



Telecom Order CRTC 2025-292

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Gatineau, 13 November 2025

Public record: Tariff Notice 7718

Bell Canada – Addition of exchanges to Service Provided in Out-of-Footprint Territory

Summary

Canadians need access to reliable, affordable, and high-quality telecommunications services for every part of their daily lives.

In this order, the Commission ensures that Bell Canada's customers will have access to local voice services offered over fibre technology in Connaught, Earlton, Englehart, Iroquois Falls, Kamiskotia, Larder Lake, Latchford, Matheson, Ramore and Virginiatown, Ontario.

The Commission approves Bell Canada's tariff application to reflect its offering of regulated exchange services outside of its incumbent territory but within the territory of its affiliate, NorthernTel, Limited Partnership, to include the 10 new exchanges.

A dissenting opinion by Commissioner Bram Abramson is attached to this order.

Application

1. On 21 May 2025, the Commission received an application from Bell Canada proposing changes to Item 12 – Service Provided in Out-of-Footprint Territory of its General Tariff.
2. Specifically, Bell Canada proposed to add 10 new residential exchanges located in the incumbent territory of NorthernTel, Limited Partnership (NorthernTel) in Ontario. The proposed exchanges would be located in the following communities: Connaught, Earlton, Englehart, Iroquois Falls, Kamiskotia, Larder Lake, Latchford, Matheson, Ramore, and Virginiatown.
3. Bell Canada noted that, in Telecom Order 2024-74, the Commission found that it would be appropriate for the company to file tariffs for services it offers outside of its own territory but within the territory of its affiliate, Télébec, société en commandite (Télébec), where such services would be regulated for Télébec. Bell Canada further noted that its application to introduce Item 12 – Service Provided in Out-of-Footprint Territory to its General Tariff was approved in Telecom Order 2024-214.

4. In its application, Bell Canada submitted that it would offer regulated residential primary exchange service (PES) in the 10 proposed exchanges using its own fibre-to-the-home (FTTH) network infrastructure. All services would be provisioned and billed through Bell Canada's existing systems, and Bell Canada indicated that no material changes to operational processes would be required.
5. Bell Canada noted that it is not proposing the introduction of a new service, but rather an extension of an existing approved offering into additional areas. Bell Canada affirmed that the services to be provided in these NorthernTel exchanges are identical to those it offers in its incumbent territory in Ontario and other out-of-footprint areas already approved under Item 12 of its General Tariff.
6. Furthermore, Bell Canada proposed the following changes to Item 12 – Service Provided in Out-of-Footprint Territory of its General Tariff:
 - For optional calling features, Bell Canada proposed to offer Voice Dialing, Call Control, and Call Privacy to subscribers in the newly added exchanges. While these features are not offered by NorthernTel because it is not technically feasible or economical to do so, Bell Canada submitted that these services are already available across its FTTH platform and can be provided without incremental unrecovered cost. The proposal mirrors the approach previously approved in Telecom Order 2024-214 for Bell Canada's out-of-footprint customers in Télébec's incumbent territory. The rate for Voice Dialing is \$5 per month, while Call Control and Call Privacy fall within Commission-approved rate ranges.
 - For residential PES, which is classified as a basket 1 service, Bell Canada proposed to adopt the Commission-approved rates for NorthernTel's residential PES rather than applying its own Ontario rates. According to Bell Canada, this ensures consistency for consumers within the NorthernTel service area and maintains compliance with rate limitations under the price cap framework.
 - For services falling under basket 3, Bell Canada noted that rates are generally frozen. For Enhanced 9-1-1 (E9-1-1), Bell Canada proposed to apply the E9-1-1 rate currently charged to residential customers of its FTTH voice services in Ontario and Quebec, including those in the operating territories of DMTS and KMTS, divisions of Bell Canada, and Télébec. This approach was approved in Telecom Decision 2024-73. Bell Canada submitted that extending this treatment to the NorthernTel exchanges is both operationally practical and consistent with Commission precedent. For its message relay service, Bell Canada submitted that the rate would be \$0.13, the Commission-approved rate for Bell Canada. Toll restriction will be offered free of charge. NorthernTel also provides toll restriction free of charge; however, they charge a deactivation fee of \$10.

- For services falling under basket 4, Bell Canada indicated that it will apply its own Ontario tariffed rates, as permitted by the price cap rules.
 - Bell Canada also proposed changes to its General Tariff (revised pages 39A and 39C, and added page 39D) to incorporate the addition of 10 NorthernTel exchanges, referencing the applicable NorthernTel tariff (CRTC 25510) for residential PES, to ensure consistency with the Commission’s direction regarding out-of-footprint services.
7. Bell Canada requested an effective date of 1 October 2025.
 8. The Commission did not receive any interventions with regard to the application.

Commission’s analysis

9. Bell Canada’s application is consistent with the Commission’s determinations in Telecom Decision 2024-73, which addressed the alignment of E9-1-1 rates and confirmed that tariffed services filed by a Canadian carrier for services offered in an affiliate’s incumbent territory are to be assessed as though filed by the incumbent local exchange carrier itself. Bell Canada has filed the present application in accordance with the price cap regime applicable to NorthernTel, as outlined in Telecom Regulatory Policy 2013-160, and has provided attestations confirming full compliance with the applicable basket and rate-element constraints.
10. The Commission is of the view that Bell Canada’s proposal is appropriate. By leveraging its own FTTH network within NorthernTel’s territory, Bell Canada avoids the need for integration with legacy systems, helping to ensure technical compatibility and operational simplicity. This approach eliminates the requirement for grandfathering, customer migration, or transitional arrangements, since the proposal pertains to areas that currently lack Bell Canada’s regulated residential service.
11. Bell Canada also confirmed that its proposed rates comply with basket-specific constraints under the price cap framework, and it has filed the appropriate attestations to that effect.
12. The Commission has consistently approved proposals to expand regulated services in affiliate territories when such proposals align with established regulatory treatment and maintain a consistent customer experience.¹ Bell Canada’s application does not introduce any new policy or operational concerns.

