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WRITER'S DIRECT DIAL

July 10, 2009

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
c/o Natek, Inc., Inc.
236 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E.
Suite 110
Washington, DC 20002

Attention: Video Division
Media Bureau

Re: **WBAL-TV, Baltimore, Maryland**
Request for Experimental Authorization

Dear Ms. Dortch:

Pursuant to Section 73.1510 of the Commission's Rules, this letter shall serve as a request by WBAL Hearst-Argyle Television, Inc. ("Hearst"), permittee of Digital Television Station WBAL-TV, Baltimore, Maryland, for experimental authorization to conduct technical experimentation with an increased effective radiated power ("ERP") of 15.6 kW and 26.6 kW.

Hearst is presently operating WBAL-TV's digital facility on Channel 11 pursuant to program test authority under its post-transition construction permit in FCC File Number BPCDT-20080312AAT. Hearst's license application is pending in FCC File Number BLCDT-20090619ABW. Hearst's current authorized power is 5.0 kW ERP.

After Hearst's commencement of WBAL-TV's post-transition Channel 11 DTV facility on June 12, 2009, Hearst has received numerous complaints of poor or no reception from viewers, and Hearst has confirmed the reception issues with multiple field tests, including some tests in coordination with the FCC's field office. In most cases, the affected viewers had no problems receiving the station's analog Channel 11 operation (316 kW) or the station's pre-transition digital Channel 59 operation (513 kW).

It would appear that WBAL-TV's post-transition viewer reception problems are similar to those experienced by other stations with high-band VHF digital channels. The problems are likely attributable to (a) WBAL-TV's limited 5.0 kW digital ERP (compared to its prior analog power of 316 kW and pre-transition digital power of 513 kW); (b) the fact that many viewers are using set-top antennas; (c) and the digital "cliff effect." Hearst understands that the Commission's staff is well aware of these high-band VHF reception problems facing WBAL-TV and other high-band VHF stations.

Hearst is diligently working towards identifying possible solutions. After an exhaustive channel study, given the frequency congestion in the Baltimore market, it appears that there is no available in-core UHF channel to which WBAL-TV could consider moving. Hearst is currently undertaking a study to determine the feasibility of using replacement digital low power television translator stations to restore service to affected viewers.

Hearst has also has evaluated options to increase its Channel 11 power. However, with its current 5.0 kW ERP nondirectional operation, WBAL-TV is already generally "maximized" under the 0.5 percent new interference standard. Hearst is considering a possible directional antenna solution that would permit power increases in certain directions. However, given the nature of the high-band VHF reception issue, the extent of power necessary to restore service to WBAL-TV's viewers is unknown.

Prior to making significant financial and human resource expenditures towards a possible directional antenna solution, Hearst desires to test, on an experimental basis, a higher ERP with its current nondirectional antenna. Such a test would permit Hearst to examine whether a power increase would improve the station's viewer reception problems, whether predicted interference to other stations actually occurs, whether, if any interference does occur, the interference is nonetheless acceptable to the affected stations, and whether a directional operation could be a feasible solution.

Accordingly, as more specifically set forth in the Engineering Statement attached hereto as Exhibit A, Hearst hereby respectfully requests experimental authorization to operate WBAL-TV with an increased ERP of 15.6 kW and 26.6 kW and otherwise at parameters consistent with its current program test authority in connection with FCC File Number BPCDT-20080312AAT. The Engineering Statement further explains the nature of the proposed technical experiment and the proposed schedule of hours and duration of the experimentation.

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch

July 10, 2009

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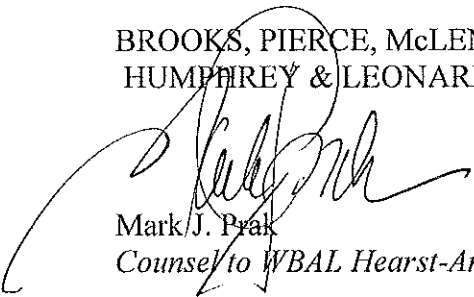
As noted in the Engineering Statement, operation with increased power of 15.6 kW ERP and 26.6 kW ERP is predicted to cause some new interference above the 0.5 percent limit to the following digital television stations: WVPT(DT), Staunton, Virginia (Channel 11); WBRE-TV, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania (Channel 11); and WHTM-TV, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania (Channel 10). Hearst has contacted each of these stations and none has objected to the proposed experimental authorization.

Because grant of the instant request for experimental authorization would facilitate experimentation directed toward improvement of WBAL-TV's post-transition digital operation and restoration of service to WBAL-TV's viewers, grant of the instant request would be in the public interest.

If any questions should arise during the course of your consideration of this request, it is respectfully requested that you communicate with this office.

Sincerely,

BROOKS, PIERCE, McLENDON,
HUMPHREY & LEONARD, L.L.P.



