

WWBT License Subsidiary, LLC
FCC Form 301
Exhibit 45

Application for Modification of Construction Permit

WWBT License Subsidiary, LLC, the permittee of WWBT(TV), Richmond, Virginia (“WWBT” or the “Station”), respectfully requests a permit to increase the power of its DTV facility from 6 kW effective radiated power (“ERP”) to 26 kW ERP. This power increase is necessary to ensure continued digital television service to many of the Station’s viewers who are unable to receive the signal from the Station’s allotted Channel 12 DTV facility.

On June 12, 2009, WWBT discontinued pre-transition digital service on Channel 54 and began operating on Channel 12. Following the switch, more than 10,000 WWBT viewers complained of a sudden inability to receive the Station’s digital signal, particularly through antennas located indoors. Although complaints came most prominently from certain heavily-populated portions of the Station’s service area — including western Richmond, Glen Allen, Mechanicsville, and Hanover — these reception problems were not limited to specific regions within the Station’s service area, nor were they unique to WWBT: viewers of other stations that switched to high-VHF band channels for post-transition operation likewise have reported reception problems.¹

¹ The Commission is aware of the severity of the reception problems that WWBT’s viewers have experienced, and FCC field officers have performed extensive fieldwork to study and document the problem. FCC staff and WWBT personnel have worked closely together in recent weeks to visit viewer homes, in some cases jointly, to study the reception problems. In most cases, FCC and WWBT personnel were unable to restore reception.

To evaluate the cause of the problem, the Station has conducted field tests at various distances from its transmitter. These tests showed signal levels ordinarily deemed to be sufficient for reception and that there is no single explanation for why the signals cannot be received. The causes of the serious reception problems remain under investigation by WWBT and Commission field personnel. However, because other stations ultimately owned by WWBT's parent company have experienced significant improvement in high-VHF band reception issues after increasing the power of their facilities, WWBT believes that increasing the power of its transmitter to 26 kW is likely to resolve many of the reception difficulties faced by the Station's viewers.

As the accompanying engineering analysis reflects, the proposed facility would comply with the Commission's principal community coverage requirements, *see* 47 C.F.R. § 73.625(a), as well as the technical requirements set forth in Sections 73.616 and 73.623 of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. §§ 73.616, 73.623. Moreover, although the proposed would cause interference above the Commission's 0.5% *de minimis* threshold to two neighboring stations, WVEC(TV), Hampton, Virginia, and WWPX-TV, Martinsburg, West Virginia, the licensees of those stations have consented to this interference.

Many of WWBT's existing viewers are unable to receive the Station's post-transition signal, including the local news programming and essential emergency information that the Station broadcasts. WWBT believes that the proposed increase in power would resolve or substantially alleviate these reception problems. The public interest therefore would be well-served by WWBT's proposal, and WWBT respectfully requests that the Commission grant the application and issue the requested construction permit as expeditiously as possible.