



Telecom Order CRTC 2026-146

PDF version

Gatineau, 22 June 2026

File numbers: 1011-NOC2024-0318 and 4754-828

Determination of costs award with respect to the participation of the Public Interest Advocacy Centre in the proceeding initiated by Telecom Notice of Consultation 2024-318

Application

1. By letter dated 3 October 2025, the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) applied for costs with respect to its participation in the proceeding initiated by Telecom Notice of Consultation 2024-318 (the proceeding). In the proceeding, the Commission sought comments on making shopping for home Internet services easier for Canadians.
2. The Commission did not receive any interventions in response to the application for costs.
3. PIAC submitted that it had met the criteria for an award of costs set out in section 68 of the *Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission Rules of Practice and Procedure* (the Rules of Procedure) because it represented a group or class of subscribers that had an interest in the outcome of the proceeding, it had assisted the Commission in developing a better understanding of the matters that were considered, and it had participated in a responsible way.
4. In particular, PIAC submitted that it represents the interests of all consumers across Canada, with a particular focus on low-income and vulnerable consumers.
5. PIAC requested that the Commission fix its costs at \$18,890.51, consisting of \$18,185.23 in legal fees and \$705.28 in disbursements for hotel accommodation, travel costs, and meals for the hearing phase of the proceeding. PIAC filed a bill of costs with its application.
6. PIAC claimed 37.3 hours at the rate of \$250 per hour, plus allowable Ontario Harmonized Sales Tax (HST), for one external senior legal counsel to review the file, prepare interventions and reply comments, prepare for the hearing, and draft a response to a procedural request. PIAC also claimed 1.1 hours at the rate of \$290 per hour, plus allowable HST, for another external senior legal counsel to conduct file review.
7. PIAC claimed 11.75 days at the rate of \$235 per day for two in-house articling students to review the file, conduct legal research, prepare request for information comments and reply comments, prepare for the hearing, and attend the hearing. Finally, PIAC also claimed 9 days at the rate of

\$600 per day for an in-house legal counsel to review the file, conduct legal research, prepare request for information reply comments, prepare the final submission and prepare for the hearing.

8. PIAC submitted that the telecommunications service providers that participated in the proceeding are the appropriate parties to be required to pay any costs awarded by the Commission (the costs respondents). PIAC also submitted that it would be appropriate to allocate responsibility for costs among cost respondents based on the most recent operating revenues and data available to the Commission, to remain consistent with the Commission's practice as set out in Telecom Regulatory Policy 2010-963.

Commission's analysis

9. The criteria for an award of costs are set out in section 68 of the Rules of Procedure, which reads as follows:
 68. The Commission must determine whether to award final costs and the maximum percentage of costs that is to be awarded on the basis of the following criteria:
 - (a) whether the applicant had, or was the representative of a group or a class of subscribers that had, an interest in the outcome of the proceeding;
 - (b) the extent to which the applicant assisted the Commission in developing a better understanding of the matters that were considered; and
 - (c) whether the applicant participated in the proceeding in a responsible way.
10. In Telecom Information Bulletin 2016-188, the Commission provided guidance regarding how an applicant may demonstrate that it satisfies the first criterion with respect to its representation of interested subscribers. In the present case, PIAC has demonstrated that it meets this requirement. PIAC submitted it represents the interests of Canadian consumers, and that this group has an interest in the proceeding.
11. PIAC has also satisfied the remaining criteria through its participation in the proceeding. In particular, PIAC's submissions helped the Commission develop a better understanding of the matters considered in the proceeding, both through its written and oral submissions. PIAC advocated for simplified educational tools for consumers and requiring Internet service providers to provide specific information in a standardized form and manner. PIAC also submitted that it participated in a responsible way by having complied with the Rules of Procedure, and having respected the deadlines and processes set out for the proceeding.
12. The rates claimed in respect of legal fees are 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 amount claimed by PIAC was necessarily and reasonably incurred and should be allowed.

13. The Commission has generally determined that the appropriate costs respondents to an award of costs are the parties that have a significant interest in the outcome of the proceeding in question and have participated actively in that proceeding. The Commission considers that the following parties had a significant interest in the outcome of the proceeding and participated actively throughout the proceeding: Bell Canada; Bragg Communications Inc., carrying on business as Eastlink; Cogeco Connexion Inc.; Quebecor Media Inc., on behalf of Videotron Ltd. and Freedom Mobile Inc. and their brands Fizz and VMedia (Quebecor); Rogers Communications Canada Inc., including Shaw Telecom G.P. and Groupe Shaw Group (Rogers); Saskatchewan Telecommunications; TekSavvy Solutions Inc.; TELUS Communications Inc. (TELUS); and Xplore Inc.
14. The Commission considers that, consistent with its practice, it is appropriate to allocate the responsibility for payment of costs among costs respondents based on their telecommunications operating revenues (TORs) as an indicator of the relative size and interest of the parties involved in the proceeding.¹
15. However, 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.
16. Accordingly, the Commission finds that the responsibility for payment of costs should be allocated as follows:²

Company	Proportion	Amount
Rogers	36.36 %	\$ 6,868.59
TELUS	31.47 %	\$ 5,944.84
Bell Canada	20.20%	\$ 3,815.88
Quebecor	11.97 %	\$ 2,261.20

Directions regarding costs

17. The Commission approves the application by PIAC for costs with respect to its participation in the proceeding.

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 TORs of the costs respondents based on their most recent audited financial statements. However, the 2025 TORs are not readily available to the Commission, so the 2024 TORs were used.

18. Pursuant to subsection 56(1) of the *Telecommunications Act*, the Commission fixes the costs to be paid to PIAC at \$18,890.51.
19. The Commission directs that the award of costs to PIAC 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 16.

Secretary General

Related documents

- *Notice of hearing - Making it easier for consumers to shop for Internet services*, Telecom Notice of Consultation CRTC 2024-318, 4 December 2024, as amended by Telecom Notices of Consultation CRTC 2024-318-1, 14 February 2025; 2024-318-2, 28 February 2025; 2024-318-3, 17 June 2025; and 2024-318-4, 24 July 2025
- *Guidance for costs award applicants regarding representation of a group or a class of subscribers*, Telecom Information Bulletin CRTC 2016-188, 17 May 2016
- *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