Mark J. Prak

Counsel to WBAL Hearst-Argyle Television, Inc.

Enclosure

cc: Barbara Kreisman (via e-mail)
Clay Pendarvis (via e-mail)
Eloise Gore (via e-mail)

EXHIBIT A

Engineering Statement

BERNARD R. SEGAL, P. E.
CONSULTING ENGINEER
KENSINGTON, MARYLAND

ENGINEERING STATEMENT
WBAL HEARST-ARGYLE TELEVISION, INC. (CA CORP.)
STATION WBAL-DT, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

Digital Television Station WBAL-DT, Baltimore, Maryland, pursuant to FCC authorization, operates its post transition digital facility on Channel 11 with effective radiated power of 5.0 kW and antenna radiation center height of 329 meters above average terrain. WBAL-DT management has received numerous complaints of poor, or no reception from viewers. After culling through the nature of the complaints, and the geographical locations of the complainants, the conclusion reached by WBAL-DT management is that the 5.0 kW power level authorized for WBAL-DT is not adequate to permit reliable reception in many instances, even with VHF outdoor antennas.

Accordingly, WBAL Hearst-Argyle Television, Inc. (CA Corp.), hereafter, Hearst, seeks an experimental authorization to conduct a measurement testing program with the effective radiated power increased to 15.6 kW, and 26.6 kW. Hearst believes that testing is the only effective way to ascertain whether increased power will alleviate the problem. The proposed power increase to 15.6 kW represents an increase of 4.95 dB relative to the 5.0 kW power level that is currently authorized. The increase to 26.6 kW which is the maximum that can be obtained with the existing equipment configuration, represents a 7.26 dB increase relative to the currently authorized 5.0 kW power for WBAL-DT. The details of the experiment have yet to be worked out, but would be designed to examine by means of measurements and observations at selected locations the extent of reception improvement, if any, and the extent of interference caused.

The use of effective radiated powers of 15.6 kW and 26.6 kW were chosen to avoid service disruptions to the viewing of other co-channel and adjacent channel stations as demonstrated in the paragraphs below.

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CONSULTING ENGINEER
KENSINGTON, MARYLAND

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WBAL Hearst-Argyle Television, Inc. (CA Corp.)
Station WBAL-DT, Baltimore, Maryland

Three stations are of particular allocation interest for the 15.6 kW mode and four stations merit attention for the 26.6 kW power mode. The three stations of interest for the 15.6 kW power mode are WVPT-DT, Staunton, VA, Ch. 11; WBRE-DT, Wilkes-Barre, PA., Ch. 11; and WHTM-DT, Harrisburg, PA, Ch. 10. For WBAL-DT operating with 26.6 kW, Station WWPX-DT, Martinsburg, WV, is an added station of interest. Interference studies have been conducted relative to each station's operation and the results are discussed in succeeding paragraphs.

Station WVPT-DT is licensed for operation with effective radiated power of 3.2 kW and antenna height above average terrain of 680 meters. An application is pending, BPEDT-20081022ABK, to increase power to 10 kW. The antenna radiation center height above average terrain would remain 680 meters. Certain Rule waivers are requested by WVPT-DT. One of the Rule waivers relates to the maximum power/height combination that is permitted.

The relative change from 3.2 kW to 10 kW for WVPT-DT is 4.95 dB. This is the precise decibel change that is proposed for the WBAL-DT measurement program. It is presumed that, like WBAL-DT, WVPT-DT is suffering reception problems comparable to those for WBAL-DT due to the relatively low authorized operating power. With each station's signal strength ratio increased by a like amount, the depth of interference penetration from each to the other will remain unchanged, but the available non-interfered with signals for each station will be improved by 4.5 dB. WVPT-DT's management will be urged to participate in the experimental measurement testing program so that the effects upon both stations can be recorded and reported. The accompanying Figure 1 shows the predicted interference impact on WVPT-DT when its ERP is raised to 10 kW.

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WBAL Hearst-Argyle Television, Inc. (CA Corp.)
Station WBAL-DT, Baltimore, Maryland

Station WBRE-DT operates on Ch. 11 with effective radiated power of 30 kW and antenna height above average terrain of 471 meters. The power/height combination far exceeds the maximum normally permitted a high VHF Band station in Zone I by the Rules. Figure 2 shows the projected impact of the proposed 15.6 kW operation for WBAL-DT on WBRE-DT. New interference is predicted to 0.62 % of the WBRE-DT served population. While this amount of interference exceeds that which is normally permitted, it is not so much above the 0.5 % limit as to be egregious. Part of the experimental program would include observations at selected locations to establish if the prediction(s) of interference are actually realized.

The impact of the 26.6 kW proposed WBAL-DT experimental operation on WBRE-DT is depicted in Figure 3. Here, again, measurements and observations will be made at selected locations to determine if the predictions of interference are actually realized.

