



## FCC Compliance Checklist

*The following was compiled for the purpose of assisting CBC station managers in ensuring compliance with FCC rules. This document can be considered and used as an annual checklist, but certain items (such as EEO, tower light inspections, and issues-program lists) may require more frequent attention. Highlighted sections indicate those areas to which FCC field agents have been noted to pay particular attention.*

### Section I: Administrative and Non-Technical

#### A. Authorizations

The current station license, construction permit, renewal certificate, consent to transfer, auxiliary transmitter authorization, special temporary authorization (STA), and/or any other instrument of authorization shall be readily available and easily accessible at the station's principal control point. Renewal certificates and consents to transfer should be associated with the corresponding station authorization.

#### B. Station Logs/Records

Station logs include entries pertaining to equipment status, equipment calibration, the Emergency Alert System (EAS) and the recording of tower light outages. These must be kept for two years. Station records include, but are not limited to chief operator designations, equipment performance measurements and AM Directional field strength measurements.

#### C. Chief Operators

Each station must designate a chief operator. The designation is to be in writing with a copy posted with the station authorization. The chief operator is to review the station logs at least once each week to determine if required entries are being made correctly and to sign and date the log upon completion of the review. The chief operator is also responsible for inspection and calibration of the transmission system, monitors, metering and control systems in addition to any equipment performance measurements or other tests as specified in the rules or terms of station authorization. While these duties are the chief engineer's responsibility, the chief operator has the responsibility to insure the required actions are taken in a timely manner.

D. Station Identification

Station identification shall be made at the beginning and ending of each period of operation (sign-on and sign-off), and hourly, as close to the hour as feasible, at a natural break in program offerings. The identification shall consist of the station's call letters immediately followed by the community of license. Any reference to additional communities must be made after the community of license. The name of the licensee, or the station frequency, channel number, or both, may be inserted between the call letters and community of license. No other insertion is permissible. Simulcast AM and FM stations may identify jointly.

E. Telephone Access to Station

Each station must maintain a local or toll free telephone number within its community of license. Stations operating from studio locations outside of the community of license must make sure residents in the community have access to this number.

F. Public Inspection File

All stations are to maintain a public inspection file at the main studio of the station. The file shall be available for public inspection at any time during regular business hours. Regular business hours are generally any eight hour period between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. The contents of the file are to be made available within a reasonable time for printing or machine reproduction upon request made in person, provided the requesting party pays the reasonable cost of reproduction. The licensee may require guarantee of payment in advance for any such requests. The licensee shall also mail photocopies of documents from the file upon request made in person, by telephone, by mail or by e-mail, with all postage paid by the station. Public file contents are as follows:

**AUTHORIZATIONS:** A copy of the current FCC authorization to construct or operate the station must be maintained in the file.

**APPLICATIONS:** The public file must contain copies of all applications, exhibits, letters, initial and final decisions in hearing cases, and other documents pertaining to the station which were filed with the Commission and which are open for public inspection at the FCC. This includes applications granted pursuant to a waiver. Applications and associated materials must be retained until granted and no longer subject to appeal.

**CITIZEN AGREEMENTS:** For commercial stations, copies of all citizen agreements must be maintained in the file for the term of the agreement.

**CONTOUR MAPS:** A copy of any service contour maps submitted with any application tendered for filing with the FCC, together with any other information

in the application showing service contours and/or main studio and transmitter must be placed in the file. Contour maps must be maintained for as long as they reflect current, accurate information regarding the station.

**OWNERSHIP REPORTS:** The public file must contain copies of ownership reports and supplemental ownership reports filed with the Commission, including all exhibits, letters, and other documents associated with these filings. Ownership reports must be maintained until a new, complete ownership report is filed with the FCC with a copy of the new report placed in the public inspection file.

**Political:**

**POLITICAL:** The licensee must place in the public file a complete record of all requests for broadcast time made by or on behalf of candidates for public office, together with an appropriate notation showing the disposition made by the licensee of such requests, and the charges made, if any, if the request was granted. All political records must be maintained for a period of two years.

