

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554**

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| |) | |
| In the Matter of |) | |
| |) | |
| Amendment of Section 73.606(b), |) | MB Docket No. 03-20 |
| Table of Allotments, |) | RM-10634 |
| Television Broadcast Stations. |) | |
| (Christiansted, Virgin Islands) |) | |
| |) | |
| |) | |

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE MAKING

Adopted: January 22, 2003

Released: January 29, 2003

Comment Date: March 24, 2003

Reply Comment Date: April 8, 2003

By the Chief, Video Division:

1. The Commission has before it a petition for rule making filed by Virgin Blue, Inc. ("Virgin Blue"), licensee of station WCVI-TV, NTSC channel 27, Christiansted, Virgin Islands. Virgin Blue requests the substitution of channel 39 for station WCVI-TV's channel 27.

2. Virgin Blue seeks to change its analog assignment from channel 27 to channel 39 in order to avoid interference from station WAPA-DT, channel 27, San Juan, Puerto Rico. Virgin Blue claims that it became aware of interference caused by WAPA-DT, when over-the-air viewers and the cable TV system on St. Thomas reported that WCVI's picture was being "knocked out" completely. Virgin Blue submits that the separation table, pursuant Section 73.623 of the Commission's rules, requires 273.6 kilometers between co-channel analog and digital transmitters, however, it states that WAPA-DT facilities are located only 145.89 kilometers or less than 91 miles from WCVI's transmitter location. Virgin Blue estimates that the interference from WAPA-DT has reduced the number of potential viewers by more than 50%. Virgin Blue concedes that WAPA-DT is operating on a channel, at a location and power level assigned by the Commission, but seeks to eliminate the strong co-channel interference by changing its channel.

3. We believe Virgin Blue's proposal warrants consideration. A staff engineering analysis indicates that channel 39 can be allotted in lieu of channel 27 to Christiansted, Virgin Islands, with a zero offset consistent with the minimum distance separation requirements of Sections 73.610 and 73.698 of the Commission's Rules. The coordinates for channel 39 at Christiansted are North Latitude 17-44-53 and West Longitude 64-43-40.

4. Accordingly, we seek comments on the proposed amendment of the TV Table of Allotments, Section 73.606(b) of the Commission's Rules, for the community listed below, to read as follows:

| <u>City</u> | <u>Channel No.</u> | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | <u>Present</u> | <u>Proposed</u> |
| Christiansted, Virgin Islands | 8+, 15, *21, 27 | 8+, 15, *21, 39 |

5. The Commission's authority to institute rule making proceedings, showings required, cut-off procedures, and filing requirements are contained in the attached Appendix and are incorporated by reference herein. In particular, we note that a showing of continuing interest is required by paragraph 2 of the Appendix before a channel will be allotted.

6. Interested parties may file comments on or before March 24, 2003, and reply comments on or before April 8, 2003, and are advised to read the Appendix for the proper procedures. Comments should be filed with the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, Washington, D.C. 20554. Additionally, a copy of such comments should be served on the petitioner, or its counsel or consultant, as follows:

Victor A. Gold, President
 WCVI-TV
 PO Box 24027
 Christiansted, Virgin Islands 00824
 (Petitioner)

7. The Commission has determined that the relevant provisions of the Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980 do not apply to rule making proceedings to amend the TV Table of Allotments, Section 73.606(b). See Certification That Sections 603 and 604 of the Regulatory Flexibility Act Do Not Apply to Rule Making to Amend Sections 73.202(b), 73.504 and 73.606(b) of the Commission's Rules, 46 FR 11549, February 9, 1981. The Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980 would also not apply to rule making proceedings to amend the DTV Table of Allotments, Section 73.622(b) of the Commission's Rules.