Station WHTM-DT operates on channel 10 with effective radiated power of 16.2 kW and antenna radiation center height above average terrain of 311 meters. In similar fashion as for the depiction of new interference to WBRE-DT from the proposed WBAL-DT operation, Figure 4 depicts the new interference to WHTM-DT from the proposed WBAL-DT experimental 15.6 kW operation. Here, the prediction of new interference impacts 0.92 % of the WHTM-DT served population. Most of the interference is predicted to occur in Maryland in the near vicinity of Baltimore where the preponderance of viewers would be expected to have antennas oriented for optimum viewing of Baltimore stations. Thus, in reality, the prediction of interference to 0.92 % of the WHTM-DT served population is a paper exercise that is not likely to prevail in practice.

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KENSINGTON, MARYLAND

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WBAL Hearst-Argyle Television, Inc. (CA Corp.)
Station WBAL-DT, Baltimore, Maryland


Figure 5 shows the new interference to WHTM-DT from the proposed 26.6 kW experimental operation for WBAL-DT. The proposed measurement program will include observations at selected locations in an attempt to verify if actual interference occurs.

Finally, when WBAL-DT operates experimentally with 26.6 kW, the new interference caused to Station WWPX-DT Martinsburg, WV, Ch. 12, exceeds the normally permitted 0.5 % by 0.05 %, as depicted on Figure 6. Similar measurements and observations will be made for WWPX-DT as for the other three stations that have already been discussed.

At the conclusion of the measurement and observation program, a report detailing the results will be submitted as required by the FCC.

The predictions of interference, herein, were made using a Sunblade processor and the "tv_process_post_transition" program. No changes were made to the FCC's default settings. The 2000 Census data were employed. The undersigned has replicated FCC results many times in the past in this manner.

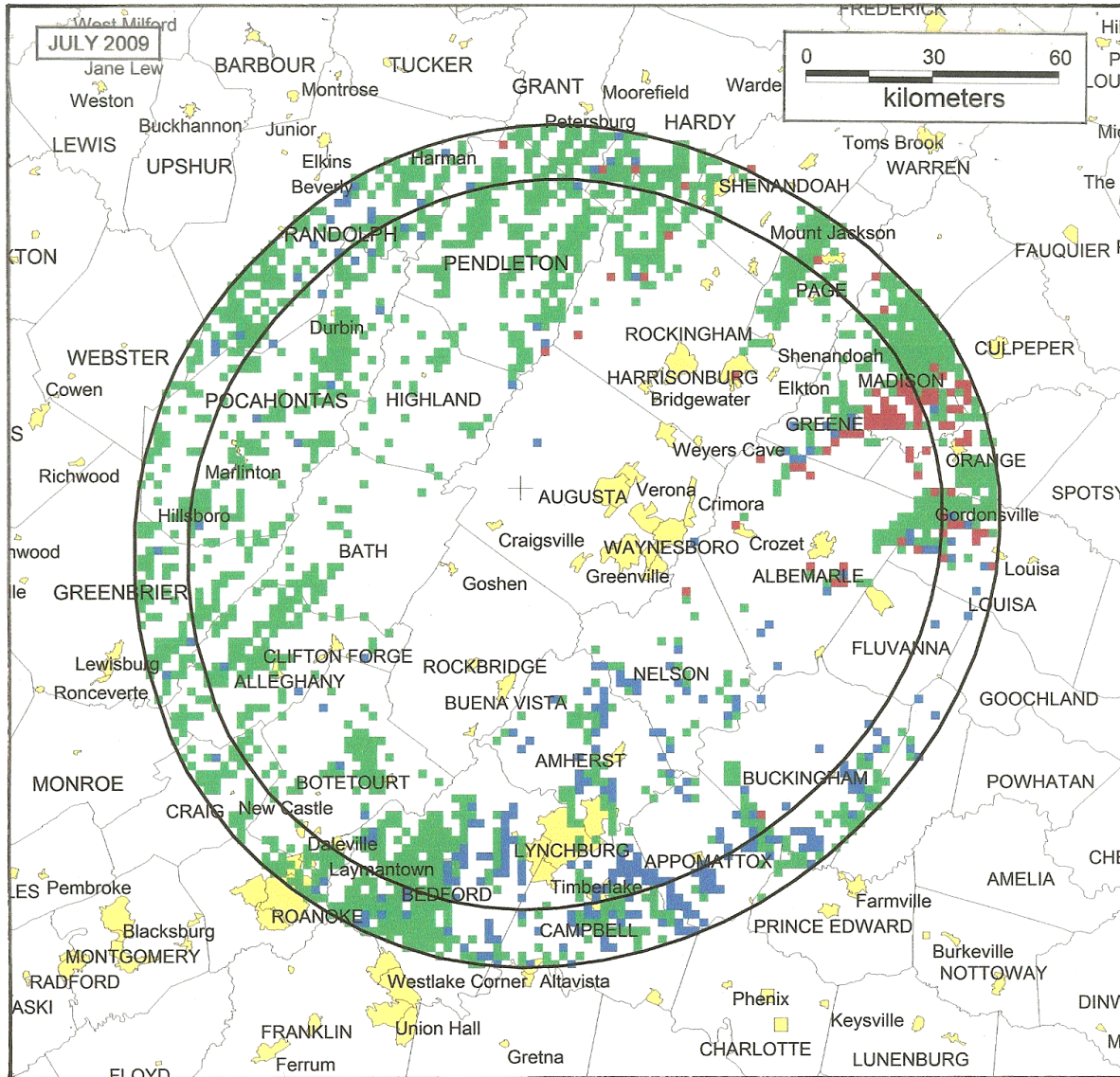
I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on July 10, 2009