**FREE POLITICAL TIME:** If free time was provided for use by or on behalf of such candidates, a record of the free time that was provided must be placed into the public file.

**EEO:**

**EEO ANNUAL EMPLOYMENT REPORT LISTINGS:** Annually, for all stations, with 5 or more full time employees, the licensee is to compile a listing of all full-time vacancies filled, listings of recruitment sources, the address/contact person/telephone number of each recruitment source. Additionally, broadcasters engaging in supplemental recruitment measures must show the recruitment source for each new full-time hiree, organizations which requested notification, the total number of persons interviewed for full-time vacancies during the proceeding year as well as the total number of interviewees referred by each recruitment source for such vacancies, and a list and brief description of supplemental recruitment measures undertaken during the year. For broadcasters that opt out of the supplemental recruitment measures, they must include the total number of applicants generated by each recruitment source utilized for any full-time vacancy during the preceding year, and the number of those applicants who were female and the number who were minority, identified by the applicable racial and/or national origin group with which each applicant is associated. There is no "official" form for these listings, however, the listing must contain at a minimum, the information specified above. The licensee must annually place in the public file (and on the station's web site if it has one) a compiled listing of their full time employment recruitment efforts. (For the purposes of these EEO rules, a

full time employee is a permanent employee whose regular work schedule is 30 hours per week or more.)

EEO PROGRAM REPORT (FCC Form 396): For all stations, regardless of the number of full time employees, the licensee must file an FCC Form 396 along with the station renewal application.

EEO ANNUAL EMPLOYMENT REPORT LISTINGS, FCC Form 396 must be retained until final action is taken on the next license renewal application.

**PUBLIC AND BROADCASTING:** The public file must contain a copy of the most recent version of the manual entitled "The Public and Broadcasting" at all times.

**LETTERS FROM PUBLIC:** For commercial stations, the licensee must retain all written comments and suggestions received from the public, including e-mail, regarding operation of their station unless the writer requested that the correspondence not be made public or the licensee felt that it must be excluded because of the nature of its content, such as a defamatory or obscene letter. E-mail copies may be kept either on the computer or on paper. Letters must be retained for three years from the date received.

**INVESTIGATIVE MATERIAL:** Any material having a substantial bearing on a matter which is the subject of an FCC investigation or complaint to the FCC of which the licensee has been advised must be placed in the public file. Such material must be retained until the licensee is notified in writing that the material may be discarded.

**Quarterly Issues-Program Lists:**

**ISSUES-PROGRAM LISTS:** The licensee must maintain a list of programs that have provided the station's most significant treatment of 5 to 10 community issues during the preceding calendar quarter. Issues-program lists must be filed by the tenth day of the succeeding calendar quarter (e.g. January 10, April 10, July 10, & October 10).

**NARRATIVES:** The issues-programs lists must include a brief narrative describing what issues were given significant treatment and the programming that provided this treatment.

**DESCRIPTIONS:** The description of the programs must include at a minimum the time, date, duration and title of each program in which the issue was treated.

**RETENTION OF ISSUES-PROGRAMS LISTS:** Issues-programs lists must be retained for the term of the license.

**TIME BROKERAGE AGREEMENTS:** For commercial stations, the public file must contain a copy of every agreement or contract involving time brokerage of the licensee's station, or of another station by the licensee. Confidential or proprietary information may be removed. Time brokerage agreements must be retained in the public inspection file as long as the agreement is in force.

**LOCAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:** A statement certifying compliance with the local public notice filing announcements must be placed into the public file within 7 days of the last day of broadcast of such announcements. Such statements must be retained until final action is taken on the application to which the statement refers.

**JOINT SALES AGREEMENTS:** A copy of any agreements for the joint sale of advertising time on the station with other stations, in or out of the market, must be placed in the public file. If there is confidential or proprietary information in the agreements, it can be blacked out or omitted.

**G. Main Studio Presence**

Each station must maintain a presence at the main studio during normal business hours so members of the public can reach responsible station personnel and receive access to the public inspection file. In addition, a main studio presence allows the licensee to make the station available for inspection at any time during normal business hours. Normal hours are typically an 8 hour period between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. local time Monday through Friday. This requirement is separate from the unattended transmitter operation rules.

