



The

Broadcasters' Desktop Resource

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... edited by Barry Mishkind – the Eclectic Engineer

Broadcast Operations

When The Satellite Companies Call You



By Karen Johnson

[May 2020] A lot of stations are getting multiple calls asking for information on your satellite downlink. Why is it happening? Who are they? What should you do?

The Internet has been abuzz, with many broadcast techs asking the same question. “Why is one of the major satellite companies calling me, asking questions about my downlink?”

It is a little disconcerting, is it not? You spent hours registering your downlinks with the FCC, but now you are being asked questions that you have already answered, by a representative of a satellite company you may not even utilize.

HERE IS WHAT'S HAPPENING

It all goes back to the FCC's Order of Proposed Modification.

In their order, they rejected a plan put forward by the C-Band Alliance (CBA) to coordinate the repack of the C-band spectrum.

Here is how it was supposed to all work: Imagine for a moment you work for a mid-market television station. You have many

antennas on your property receiving content from various sources and multiple satellites.

Under the CBA plan, simply identifying your registration would have been sufficient for the group to come up with a plan to address all of the downlink antennas on your site.

IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN SIMPLE

The CBA's original idea was to work together, coordinating and identifying the need of each site in the United States.

However, when the CBA's plan was rejected by the FCC, they could no longer coordinate on this level. *Each* company is now responsible for identifying which registered dishes are using their services.

You gave the FCC lots pertinent information when you registered your antennas, but nothing on that paperwork identifies what satellite you are using.

Because each satellite owner must now work independently, they are tasked by the FCC with identifying you and your needs.

ABOUT THOSE PHONE CALLS

Now, for example, Intelsat is making the rounds and, as irritating as it is to go through and methodically answer these basic questions, imagine how they are feeling.

Intelsat is contacting you out of a sense of extreme caution. They must go through the **entire data base of registered antennas** in order to identify the ones that access their systems.

You can expect more calls like this in the future. For example, you may get a call from networks like Moody, Westwood and others, or calls directly from SES or Telesat. Again, each satellite owner must identify and coordinate your needs with the FCC.

THE SILVER LINING

Think about this: now is the perfect opportunity for you to talk to a rep from a network or satellite owner about your needs on site.

Give them a thorough description of your down-link. Ask them to make all updates to your antenna, whether that is simply a filter install, a

repoint, or - in extreme cases - a replacement of your dish.

Remember: the C-Band repack is being paid for through the FCC's 5G auction in the top markets.

[More information about the 5G filters is here.](#)

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More information on the C-Band changes and other satellite information can be found on the [LinkUp web site.](#)

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A broadcaster and entrepreneur, Karen has spent two decades championing the power of satellite to deliver broadcast-quality radio and video that is live and immediate.

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