Bernard R. Segal, P. E.

Maryland License No. 25811

FIGURE 1



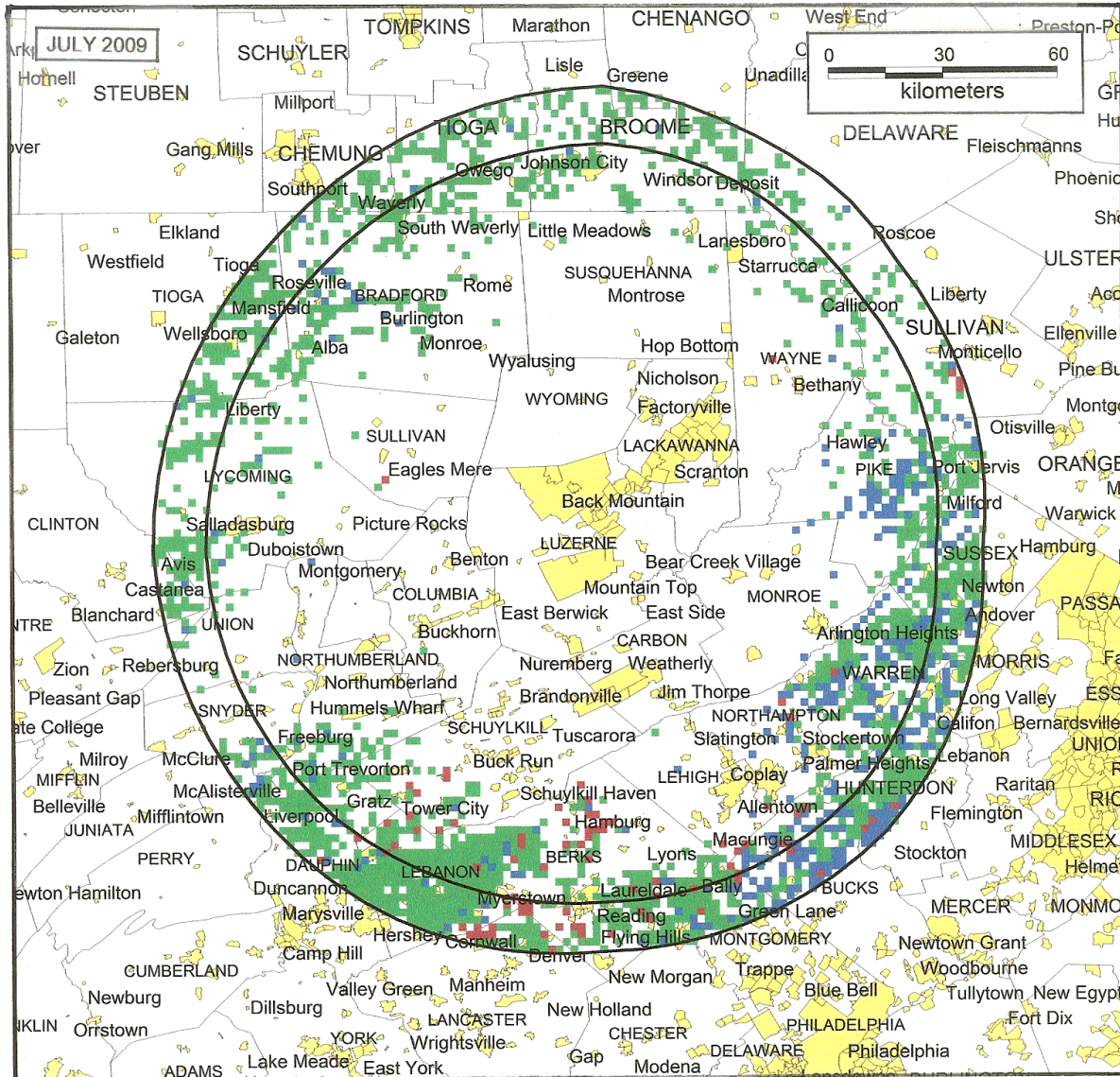
WVPT-DT, STAUNTON, VA, APPLICATION, CH. 11, 10 KW, 680 METERS
 WBAL-DT, BALTIMORE, MD, PROPOSED CH. 11, 15.6 KW (NON-DA), 300 METERS

