BCN) participated in the first call for Broadband Fund applications. In Telecom Decision 2020-256, BCN received approval for its funding application. The approved application supports improving and operating satellite capacity for five eligible satellite-dependent communities in Manitoba.
3. The Commission later received written acceptance of the funding award from BCN and approved BCN’s related statement of work in Telecom Order 2021-133, subject to the conditions of funding set out in Telecom Decision 2020-256.
4. Among the conditions of funding is the requirement, set out in paragraph 13 of Telecom Decision 2020-256, that any material changes to the project be approved by the Commission. An application for a material change is known as a change request.

Change requests

5. Telecom Decision 2020-256 was issued on 12 August 2020. The funding for this project was originally expected to end by 31 March 2024.
6. In Telecom Order 2024-145, the Commission approved BCN's change request for additional funding to continue subsidizing operational costs for satellite capacity, bringing the funding amount to \$8,224,147 to maintain service continuity until the fall of 2025.
7. On 10 July 2025, BCN submitted another change request for its project, and continued to provide related documentation up until 6 August 2025. Specifically, BCN requested a project extension, additional funding for satellite operational costs, and an expanded project scope to include satellite capacity that would serve additional communities.

Commission's analysis

8. The Commission has reviewed the documents submitted with the change request, including those submitted confidentially.¹
9. The Commission has expedited its decision on this change request due to the expiry, on 15 August 2025, of an alternative source of funding for the requested additional communities. Without that funding, BCN's customers in those communities, including anchor institutions such as health care centres and schools, could lose their broadband service.
10. The Commission considers that approving BCN's change request in whole would not align with the objectives identified by the approach set out in Telecom Regulatory Policy 2018-377 because the extent of changes requested goes beyond what would constitute a material change to this project. However, BCN's change request includes eight eligible satellite-dependent communities in Manitoba. In these communities, BCN's customers include 94 households and 29 anchor institutions, such as health care centres and schools. There is a public interest in ensuring service continuity to these customers and allowing for timely notification to customers if service is to be discontinued.
11. Accordingly, the Commission considers it appropriate to provide an extension of funding for BCN to cover satellite operational costs until 31 March 2026 in the following eight eligible satellite-dependent communities in Manitoba: Barren Lands, Lac Brochet, Pukatawagan, Shamattawa First Nation, and Tadoule Lake (as approved in Telecom Decision 2020-256), as well as Bloodvein, Gods River, and Poplar River (the additional communities).

Conclusion

12. The Commission conditionally approves BCN's change request, granting a temporary extension of operational funding for eight eligible satellite-dependent communities. This

¹ Detailed operational information in respect of funded Broadband Fund projects is generally treated as confidential. See Telecom Regulatory Policy 2018-377, paragraphs 405–408, and section 11 (“Confidentiality”) of the Application Guide cited in paragraph 1 of this order.

approval is subject to BCN's compliance with the conditions set out below. In addition, all funding conditions and conditions imposed under section 24 of the *Telecommunications Act*, as set out in Telecom Decision 2020-256 continue to apply.

13. Final approval of BCN's change request is subject to the following conditions:

- within **10 business days** of publication of this order, BCN must:
 - confirm that it accepts the additional funding; and
 - submit the required funding amount to the Commission.

14. The following condition of funding applies:

- by **31 December 2025**, BCN must provide evidence that its customers in the eight eligible satellite-dependent communities have been notified of any service termination that may occur once funding ends on 31 March 2026.

15. BCN must submit a new signed agreement with the satellite service provider for Commission review prior to submitting claims for reimbursement.

16. The Commission also reminds BCN of the condition of funding set out in Telecom Decision 2020-256, at paragraph 12: "If it receives any additional funding for the project from any source, BCN must notify the Commission in writing as soon as possible, and no later than **10 days** after receiving the funding. The Commission may proportionately reduce the amount of funding it has approved."

Related documents

- *Broadband Fund – Change request – Broadband Communications North Inc.'s Manitoba satellite project*, Telecom Order CRTC 2024-145, 28 June 2024
- *Broadband Fund – Acceptance of statement of work for Broadband Communications North Inc.'s Manitoba satellite project*, Telecom Order CRTC 2021-133, 16 April 2021
- *Broadband Fund – Project funding approval for Broadband Communications North Inc.'s Manitoba satellite project*, Telecom Decision CRTC 2020-256, 12 August 2020
- *Broadband Fund – Call for applications*, Telecom Notice of Consultation CRTC 2019-191, 3 June 2019
- *Development of the Commission's Broadband Fund*, Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2018-377, 27 September 2018