**H. Main Studio Location**

The main studio for each station shall be located within the principal community signal strength contour of any broadcast station licensed to that same community or 25 miles from the reference coordinates of the center of its community of license, whichever the licensee chooses.

**Section II: Antenna Structures**

**A. Antenna Registration**

Most antenna structures that are higher than 60.96 meters (200 feet) above ground level or that may interfere with the flight path of a nearby airport must be studied by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and registered with the FCC. Owners are required to register their non-exempt tower structures with the FCC. All proposed and altered antenna structures must be registered prior to construction or alteration. For

licensees this means that the tower must be registered before a new construction permit or license modification involving the tower or antenna is granted. We (Corporate) insure that our towers are registered.

Licensees should be familiar with the painting and lighting specifications shown on their station authorization. In the event that the structure owner is unable to maintain the prescribed painting and lighting, e.g. in cases including but not limited to abandonment, negligence, or bankruptcy, the FCC would require that each tenant licensee on the structure undertake efforts to maintain painting and/or lighting. Additionally, if the licensee has reason to believe that the structure is not in compliance or that the owner is not carrying out its responsibility to maintain the structure, the licensee must immediately notify the owner, notify the site management company (if applicable), notify the FCC, and make a diligent effort to ensure that the antenna structure is brought into compliance.

Once a tower (or towers in the case of an AM Directional station) is registered, then the registration number(s) is to be displayed in a conspicuous place that is readily visible near the base of the antenna structure(s). Materials used to display the registration number must be weather-resistant and of sufficient size to be easily seen.

B. Antenna Specifics

The construction permit, station license, or other instrument of authorization provides authority for the station to operate under a specific set of operating parameters. The licensee must thoroughly review the current station authorization, and where applicable the structure registration, to compare the listed specifications to the location, height, etc. that is actually used by this station. This item is seen to by Corporate and is not normally a matter of local concern, but local management should be familiar with the operating parameters.

C. Tower Light Observations

The lighting on tower structures is to be observed at least once every 24 hours either visually or by observing an automatic indicating device; or alternatively the licensee/tower owner may provide and maintain an automatic alarm system to constantly monitor the lighting on a structure. All automatic or mechanical control devices, indicators, and alarm systems are required to be inspected at intervals not to exceed 3 months.

D. Painting/Lighting

The licensee must make certain that the number and placement of paint bands and lighting match exactly with that shown on the station authorization and/or tower registration. The licensee/tower owner should also be aware of the requirement to clean or repaint tower structures as often as necessary to maintain good visibility to aircraft.

E. FAA Notifications

The tower owner/licensee is to notify the nearest Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Flight Service Station within 30 minutes of the observation of an improper functioning or extinguished top steady burning light or any flashing obstruction light regardless of its position on the structure. Such improper functioning beacons include non-lighted beacons as well as those that are lighted, but non-flashing. Notification is to also be made immediately to the FAA once the beacon or steady burning top light is returned to service. Notification is not required when side light outages are observed.

F. Station Logs

For all stations operating from a tower owned by the licensee and which have authorizations that specify tower lighting, the licensee/tower owner is to make entries in the station log concerning any observed or otherwise known extinguishment or improper functioning of any tower light regardless of its position on the tower.

G. Fencing

For stations utilizing antenna tower(s) having radio frequency (RF) potential at the base (series fed, folded unipole, and insulated base antennas), all towers are to be enclosed within an effective locked fence or other enclosure. Fencing must be capable of preventing access to small children or livestock. The design of the fence must be such that a concerted effort is made to gain access to the tower.

**Section III: Emergency Alert System (EAS)**

A. Participating vs. Non-Participating

All CBC stations are “participating.”

B. Handbook

All stations are to maintain an EAS Operating Handbook and a copy of the State EAS Plan. The handbook and State Plan are to be available at ALL EAS control points.