WITHIN PROPOSED WVPT-DT 36 DBU (OUTER BLACK CONTOUR)	883,274
NOT AFFECTED BY TERRAIN (TERRAIN LOSS - GREEN)	726,479
ADDITIONAL LOSS DUE TO DTV INTERFERENCE (BLUE)	31,566
NEW INTERFERENCE FROM PROPOSED WBAL-DT (BROWN)	7,089 (1.02%)

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FIGURE 2



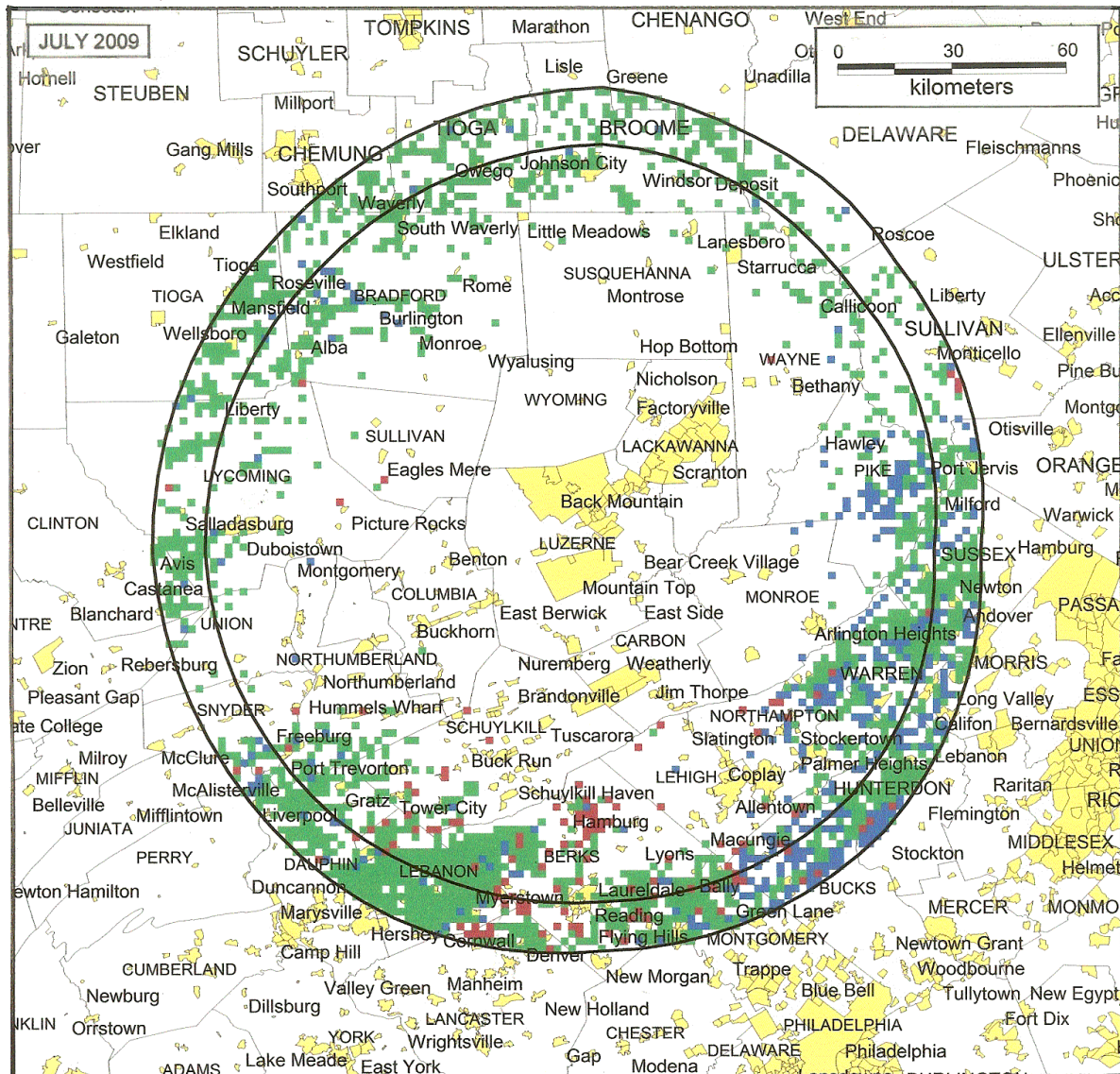
WBRE-DT, WILKES-BARRE, PA, LICENSED, CH. 11, 30KW, 471 METERS
 WBAL-DT, BALTIMORE, MD, PROPOSED CH. 11, 15.6 KW (NON-DA), 300 METERS

