

Request for STA for Interim Pre-Transition Channel Operations

The instant request for STA seeks ongoing authority for WXII-TV to operate periodically on its pre-transition channel 31 from the station's interim antenna during certain construction phases of WXII-TV's repack project to transition from its existing channel 31 to its post-transition channel 16. (It should be noted that WXII-TV is the channel sharer station for co-owned sharee station WCWG, Lexington, North Carolina, and, as such, WCWG's operations will be affected by WXII-TV's proposed interim operation.)

WXII-TV has been assigned to Transition Phase 9, which means that testing of its post-transition facility is scheduled to begin in March 2020, and the Phase Completion Date is scheduled for May 1, 2020. As such, some of WXII-TV's transition-related construction activities—including but not limited to tower work, removal of the station's former analog antenna, and installation of WXII-TV's post-transition primary antenna—have been scheduled to commence during in the April/May 2018 time frame. Thus, as some of these activities are set in motion and WXII-TV's post-transition construction unfolds, WXII-TV will periodically shut down its current primary antenna and move its operation over to its side-mount interim antenna, which is described in the technical portion of this STA request. Precise dates and periods of side-mount interim antenna operation are, of course, unknowable, and WXII-TV respectfully requests a full six-month period of STA for this purpose. (WXII-TV may need to file for one or more extensions of STA for channel 31 operations from the side-mount interim antenna.)

Grant of this STA for interim operations from WXII-TV's side-mount antenna specified herein is in the public interest because it is in furtherance of WXII-TV's repack transition plan. Indeed, the Commission has specifically contemplated precisely this type of temporary, "interim" operation in furtherance of the overall post-Auction transition in order to facilitate continuity of service for viewers and to avoid stations being off-the-air for periods of time during construction activities of repacked stations. *See, e.g., Incentive Auction Task Force and Media Bureau Adopt a Post-Incentive Auction Transition Scheduling Plan*, Public Notice, 32 FCC Rcd 890 (2018), ¶ 62 ("[I]nterim and auxiliary facilities will be an important part of the transition for broadcasters and we will take action as appropriate to facilitate the use of such facilities and equipment.").

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