C. EAS Decoder/Monitor and Encoder/Generator

All AM, FM and TV stations must have equipment installed and capable of decoding, either manually or automatically, the digitally encoded EAS protocol while monitoring at least two assigned EAS stations. Stations must also have equipment capable of generating the EAS protocol so that the EAS signal may be broadcast to other receiving stations. This equipment must be operational during all hours of broadcast operation. Manually operated equipment must be located so that operators, at their normal duty stations, can be alerted immediately when EAS messages are received. Only one EAS decoder/encoder is required for combined facilities operating from one common location, such as a co-owned and co-located AM and FM studio.

D. EAS Tests

All stations are to conduct required weekly tests (RWT) of the EAS header and End of Message (EOM) codes a minimum of once a week at random days and times, which can include any time of the day or night. Since all stations must monitor at least two sources, an RWT should be received each week from each of the two sources. If the station is not operating at the time an RWT is scheduled, then the licensee shall log that they were off the air and an RWT should be aired some time during the week after operation of the station resumes. Operators must be trained in the proper operation of EAS equipment and be prepared to demonstrate the airing of a test upon request by the FCC.

F. Station Logs

All stations are to maintain a station log containing entries pertaining to each test of the Emergency Alert System that is received or initiated by the station. EAS test entries must be made in the station log either manually by responsible broadcast station staff, or by an automatic device. Stations may keep EAS test data in a special EAS log which can be maintained at any convenient location; however, such log must be considered a part of the official station log. It is also to contain entries which adequately describe the reason why any test activation was not received and any corrective action taken. Since monthly tests conducted on even numbered months are to occur between local sunset and 8:30 a.m., then daytime only AM stations may not receive some of the tests. In this case the station will still be required to determine when the test was sent and log the reason why the station did not received the test.

**Section IV: Technical**

*Most items in this section are taken care of by the engineering department. Nevertheless, managers should be generally familiar with the requirements and periodically require engineers to produce evidence or other written documentation of compliance.*

A. Power

All stations are to maintain antenna input power between 90% and 105% of that authorized. The power is to be maintained as near as practicable to the station's authorized power.

B. Direct vs. Indirect Method

The antenna input power of AM stations must be determined using the direct method, except when it is impossible to do so for technical reasons. FM stations normally determine power by the indirect method. FM stations using the indirect method must have available the efficiency factor for each transmitter.

C. Frequency

AM stations must maintain their carrier frequencies within 20 Hz of the assigned value. FM stations must maintain their carrier frequencies within 2 kHz of the assigned value. FM pilot frequencies must be maintained within 2 Hz of the nominal 19 kHz value.

D. Modulation

AM stations must maintain their modulation at or below 100% on negative peaks and at or below 125% on positive peaks. FM stations must maintain their modulation at or below 100% at all times, unless subcarriers are employed.

E. Transmitter Metering & Control

All stations are to maintain sufficient metering to determine compliance with power, modulation and mode of operation. In addition, where applicable, stations may need monitoring devices to determine compliance with antenna tower lighting. AM Directional stations have the further requirement to maintain sufficient metering to monitor parameters of the AM directional antenna system. All stations must have personnel which maintain the ability to turn off the transmitter.

F. Monitoring Procedures

The licensee must establish monitoring procedures and schedules for the station. Monitoring procedures and schedules must enable the licensee to determine compliance with operating power, modulation levels, AM modes of operation, and where applicable with antenna tower lighting and AM directional antenna parameters. Licensees should be able to provide upon request made by the FCC, the monitoring procedures and schedules they have established for each station.

G. Calibration

The licensee must conduct periodic complete inspections of the transmitting system, all required monitors and automatic logging devices to ensure proper station operation. Monitors and automatic logging devices must be periodically calibrated so as to provide reliable indications of transmitter operating parameters with a known degree of accuracy. The determination as to how frequent the complete inspection and calibrations are to occur is up to the licensee. The licensee should make certain that the date of calibration of each device is entered in the station log along with any other resulting actions associated with the calibration, such as replacement of a meter or other device. The licensee may keep calibration data in a special calibration log, however, such log must be considered a part of the official station log and as such must be made available upon request.