

WBAL First Quarter 2019 Transition Plan Progress Report

The exhibit is to provide additional information on repack issues faced by WBAL.

The broadcast tower used by WBAL is jointly owned by three stations, WBAL, WMAR and WJZ. The candelabra tower presents unique challenges for each of these Phase 9 repacked stations. Given the difficulty and time required to change the antennas using conventional gin pole tower rigging methods, the decision has been made to use a helicopter service for this task. The time saved is significant, and this is considered the safest method.

The three-station tower consortium, Television Tower Inc., has identified a parking area of the Ridley Athletic Complex, which is part of Loyola University, as the only viable staging area for a helicopter lift. TTI, along with consultants and tower crew, has been in negotiations with Loyola for the use of this area for almost a year. It appears an agreement is possible. The use of the area is limited to the very short window of time, May 25-June 8, 2020.

Helicopter lift regulations require a 300-foot radius safety zone which means portions of the Ridley Athletic Complex and both WBAL and WJZ studios must be evacuated during a helicopter lift. This means the helicopter lift must be done on one of the two weekends inside that time window.

The success of this operation depends on completing an agreement with Loyola University, and clear weather one of the two weekends. The 15-16 helicopter lifts can be done in two days. The second weekend is a backup. If inclement weather prevents the helicopter lift on both weekends, a conventional installation will be used and will take 4-6 weeks to complete.

This timeframe is after the May 1, 2020 Phase 9 completion date, so WBAL will require an STA to transition on their auxiliary antenna.

WBAL will not be fully constructed by the Phase 9 transition date.