8. For further information concerning this proceeding, contact Pam Blumenthal, Media Bureau, (202) 418-1600. For purposes of this restricted notice and comment rule making proceeding, members of the public are advised that no ex parte presentations are permitted from the time the Commission adopts a Notice of Proposed Rule Making until the proceeding has been decided and such decision is no longer subject to reconsideration by the Commission or review by any court. An ex parte presentation is not prohibited if specifically requested by the Commission or staff for the clarification or adduction of evidence or resolution of issues in the proceeding. However, any new written information elicited from such a request or a summary of any new oral

information shall be served by the person making the presentation upon the other parties to the proceeding unless the Commission specifically waives this service requirement. Any comment which has not been served on the petitioner constitutes an ex parte presentation and shall not be considered in the proceeding. Any reply comment which has not been served on the person(s) who filed the comment, to which the reply is directed, constitutes an ex parte presentation and shall not be considered in the proceeding.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Barbara A. Kreisman
Chief, Video Division
Media Bureau

Attachment: Appendix

APPENDIX

1. Pursuant to authority found in Sections 4(i), 5(c)(1), 303(g) and (r), and 307(b) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, and Sections 0.61, 0.204(b) and 0.283 of the Commission's Rules, IT IS PROPOSED TO AMEND the DTV Table of Allotments, Section 73.622(b) of the Commission's Rules and Regulations, as set forth in the Notice of Proposed Rule Making to which this Appendix is attached.

2. Showings Required. Comments are invited on the proposal(s) discussed in the Notice of Proposed Rule Making to which this Appendix is attached. Proponent(s) will be expected to answer whatever questions are presented in initial comments. The proponent of a proposed allotment is also expected to file comments even if it only resubmits or incorporates by reference its former pleadings. It should also restate its present intention to apply for the channel if it is allotted and, if authorized, to build a station promptly. Failure to file may lead to denial of the request.

3. Cut-off protection. The following procedures will govern the consideration of filings in this proceeding.

(a) Counterproposals advanced in this proceeding itself will be considered, if advanced in initial comments, so that parties may comment on them in reply comments. They will not be considered if advanced in reply comments. (See Section 1.420(d) of the Commission's Rules).

(b) With respect to petitions for rule making which conflict with the proposals in this Notice, they will be considered as comments in the proceeding, and Public Notice to this effect will be given as long as they are filed before the date for filing initial comments herein. If they are filed later than that, they will not be considered in connection with the decision in this docket.

(c) The filing of a counterproposal may lead the Commission to allot a different channel than was requested for any of the communities involved.

4. Comments and Reply Comments; Service. Pursuant to applicable procedures set out in Sections 1.415 and 1.420 of the Commission's Rules and Regulations, interested parties may file comments and reply comments on or before the dates set forth in the Notice of Proposed Rule Making to which this Appendix is attached. All submissions by parties to this proceeding or by persons acting on behalf of such parties must be made in written comments, reply comments, or other appropriate pleadings. Comments shall be served on the petitioner by the person filing the comments. Reply comments shall be served on the person(s) who filed comments to which the reply is directed. Such comments and reply comments shall be accompanied by a certificate of service. (See Section 1.420(a), (b) and (c) of the Commission's Rules.). The Commission permits the electronic filing of all pleadings and comments in proceeding involving petitions for rule making (*except in broadcast allotment proceedings*). See Electronic Filing of Documents in Rule Making Proceedings, GC Docket No. 97-113 (rel. April 6, 1998). Filings by paper can be sent by hand or messenger delivery, by commercial overnight courier, or by first-class or overnight U.S. Postal

Service mail (although we continue to experience delays in receiving U.S. Postal Service mail). The Commission's contractor, Vistrionix, Inc., will receive hand-delivered or messenger-delivered paper filings for the Commission's Secretary at 236 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E., Suite 110, Washington, D.C. 20002. The filing hours at this location are 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. All hand deliveries must be held together with rubber bands or fasteners. Any envelopes must be disposed of before entering the building. Commercial overnight mail (other than U.S. Postal Service Express Mail and Priority Mail) must be sent to 9300 East Hampton Drive, Capitol Heights, MD 20743. U.S. Postal Service first-class mail, Express Mail, and Priority Mail should be addressed to 445 12th Street, SW, Washington, D.C. 20554. All filings must be addressed to the Commission's Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, Washington, D.C. 20554.

5. Number of Copies. In accordance with the provisions of Section 1.420 of the Commission's Rules and Regulations, an original and four copies of all comments, reply comments, pleadings, briefs, or other documents shall be furnished the Commission.

6. Public Inspection of Filings. All filings made in this proceeding will be available for examination by interested parties during regular business hours in the Commission's Reference Center (Room CY-A257) at its headquarters, 445 12th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C.