¹ See Telecom Order 2025-115, Telecom Order 2024-214, and Telecom Decision 2024-73.

Conclusion

13. In light of all of the above, the Commission approves, by majority decision, Bell Canada's application.
14. Revised tariff pages are to be issued within 10 calendar days of the date of this order. Revised tariff pages can be submitted to the Commission without a description page or a request for approval; a tariff application is not required.

Secretary General

Related documents

- *Consolidated applications to review and vary Telecom Regulatory Policy 2024-180*, Telecom Decision CRTC 2025-154, 20 June 2025
- *Bell Canada – Tariff Notice 7710 – Service Provided in Out-of-Footprint Territory*, Telecom Order CRTC 2025-115, 21 May 2025
- *Bell Canada – Tariff Notice 7692 – Introduction of Service Provided in Out-of-Footprint Territory*, Telecom Order CRTC 2024-214, 20 September 2024
- *Competition in Canada's Internet service markets*, Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2024-180, 13 August 2024
- *Télébec, Société en commandite – Application to restructure segmented service charges for telephone number reservation service*, Telecom Decision CRTC 2024-75, 8 April 2024
- *Télébec, Société en commandite – Introduction of Fibre to the Home and Business*, Telecom Order CRTC 2024-74, 8 April 2024
- *Bell Canada – Application to align 9-1-1 fees in the operating territories of Bell Canada's affiliated carriers*, Telecom Decision CRTC 2024-73, 8 April 2024
- *Modern telecommunications services – The path forward for Canada's digital economy*, Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2016-496, 21 December 2016
- *Regulatory framework for the small incumbent local exchange carriers and related matters*, Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2013-160, 28 March 2013

Dissenting opinion of Commissioner Bram Abramson

1. For more than 20 years, the Commission has required the largest incumbent local exchange carriers (ILECs) and cable carriers to provide wholesale high-speed access (HSA) services.¹ We have maintained that these services are important to fostering Internet service competition in markets where there is enduring market power.²
2. So, too, have those who frame the policies we are to implement. The Commission is required to maintain a regulatory framework mandating the provision of wholesale fixed-network access at just and reasonable rates. We are likewise obliged to apply that framework “equitably”.³ I dissent from the Telecommunications Committee’s majority decision⁴ because, in my view, it fails to meet that obligation.
3. Since last year, the Commission has “consistently”—that is, twice⁵—expanded regulated services in affiliate territories without addressing HSA. I dissented both times. Tariffing affiliated ILEC brands separately should not enable regulatory arbitrage, least of all to avoid obligations that might otherwise apply.⁶
4. Here, too. Wherever Bell Canada is the ILEC of record, it must meet HSA obligations, either currently or by 2029.⁷ But Bell also now owns and runs fibre in areas where its affiliate is the ILEC of record. In Telecom Orders 2024-214 and 2025-115, and again here, the Telecommunications Committee rightly ensured Bell will still offer, now under its main brand, wireline voice services in those affiliated territories. We should take the same care to clarify whether Bell’s HSA obligations carry over to the fibre it deploys in out-of-footprint territories. After all, a shift in

¹ See, e.g., Telecom Regulatory Policy 2024-180.

² See, e.g., Telecom Decision 2025-154.

³ *Order issuing a direction to the CRTC on a renewed approach to telecommunications policy*, SOR/2023-23, 10 February 2023, sections 9 and 13.

⁴ On behalf of the Commission: *Telecommunications Committee*, By-Law No. 10 (CRTC), paragraph (e) (“[a]ny act or thing done by the Telecommunications Committee shall be deemed to be an act or thing done by the members [...]”), pursuant to paragraph 11(1)(b) and subsection 12(3) of the *Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission Act* (duties delegated to standing committees by by-law). Delegation to standing committees, whose remit is made explicit through by-law, may be distinguished from other forms of delegation, like the assignment of particular files and of panels to those files (*Shoan v. Canada [Attorney General]*, 2016 FCA 261, para 6).

⁵ Telecom Orders 2024-214 and 2025-115. The other decision cited in paragraph 12 of the majority’s decision was, rather, part of a trio of same-day decisions that invited the framework then laid down in Telecom Order 2024-214 and expanded upon in Telecom Order 2025-115 and, now, this decision: Telecom Orders 2024-73, 2024-74, and 2024-75, aligning tariffed rates but requiring out-of-footprint tariffs in respect of fibre-based services.

⁶ See dissents attached to Telecom Orders 2024-214, at paragraph 9, and 2025-115, at paragraphs 5 to 6.

⁷ Telecom Regulatory Policy 2024-180, paragraph 57.

regulatory focus from wireline voice to broadband access is the very change we've committed to.⁸

5. Whether it is equitable for our HSA framework to distinguish Bell Canada from its affiliated ILEC brands is an open question. But the case where Bell Canada itself owns and operates the fibre seems the most straightforward part of the question, and the most urgent to clarify.
6. It is not too late. Much of this fibre is likely new, meaning HSA obligations will not apply until 12 August 2029. For reasons of equity and clarity, we should not wait that long.

⁸ Telecom Regulatory Policy 2016-496, paragraph 51.