WITHIN WBRE-DT 36 DBU (OUTER BLACK CONTOUR)	3,340,487
NOT AFFECTED BY TERRAIN (TERRAIN LOSS – GREEN)	2,664,079
ADDITIONAL LOSS DUE TO DTV INTERFERENCE (BLUE)	143,482
NEW INTERFERENCE FROM PROPOSED WBAL-DT (BROWN)	15,610 (0.62%)

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FIGURE 3



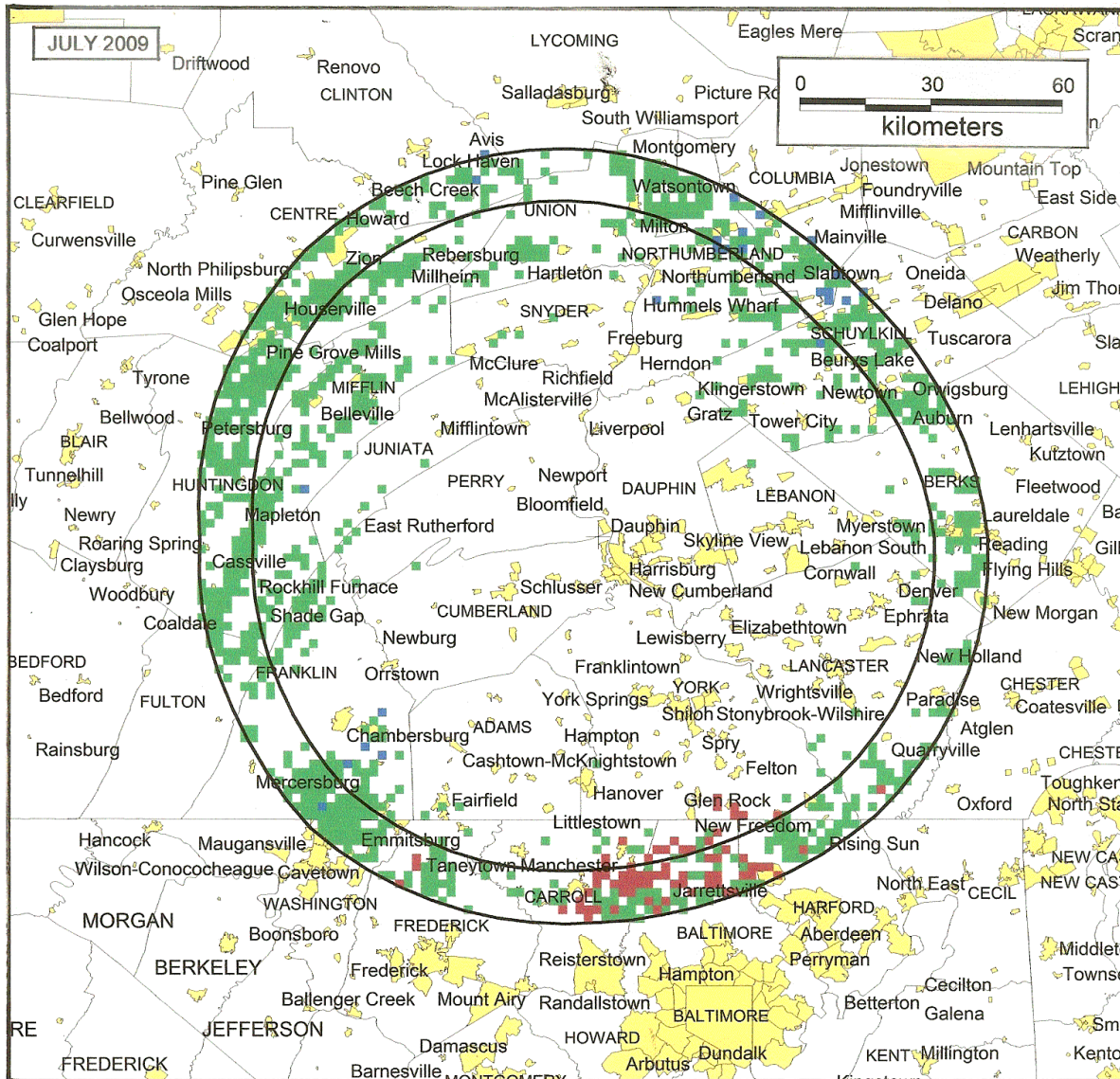
WBRE-DT, WILKES-BARRE, PA, CH. 11, 30 KW, 471 METERS
 WBAL-DT, BALTIMORE, MD, CH.11, 26.6 KW (NON-DA) 300 METERS

WITHIN WBRE-DT 36 DBU (OUTER BLACK CONTOUR)	3,340,487
NOT AFFECTED BY TERRAIN (TERRAIN LOSS – GREEN)	2,664,079
EXISTING DTV INTERFERENCE (BLUE)	143,482
NEW INTERFERENCE FROM WBAL-DT (BROWN)	29,434 (1.17 %)

