Telecom Order CRTC 2026-165

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Gatineau, 9 July 2026

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Determination of costs award with respect to the participation of the Deaf Wireless Canada Consultative Committee in the proceeding initiated by Telecom and Broadcasting Notice of Consultation 2025-227

Application

1. By letter dated 15 January 2026, the Deaf Wireless Canada Consultative Committee (DWCC) applied for costs with respect to its participation in the proceeding initiated by Telecom and Broadcasting Notice of Consultation 2025-227 (the proceeding). In the proceeding, the Commission sought to help make it easier for Canadians to know what to expect from their Internet, cellphone, telephone, or television service providers in the event of a service outage or disruption. The Commission looked to consider additional consumer protections, including clearer communications from service providers during outages and refunds for lost services.

2. The Commission did not receive any interventions in response to the application for costs.

3. The DWCC 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. With respect to the group or class of subscribers that the DWCC has submitted it represents, the DWCC explained that it represents the interests of Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing (DDBHH) Canadians. The DWCC added that it advocates for equitable and accessible telecommunications services, particularly for consumers who rely on visual and text-based communication modalities as their primary means of access. With respect to the specific methods by which the DWCC has submitted that it represents this group or class, the DWCC explained that it provided perspectives not addressed by telecommunications service providers regarding the loss of video communication, relay services, real-time text, emergency access, and accessible notifications. The DWCC also submitted that it assisted the Commission in understanding how outage protections must operate to avoid creating or perpetuating accessibility barriers.

5. The DWCC requested that the Commission fix its costs at $19,350, consisting entirely of consultant fees. The DWCC filed a bill of costs with its application.

6. The DWCC claimed 80 hours at a rate of $225 per hour for a first senior consultant to review the file, prepare the costs application, intervention, and reply, and conduct case management. The DWCC also claimed 6 hours at a rate of $225 per hour for a second senior consultant to prepare the intervention.

7. The DWCC 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).

Request for information

8. In order to address certain commonalities in the DWCC's approach to costs applications in this and various other proceedings, on 26 March 2026, Commission staff sent a request for information to the DWCC to seek further clarity on these common issues.

9. On 9 April 2026, the DWCC replied, providing additional information on its processes and how they impact its costs applications. The DWCC explained why and when it uses multiple consultants, how it utilizes external resources, and why infographics and visual materials are incorporated into its submissions. The DWCC also provided additional information regarding how its participation in various recent Commission proceedings, including the present one, demonstrates that accessibility-focused participation is necessary to ensure that the Commission has a complete record.

Commission's analysis

10. 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.

11. 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, the DWCC has demonstrated that it meets this requirement. The DWCC represents the interests of DDBHH Canadians, and in particular,

consumers who rely on visual and text-based communication modalities as their primary means of access.

12. The DWCC has also satisfied the remaining criteria through its participation in the proceeding. The DWCC's submissions assisted the Commission in developing a better understanding of the matters that were considered by providing an accessibility lens, illustrating that service outages are not merely a consumer inconvenience but a functional communication failure with direct accessibility and public-safety implications for DDBHH users. The DWCC also participated in a responsible way.

13. The DWCC's response to the request for information provided the Commission with additional clarification. This helped the Commission to better understand why the DWCC's processes are unique compared to those of other interveners, which may lead to a different number of consultants and hours required to participate in and contribute to the Commission's proceedings.

14. The rates claimed in respect of consultant 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 the DWCC was necessarily and reasonably incurred and should be allowed.

15. This is an appropriate case in which to fix the costs and dispense with taxation, in accordance with the streamlined procedure set out in Telecom Public Notice 2002-5.

16. 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 in the proceeding: Bell Canada; Bragg Communications Inc., carrying on business as Eastlink; Cogeco Communications Inc.; Iristel Inc.; Quebecor Media Inc.; on behalf of its affiliates Freedom Mobile Inc. and Videotron Ltd. (Quebecor); Rogers Communications Canada Inc., including Groupe Shaw Group and Shaw Telecom G.P. (Rogers); Saskatchewan Telecommunications; TekSavvy Solutions Inc.; TELUS Communications Inc. (TELUS); and Xplore Inc.

17. 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]

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

18. 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.

19. Accordingly, the Commission finds that the responsibility for payment of costs should be allocated as follows:[2]

Company	Proportion	Amount
Rogers	36.38%	$7,039.53
TELUS	31.49%	$6,093.32
Bell Canada	20.22%	$3,912.57
Quebecor	11.91%	$2,304.58

Directions regarding costs

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

21. Pursuant to subsection 56(1) of the *Telecommunications Act*, the Commission fixes the costs to be paid to the DWCC at $19,350.

22. The Commission directs that the award of 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.

Secretary General

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

Related documents

- *Call for comments – Consumer protections in the event of a service outage or disruption*, Telecom and Broadcasting Notice of Consultation CRTC 2025-227, 4 September 2025, as amended by Telecom and Broadcasting Notice of Consultation CRTC 2025-227-1, 3 October 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

- *New procedure for Telecom costs awards*, Telecom Public Notice CRTC 2002-5, 7 November 2002