

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

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May 14, 2003

Lou Silverstein, President
Southwest FM Broadcasting Company, Inc.
Box 2529
Prescott, Arizona 86302

In re: KAHM (FM), Prescott, AZ
Southwest FM Broadcasting Company, Inc.
Facility ID No. 61510
Complaints of Interference

Dear Mr. Silverstein:

By letter dated March 11, 2003 I asked if you could provide information about several complaints that we had received regarding interference to reception to KAHM, Prescott, AZ. The complaints indicated that the interference came from a Spanish-speaking station that we could not readily identify on the basis of the information given.

In your reply letter of April 3, 2003, you attribute the interference to KCMT, Oro Valley, AZ (Facility ID No. 87841) which operates on Channel 271, like KAHM. You indicate that the interference has been continuous since KCMT commenced operations, making KAHM sound scratchy in some areas and unlistenable in other areas. You also state that the complaints came from such diverse areas as Sedona, Sun City, Scottsdale, Phoenix, and Chandler, AZ.

Presently, KCMT is separated from KAHM by 284.8 km, which exceeds the minimum separation of 270 km required by 47 CFR Section 73.207. Thus KCMT's construction permit was granted in accordance with the FCC's rules. In January 2003, we examined the license application BLH-20021218AML for KCMT after that station had completed construction, and found nothing amiss. KCMT is operating in compliance with the FCC's rules.

Examining the matter further, we find that the areas from which complaints have been received lie outside the 60 dBu protected service contour for KAHM. The FCC's rules provide for generally interference-free service within a station's 60 dBu protected service contour. Outside of that contour, listenable service may be provided, but that service is not protected from interference caused by new or modified broadcast stations. As shown on the attached map, the entire Phoenix metropolitan area lies outside of KAHM's 60 dBu service contour (shown in blue).¹ Because there is no rule violation, the complaints do not merit any action against KCMT.

¹ KCMT's 40 dBu interfering contour can be seen on this map, shown in red covering the southeastern portion of the Phoenix metropolitan area. The 40 dBu interfering contour corresponds to the interfering signal strength need to produce predicted interference within KAHM's 60 dBu protected service contour, had these contours actually overlapped.

Outside of the 60 dBu contour, the field strength continues to fall off in intensity. As it does, less of an interfering signal is required to cause predicted interference. For example, at the 55 dBu service contour, the interfering contour need only be 35 dBu for predicted interference to occur.

KAHM presently operates as a maximum Class C station. As such, the station cannot further increase its effective radiated power to overcome the interference received from KCMT in the Phoenix area. To improve service in this region, KAHM must relocate its transmitter site closer to Phoenix. This will require the grant of a minor change construction permit application on FCC Form 301, which must be filed by the station if site move is desired. We have not performed a technical analysis to see if such a move is feasible.

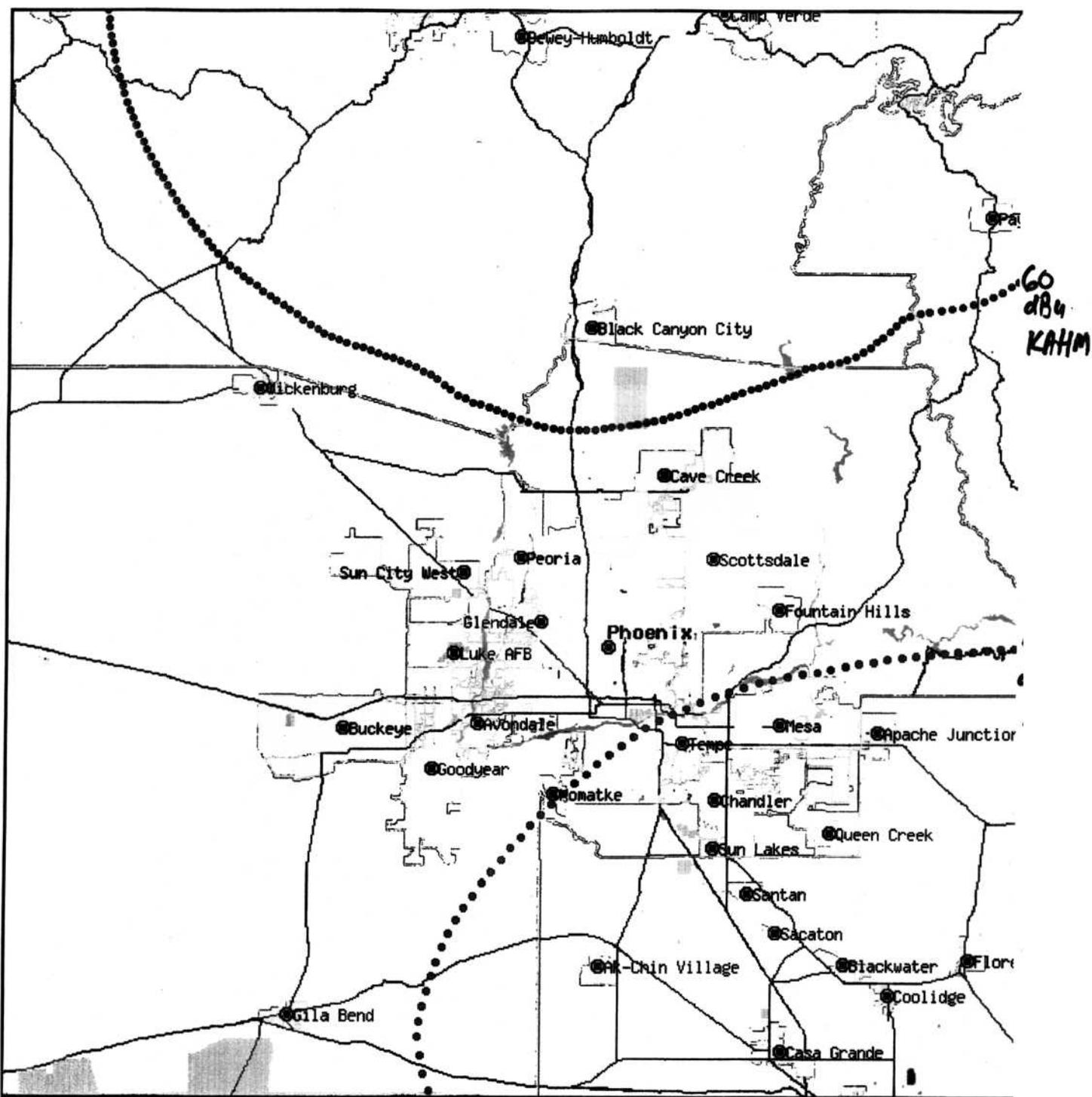
Some listeners may be able to improve reception of KAHM at home by hooking up their receivers to rotatable rooftop FM or VHF TV antennas. Filters will not be effective since the interference comes from a station on the same channel or frequency as KAHM.

Finally, you refer to a translator application that was filed during the recent FM translator application window filing period, suggesting that expeditious grant of this application would ameliorate the reception problems. Presently, we will not expedite any application for a new translator station, having received more than 13,500 applications during the application filing window. Many if not most of these conflict with other translator applications. These applications will be processed in due course, but no translator application is expected to be granted soon.

Sincerely,



Dale E. Bickel
Senior Electronics Engineer
Audio Division
Media Bureau



Click on the Tiger Census Map to resize and recenter the map at the cursor location.