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FIGURE 4



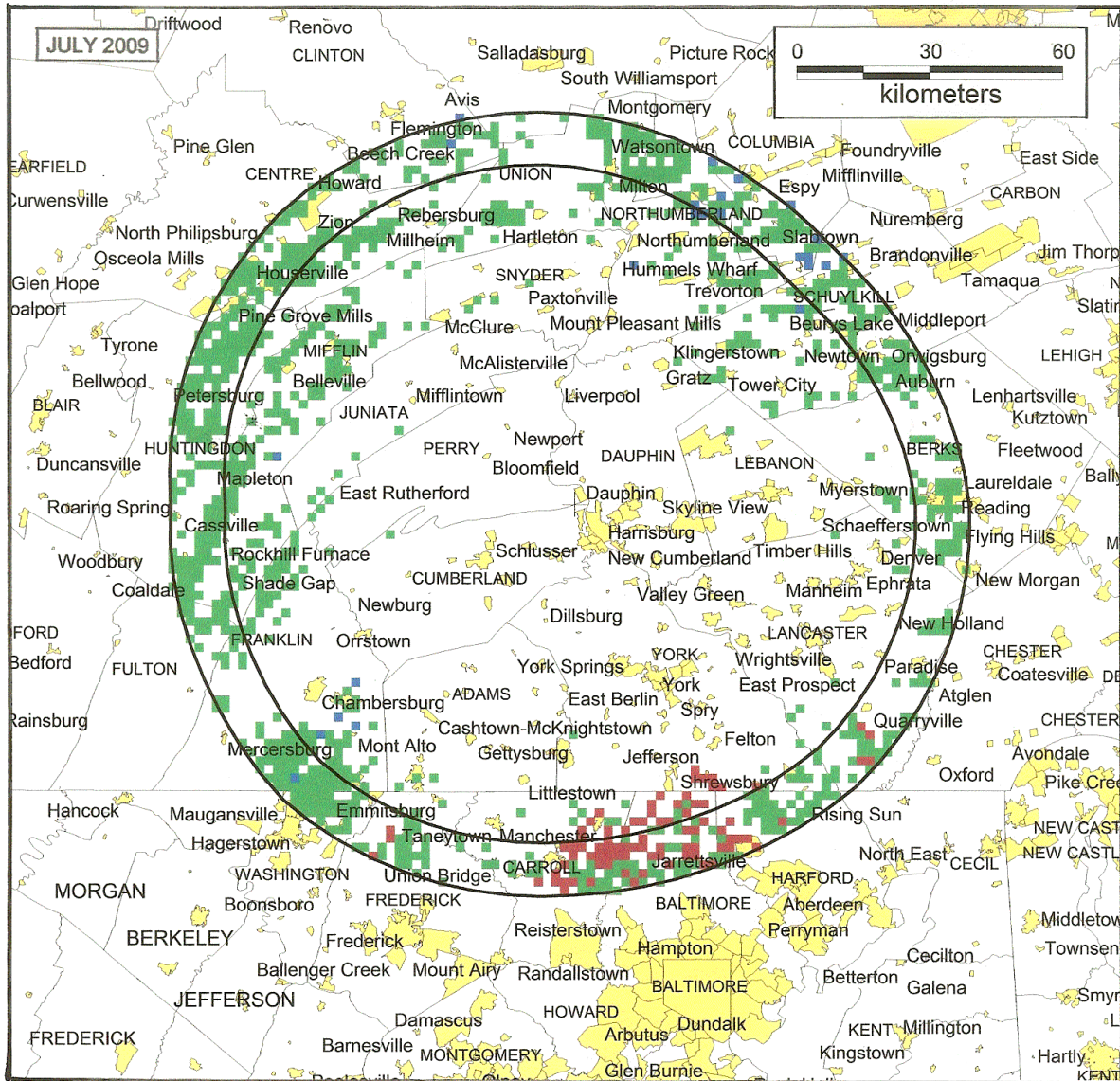
WHTM-DT, HARRISBURG, PA, LICENSED, CH. 10, 16.2 KW, 311 METERS
 WBAL-DT, BALTIMORE, MD, PROPOSED CH. 11, 15.6 KW (NON-DA), 300 METERS

WITHIN WHTM-DT 36 DBU (OUTER BLACK CONTOUR)	2,581,897
NOT AFFECTED BY TERRAIN (TERRAIN LOSS – GREEN)	2,135,057
ADDITIONAL LOSS DUE TO DTV INTERFERENCE (BLUE)	15,847
NEW INTERFERENCE FROM PROPOSED WBAL-DT (BROWN)	19,577 (0.92%)

