

## Station WMAR-TV Phase Transition Waiver Request

Station **WMAR-TV** in Baltimore, MD (Facility ID 59442) is currently assigned to Phase 8 for repack. Its reassignment to Phase 9 would serve the public interest by contributing to a more efficient, less costly, and safer transition.

WMAR shares a complex candelabra tower with Stations **WJZ-TV** (Facility ID 25455) and **WBAL-TV** (Facility ID 65696), Baltimore. All three stations are being repacked, with WJZ and WBAL assigned to Phase 9. The three stations have been cooperating to develop the best possible repack plan, and, with the help of consulting structural engineers, RF engineers, and a professional manager, they have determined that completing the moves for all three stations at one time would offer critical efficiencies and cost savings, while also providing an additional margin of safety for the project and minimizing viewer inconvenience.

WMAR's two antennas are in a stacked configuration on the shared tower. The additional cost of "gin pole" rigging these antennas without the coordination from WJZ and WBAL that would be made possible by moving all the antennas at the same time will be \$35,000 to \$50,000.

Mobilizing the helicopter lift necessary for WMAR's move will cost \$75,000, and if the WJZ and WBAL antenna installations are done later, there will be a second \$75,000 helicopter expense.

Completing the work at one time will offer substantially lower expenses for other necessary tower rigging, staging and deployment activities, plus it will contribute to a more efficient use of scarce tower-work resources, likely benefitting other broadcasters who will be needing these services.

In addition to the inherent safety benefit of shortening the time that helicopter and tower crews would be engaged in completing the project, doing the work at one time would substantially reduce the time period that the stations' shared candelabra tower would be less perfectly balanced.

Another benefit is that if all three stations can complete their channel changes in the same phase, it will cut in half the number of channel re-scans required for the viewing public to receive these signals on their new channels.

Finally, WMAR currently operates on Channel 38 which is outside the new core of television channels (Ch. 2 - Ch. 36). As such, moving from Phase 8 to Phase 9 will have no impact on the transition of any other full-service DTV station since no other station will be transitioning to Channel 38 or Channel 39.