



Telecom Order CRTC 2025-49

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Reference: 2021-48

Gatineau, 19 February 2025

Public record: 1011-NOC2019-0372

Broadband Fund – Change request – Rogers Communications Canada Inc.’s Ontario transport fibre project – February 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 approves Rogers Communications Canada Inc.’s request to postpone the completion date for its transport fibre project in Bruce Station, Ontario.

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 2019-372, which initiated the second call for Broadband Fund applications, the Commission defined a material change as including a major change in the cost or scope of a project.
2. Rogers Communications Canada Inc. (RCCI) participated in the second call for Broadband Fund applications. In Telecom Decision 2021-48, RCCI received approval for its funding application. The approved application supports a project to construct and upgrade transport infrastructure in Bruce Station, Ontario.
3. The Commission later received written acceptance of the funding award from RCCI and approved RCCI’s related statement of work in Telecom Order 2021-401, subject to the conditions of funding set out in Telecom Decision 2021-48.
4. Among the conditions of funding is the requirement, set out in paragraph 13 of Telecom Decision 2021-48, 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. The Application Guide appended to Telecom Notice of Consultation 2019-372 stipulated the Commission's expectation that projects be completed within three years of the funding award. Telecom Decision 2021-48 was issued on 4 February 2021, creating an expectation that this project be completed by 4 February 2024.
6. In Telecom Order 2024-16, the Commission approved a change request from RCCI to delay the project's internal completion date by six months. The additional time was needed to mitigate the discovery of asbestos at one of the project sites. This approval did not affect the 4 February 2024 expected completion date.
7. In Telecom Order 2024-140, the Commission approved a second change request from RCCI to delay the project's completion by an additional 10.5 months. The additional time was needed due to unforeseen infrastructure upgrade requirements and other factors relating to commercial negotiations with third parties. This approval did affect the expected completion date, which Telecom Order 2024-140 therefore extended to the end of fall 2024.
8. On 14 November 2024, RCCI submitted a third change request. In this request, RCCI is seeking an additional seven months to complete the project by early summer 2025. RCCI stated that the additional time is needed due to factors that it requested remain confidential, which relate to a third-party general contractor for the project.

Commission's analysis

9. The Commission has reviewed the documents submitted with the change request, including those submitted confidentially.¹ The Commission underlines the importance of addressing connectivity gaps quickly by completing Broadband Fund projects in a timely manner.
10. The Commission considers that, under the circumstances, the revised timeline is reasonable and necessary due to circumstances beyond RCCI's control. Accordingly, the Commission considers that approving the change request would satisfy the objectives identified by the approach set out in Telecom Regulatory Policy 2018-377.
11. The Commission notes that the change request was submitted only a few days before the project's expected completion date. The Commission reminds all parties that any change requests relating to material timing changes should be submitted in a timely fashion and must take existing timeline expectations into account.

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.

Conclusion

12. The Commission approves RCCI's change request and expects that the project be completed by the end of June 2025. All funding conditions and conditions imposed under section 24 of the *Telecommunications Act*, as set out in Telecom Decision 2021-48, continue to apply.

Secretary General

Related documents

- *Broadband Fund – Change request – Rogers Communications Canada Inc.'s Ontario transport fibre project – June 2024*, Telecom Order CRTC 2024-140, 27 June 2024
- *Broadband Fund – Change request – Rogers Communications Canada Inc.'s Ontario transport fibre project*, Telecom Order CRTC 2024-16, 17 January 2024
- *Broadband Fund – Acceptance of statement of work for Rogers Communications Canada Inc.'s Ontario transport fibre project*, Telecom Order CRTC 2021-401, 8 December 2021
- *Broadband Fund – Project funding approval for Rogers Communications Canada Inc.'s Ontario transport fibre project*, Telecom Decision CRTC 2021-48, 4 February 2021
- *Broadband Fund – Second call for applications*, Telecom Notice of Consultation CRTC 2019-372, 13 November 2019; as amended by Telecom Notices of Consultation CRTC 2019-372-1, 20 March 2020; and 2019-372-2, 27 April 2020
- *Development of the Commission's Broadband Fund*, Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2018-377, 27 September 2018