

Request for Further Extension of Silent STA

Telemundo of Puerto Rico (“Licensee”), the licensee of analog TV translator station W09AT, Fajardo, Puerto Rico (FIN 64973) (“Translator”), hereby respectfully requests that the FCC exercise its discretion under Section 312(g) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended (“Act”), and grant this request for a further extension of special temporary authority for the Translator to remain silent for an additional six months, until September 6, 2019.

As the FCC is aware, Hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico on September 20, 2017 and destroyed Puerto Rico’s power grid, rendered many broadcast facilities inoperable, and made travel difficult and often impossible throughout many areas of the island. In its initial request for silent authority, the Licensee reported that it was unable to access the Translator but that it planned to travel to the site as soon as practicable to ascertain the status of the Translator (File No. 0000034983, granted November 7, 2017) (“Silent STA”). On April 25, 2018, the Licensee filed a request to extend the Silent STA and reported that it was able to make an assessment of the Translator and advised the FCC that the Translator facilities and tower were completely destroyed (File No. 0000053334, granted August 17, 2018).

On September 11, 2018, the Licensee filed a request to further extend the Silent STA to March 6, 2019, pursuant to the relief set forth in a public notice released by the Media Bureau on August 30, 2018¹ to alleviate broadcasters’ concerns about license expirations under Section 312(g) of the Act (File No. 0000059571, granted December 13, 2018). The Licensee determined that the best course of action was to replace the Translator’s facilities and convert to digital operations at the same time.

Viewers in Puerto Rico were and are in dire need of continued broadcast service. After Hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico, the Licensee prioritized repairing the damage done to its commonly owned full-power TV station WKAQ-TV, San Juan, Puerto Rico (FIN 64983) so that it could continue to provide essential broadcast service to the residents of Puerto Rico during this critical time. In addition, the Licensee also focused on working with the licensee of WAPA-TV, San Juan, Puerto Rico (FIN 52073), whose facilities were destroyed by the Hurricane, to resume broadcast of WAPA-TV, first on a multicast channel of WKAQ-TV and subsequently by allowing WAPA-TV to permanently mount its antenna on the WKAQ-TV tower. Now that these critical priorities have been addressed, the Licensee is able to focus on the reconstruction of the Translator.

In the last several weeks, the Licensee was able to identify a surviving tower and secure an agreement with the landlord to relocate the Translator’s antenna to that tower. On March 4, 2019, the Licensee filed an application for a construction permit to implement the site change for the Translator and to convert to digital operations (File No. 0000068243; pending)

¹ *Media Bureau Provides Guidance for Broadcast Licensees Still Rebuilding in the Aftermath of Hurricanes Irma and Maria*, Public Notice, 33 FCC Rcd 8368, DA 18-901 (MB 2018). This public notice announced that the Bureau would withhold cancellation of broadcast licenses in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands under Section 312(g) of Act for a period six months until March 6, 2019, and provided procedures for stations to receive the benefit of such consideration.

("Modification Application"). While the Licensee is unable to resume operations of the Translator by March 6, 2019, the Licensee will be ready to complete the procurement and installation process to construct the new, replacement facilities for the Translator once the FCC grants this Modification Application. At this time, the Licensee is optimistic that operation of the Translator can be restored with the new, replacement facilities by September 6, 2019.

In view of the above circumstances, the Licensee will need an extension of the Silent STA. A grant of the instant request is equitable and fair, and will serve the public interest by allowing the Licensee the time needed to restore service to viewers of the Translator who lost service due the devastation caused by Hurricane Maria. Accordingly, the Licensee respectfully requests that the FCC grant a further extension of the Silent STA for the Translator to remain silent for an additional six months, until September 6, 2019.