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Spectrum Management and Telecommunications

Client Procedures Circular

Interference Resolution Services on a 24/7 Basis for Public Safety Agencies

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Canada

Preface

Client Procedures Circulars describe the various procedures or processes to be followed by the public when dealing with Industry Canada. The information contained in these circulars is subject to change without notice. It is therefore suggested that interested persons consult the nearest district office of Industry Canada for additional details. While every reasonable effort has been made to ensure accuracy, no warranty is expressed or implied. As well, these circulars have no status in law.

Comments and suggestions may be directed to the following address:

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Spectrum Management Operations Branch
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Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C8

Attention: Spectrum Management Operations

E-mail: spectrum_pubs@ic.gc.ca

All Spectrum Management and Telecommunications publications are available on the following website: <http://www.ic.gc.ca/spectrum>.

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Principle

The Minister of Industry, through the *Department of Industry Act*, the *Radiocommunication Act* and the *Radiocommunication Regulations*, with due regard to the objectives of the *Telecommunications Act*, is responsible for spectrum management in Canada. As such, the Minister is responsible for developing national policies and goals for the effective use and management of the radio frequency spectrum.

Mandate

Paragraph 5(1)(l) of the *Radiocommunication Act* authorizes the Minister to make determinations as to the existence of harmful interference¹ and to issue orders to persons in possession or control of radio apparatus, interference-causing equipment or radiosensitive equipment that the Minister determines to be responsible for the harmful interference to cease or modify operation of the apparatus or equipment until such time as it can be operated without causing or being affected by harmful interference.

Background

Industry Canada recognizes that it has responsibilities in resolving harmful interference to radiocommunication systems and that support from Industry Canada to assist public safety agencies in resolving such interference outside of normal business hours may be required.

The Department has provided public safety agencies with after-hours services, based upon identified requirements, for the resolution of harmful interference to their radiocommunication systems. Such arrangements were instituted on either a formal or informal basis and developed at the national, regional and district office level.

The procedures in this document apply to public safety agencies that are entities of the provincial and federal governments providing services related to the preservation of life and protection of property. These entities are police, fire, emergency medical services, Canadian Coast Guard and Department of National Defence - Search and Rescue.

Policy

Public safety agencies must ensure that their radiocommunication systems are installed and operating as per their radio authorization and must collect the information necessary to resolve any interference situations. Furthermore, public safety agencies are expected to undertake reasonable and appropriate actions before contacting the Department for assistance in the resolution of harmful interference. As a minimum, public safety agencies are to have completed the actions outlined below before requesting assistance either during or outside normal business hours.

¹ As defined in the *Radiocommunication Act*, “harmful interference” means an adverse effect of electromagnetic energy from any emission, radiation or induction that (a) endangers the use or functioning of a safety-related radiocommunication system, or (b) significantly degrades or obstructs, or repeatedly interrupts, the use or functioning of radio apparatus or radio-sensitive equipment.

Procedures

This section outlines the procedures for requesting Industry Canada after-hours service in the resolution of harmful interference to public safety agencies.

Public Safety Agencies

1. Public safety agencies are to identify key personnel or positions within their organization that will be authorized to request the assistance of Industry Canada outside normal office hours.
2. When requesting after-hours service from Industry Canada, public safety agency personnel must ensure that the necessary actions outlined below have been completed before requesting assistance:
 - (i) evaluate the impact of the incident on communications to determine whether it constitutes harmful interference that endangers the protection of human life and property;
 - (ii) determine whether the incident needs to be resolved immediately or whether it can be dealt with the following business day (e.g. intermittent interference; ability to migrate communications to an unaffected operational channel);
 - (iii) consult with their technical experts (e.g. service representative) and confirm that the radiocommunication system being affected is operating within its authorized licensing parameters and that system components are functioning properly;
 - (iv) confirm that the radiocommunication system's performance, as well as other radiocommunication systems under its control and operating in close proximity, are operating within their authorized licensing parameters;
 - (v) collect and record details on the nature of the interference, including but not limited to, whether the interference takes the form of identifiable words, music or other electrical noise, bit error rate, whether it is intermittent (time duration) or continuous, time of day when the interference occurs, geographical area where interference is experienced, and any other related information;
 - (vi) record the actions taken to validate the existence of interference; and
 - (vii) record the measures taken to eliminate the interference (e.g. additional filtering, squelch adjustments, etc.).
3. During normal business hours (i.e. 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., local time) public safety agencies shall communicate directly with the appropriate Industry Canada District Office as per RIC-66.²

² Radiocommunication Information Circular RIC-66, *Addresses and Telephone Numbers of Regional and District Offices*, is available at <http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/smt-gst.nsf/eng/sf01742.html>.

4. Outside normal business hours, public safety agencies shall communicate with the Industry Canada Call Centre:
 - (i) weekdays from 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 a.m., local time;
 - (ii) weekends beginning Friday at 4:30 p.m. to Monday at 8:30 a.m., local time;
 - and
 - (iii) statutory holidays incorporating the time periods as noted in (i) and (ii), as applicable. Statutory holidays are: New Year's Day,* Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, St. John the Baptist Day (Quebec only), Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day,* Christmas Day* and Boxing Day.*

* If the statutory holiday falls on a weekend, then the following business day becomes the designated holiday.

Industry Canada

1. Industry Canada will publish a toll-free telephone number so that public safety agency personnel are able to contact Industry Canada after hours;
2. Upon receipt of a request to assist with harmful interference to a public safety agency's radiocommunication system, Industry Canada personnel will review with the public safety agency the information provided, as outlined above. If the information provided is deemed insufficient, the public safety agency may be required to undertake specific actions and/or provide additional information;
3. Upon arriving at a decision that the interference is deemed harmful, Industry Canada will make a determination on the source of the interference in as timely a manner as possible, taking into consideration things such as the recurring nature of the interference, weather conditions, proximity of Industry Canada personnel to the station experiencing the interference, time of night, the ability to identify and contact the individual responsible for the source of harmful interference, and the availability of Industry Canada personnel;
4. Industry Canada will issue orders, as necessary, to persons in control of radio apparatus or interference-causing equipment to cease or modify operation until such time as the radio apparatus or equipment can be operated without causing harmful interference to the public safety agency's radiocommunication system;
5. Industry Canada will notify the public safety agency as soon as possible regarding the source of the harmful interference and the steps to be taken to resolve it (subject to confidentiality and privacy issues).

After-hours Contact Process

- (1) Public safety agencies that have determined that their radiocommunication system is receiving harmful interference and have followed the steps outlined in the section entitled "Procedures" may contact the Industry Canada Call Centre toll-free at 1-877-536-2328.

- (2) Public safety agency personnel shall provide the Industry Canada Call Centre with the following information:
- (i) name of the public safety agency;
 - (ii) name, title and telephone number of the individual calling;
 - (iii) name, title and telephone number of the individual who is knowledgeable about the interference complaint (if different from (ii));
 - (iv) city and province where the interference is being experienced;
 - (v) nature of the interference complaint (general description of the interference problem); and
 - (vi) the location, if known, of the Industry Canada District Office responsible for locating the interference to the affected station (reference RIC-66, *Addresses and Telephone Numbers of Regional and District Offices*).
- (3) Industry Canada personnel assigned to the interference complaint will contact the public safety agency's designated person to discuss and evaluate the information provided. Upon arriving at a decision that the interference is deemed harmful, Industry Canada will advise the public safety agency of the steps to be taken, including any foreseen limitations impacting Industry Canada's response.

References

Other spectrum documents can be found on Industry Canada's Spectrum Management and Telecommunications website at <http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/smt-gst.nsf/eng/home>.