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FIGURE 5



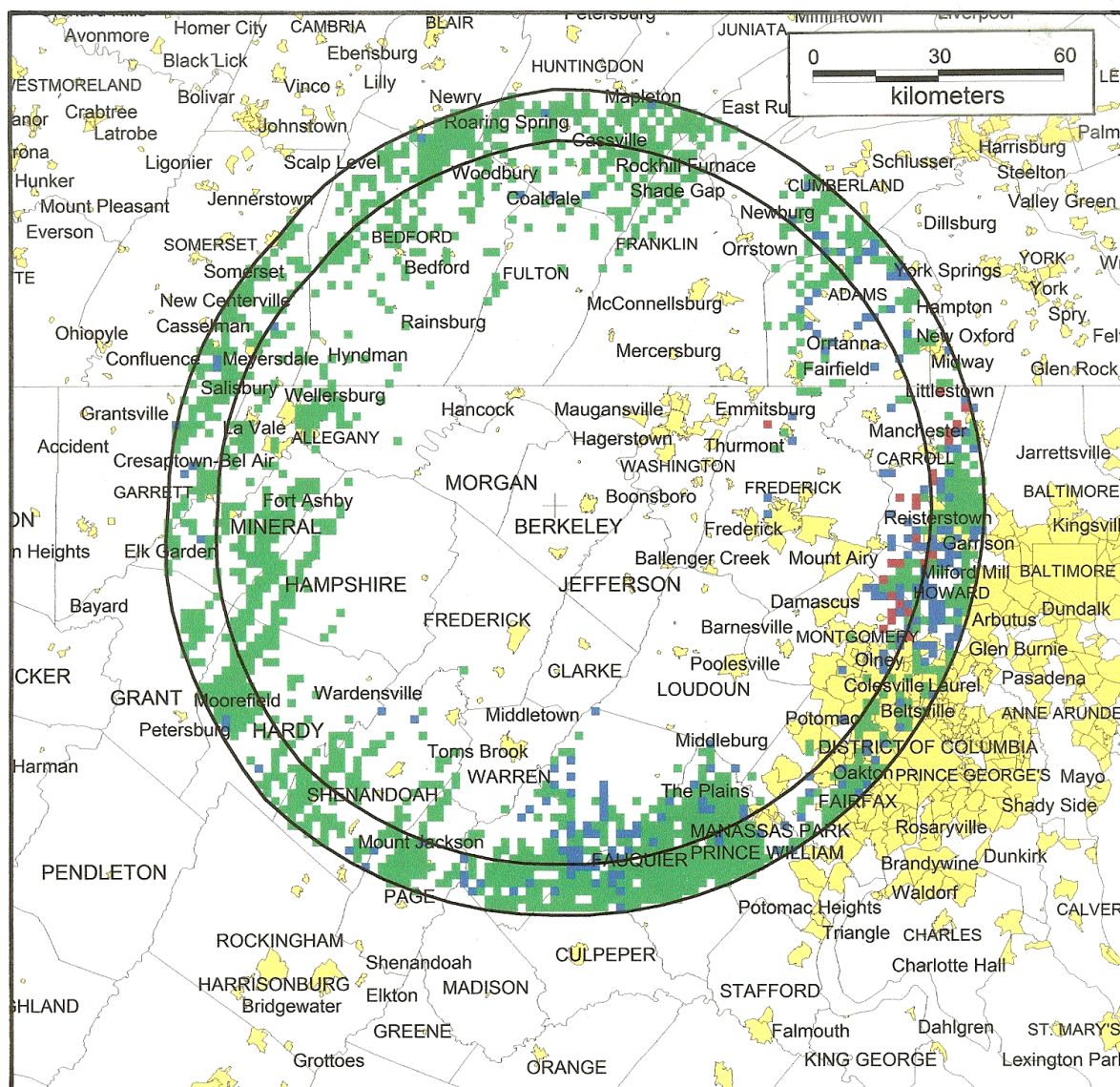
WHTM-DT, HARRISBURG, PA, CH. 10, 16.2 KW, 311 METERS
 WBAL-DT, BALTIMORE, MD, CH. 11, 26.6 KW (NON-DA) 300 METERS

WITHIN WHTM-DT 36 DBU (OUTER BLACK CONTOUR)	2,581,897
NOT AFFECTED BY TERRAIN (TERRAIN LOSS – GREEN)	2,135,057
EXISTING DTV INTERFERENCE (BLUE)	15,847
NEW INTERFERENCE FROM WBAL-DT (BROWN)	23,766 (1.12 %)

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FIGURE 6



WWPX-DT, MARTINSBURG, WV, CH. 12, 23 KW, 314 METERS
 WBAL-DT, BALTIMORE, MD, CH. 11, 26.6 KW (NON-DA) 300 METERS

WITHIN WWPX-DT 36 DBU (OUTER BLACK CONTOUR)	3,259,722
NOT AFFECTED BY TERRAIN (TERRAIN LOSS - GREEN)	2,645,014
EXISTING DTV INTERFERENCE (BLUE)	200,462
NEW INTERFERENCE FROM WBAL-DT (BROWN)	13,502 (0.55 %)

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