



December 1, 2023

Marlene H. Dortch, Esq.
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street NE
Washington DC 20554

Re: **MB Docket No. 12-107**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB)¹ hereby responds to the Media Bureau's request for a quarterly status report regarding industry efforts related to the existing waiver of the audible crawl rule.²

NAB continues to work cooperatively with advocates for persons who are blind or visually impaired toward a solution for enabling compliance with the audible crawl rule. Specifically, we are actively coordinating on the development of best practices to help ensure that emergency information conveyed by visual images during non-newscast programming is accessible to viewers who are blind or visually impaired.³ Through these conversations, NAB has also identified the potential for best practices concerning the accessibility of *pre*-emergency information and notifications about situations that do not rise to the level of an emergency, designed more for station branding and general awareness rather than information regarding an imminent emergency. As referenced by the Commission, our goal is to create materials that can be used to educate and train broadcasters to offer effective communication of critical emergency information conveyed in graphic images in textual crawls.⁴

To that end, in accordance with our agreed-upon process, NAB has produced a working draft of best practices that is currently being reviewed by a diverse group of industry professionals (e.g., news directors, meteorologists) with expertise in the journalistic decisions related to the

¹ NAB is a nonprofit trade association that advocates on behalf of local radio and television stations and broadcast networks before Congress, the Federal Communications Commission and other federal agencies, and the courts.

² 47 C.F.R. § 79.2(b)(2)(ii); *Accessible Emergency Information, and Apparatus Requirements for Emergency Information And Video Description: Implementation of the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010*, MB Docket No. 12-107, Memorandum Opinion and Order at ¶ 10 (MB 2023) (MO&O).

³ MO&O at ¶ 10.

⁴ *Id.*

1 M Street SE
Washington DC 20003 3512
Phone 202 429 5300
nab.org

display of text crawls and visual images about emergencies. Thereafter, the accessibility advocates will evaluate the industry draft to assess whether it overlooks any important steps stations can take to ensure accessibility for all viewers, especially when displaying visual graphic images regarding emergencies.

In the meantime, NAB remains confident that, in most cases, emergency information conveyed by visual images is accessible because stations run accompanying text crawls that provide the same information, if not more, and can be converted to speech. The frequency of such crawls typically varies depending on factors like a station's location and the types of weather and other hazards common to the area.

Regarding a potential technical solution for complying with the audible crawl rule, NAB continues to monitor any potential options for trying to identify a mechanism, the requirements for such an endeavor, and outside entities that could play a role in developing heretofore elusive solutions. We believe, however, that the work being done as part of this process will address most, if not all of the important issues raised by advocates of those who are blind or visually impaired.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Kaplan", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Rick Kaplan
Larry Walke
Legal and Regulatory Affairs
National Association of Broadcasters

cc: Maria Mullarkey
Suzy Rosen Singleton