21 December 2006

Mr. Leonard St-Aubin  
Director General  
Telecommunications Policy Branch  
Industry Canada  
300 Slater Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0C8

Dear Mr. St-Aubin:

Subject: Bell Mobility comments in Response to: Consultation on Air-to-Ground Services in the Bands 849-851 MHz and 894-896 MHz, Canada Gazette – Part 1, Notice No. DGTP-011-06, published 28 October 2006

1. Bell Mobility is pleased to submit the attached comments in response to the above captioned Notice.

2. If there are any questions concerning these comments, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours truly,

[ Original signed by S. Morin ]

Attachment
Canada Gazette Notice No. DGTP-011-06

Consultation on Air-to-Ground Services in the Bands 849-851 MHz and 894-896 MHz

Published in the Canada Gazette, Part 1 dated 28 October 2006

Comments of Bell Mobility Inc.

20 December 2006
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0 INTRODUCTION</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0 COMMENTS</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Service provisions</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Technical considerations</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Licensing process</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Transition plan</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0 CONCLUSION</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.0 INTRODUCTION

Bell Mobility Inc. (Bell Mobility or the Company) is pleased to provide the following comments in response to Notice No. DGTP-011-06: Consultation on Air-to-Ground Services in the Bands 849-851 MHz and 894-896 MHz, as published in the Canada Gazette, Part 1, dated 28 October 2006 (the Notice).

Industry Canada (Industry Canada or the Department) states that the comments sought are limited to the spectrum used to transmit information between aircraft and ground stations. The Department also states that the use of licensed spectrum on board aircraft may be the subject of a future consultation and that the use of portable electronic devices on board aircraft, including cellular phones and wireless LANs, is regulated by Transport Canada and therefore not part of this Notice.

For ease of reference, the following comments are numbered according to the Notice's numbering system and are captioned by the specific question posed in the Department's Notice.

2.0 COMMENTS

1. Service provisions

Bell Mobility supports the Department's proposal to remove the technology specific limitations and modifying the designation of this spectrum for air-to-ground digital radiocommunication applications. The Company also supports the Department's proposal to adopt a new band plan based on the allocation of two block pairs that are harmonized with the U.S. band plan configuration.

This approach will enable the use of spectrally-efficient technologies for the provision of new enhanced broadband services to meet the needs and expectations of Canadian travelers while fostering interoperability and the resulting benefits of regional harmonization.
2. Technical considerations

The Department seeks comments on its proposal to adopt maximum transmitter power limits for ground stations and airborne stations of 500 W e.r.p and 12 W e.r.p., respectively. Respondents suggesting alternatives should describe how their proposal would minimize interference, use spectrally-efficient technologies, and enable regional harmonization and interoperability.

Bell Mobility supports the Department's proposal to decrease the transmitter power allowed for airborne stations and increase the transmitter power for ground stations.

3. Licensing process

The Department seeks comments on its proposal to make this spectrum available as one national licence per block pair, consistent with the proposed band plan, and on whether a spectrum aggregation restriction should be adopted. Respondents suggesting alternatives should describe how their proposal would facilitate enhanced services, network deployment and the coordination with U.S. licensees.

The Company supports the Department's proposal to make this spectrum available as a national licence per block pair. However, it is important to note at the outset that the uses to be made of the two block pairs, while requiring the use of spectrum-efficient technologies, will not result in the same type of enhanced services being offered in both blocks due to the simple fact that one block pair is 3 MHz while the other block pair is 1 MHz.

While spectrum harmonization with the U.S. is indeed desirable, policy harmonization, such as the adoption of a spectrum aggregation limit, should only occur when the result is truly linked to a requirement related to, or a benefit for, the Canadian market. The situation in the U.S. that resulted in the adoption of a spectrum aggregation restriction policy limiting the ability of any one licensee from acquiring both licences was linked to their particular fact situation and policy at the time. There has been no demonstrated policy need in Canada to ensure that no one licensee acquires both licences. Therefore, the Department should reserve its determination of whether a spectrum aggregation restriction should be adopted for Canada only after it has sought expressions of interest for each of the block pairs as outlined in the Notice.
4. **Transition plan**

The Department seeks comments on its proposal for a transition plan, including the proposed transition measures. Respondents suggesting alternatives should describe how their proposal would give some flexibility to the incumbent, minimize service interruption and provide timely access to the new licensees.

Bell Mobility is of the view that there is no need for a transition plan in Canada. As the only incumbent using the existing band pair, the Company is not in need of any such transition.

3.0 **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, Bell Mobility appreciates the opportunity to provide its comments in response to the Notice. The Company believes that the Department, in considering a proposal for Canada, should ensure that all elements of its proposal result in benefits to Canada such that regional harmonization should be adopted only when of clear benefit to Canada.

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