



Telecom Order CRTC 2019-389

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Ottawa, 29 November 2019

Public record: Tariff Notice 7596

Bell Canada – Destandardization of residential two-party service

Application

1. The Commission received an application from Bell Canada, dated 17 June 2019, in which the company proposed to destandardize its residential two-party service,¹ effective 21 August 2019. Bell Canada proposed that as of that date, it would (i) cease offering residential two-party service to new customers and (ii) grandfather existing customers. According to Bell Canada, no existing residential two-party service customers would be affected by the destandardization, since the service would continue to be available to them until they either cancel it or move.
2. Bell Canada indicated that two-party service uses obsolete technology and does not meet the Commission's defined minimum standard, which is individual single-party line service for residential customers. Bell Canada submitted a copy of the notice that was sent to affected customers to advise them of the destandardization proposal.
3. The Commission received comments on the application from seven customers. Bell Canada filed a reply on 27 August 2019.

Interventions

4. Several customers submitted that Bell Canada should not be allowed to discontinue the lower-cost two-party service, citing concerns over cost or the loss of rotary phone use. Two customers were concerned that they could lose two-party service as a result of a move or future decisions of the company, respectively, and two customers thanked the company for not discontinuing the service.
5. In its reply, Bell Canada submitted that some customers may have mistakenly understood that the company would be withdrawing its current residential two-party service, which it has not proposed to do. It also indicated that customers could choose to subscribe to mobile wireless service instead of wireline service.

Commission's analysis and determinations

6. The Commission considers that Bell Canada's application meets the requirements set out in Telecom Information Bulletin 2010-455-1, in which the Commission set out

¹ Two-party service is a local exchange service shared by two customers.

its procedures for dealing with applications to destandardize and/or withdraw tariffed services.² In particular, Bell Canada's application described the service that the company proposes to destandardize, gave a proposed date and rationale for destandardizing the service, indicated the number of customers who will be affected, and provided a copy of the notice that was sent to customers.

7. The Commission considers that Bell Canada's proposal is reasonable, since (i) the company is not withdrawing residential two-party service for existing customers, (ii) the service in question uses obsolete technology, and (iii) the objections of some of the customers were based on their mistaken understanding that Bell Canada was proposing to discontinue its service, which it is not.
8. Accordingly, the Commission **approves** Bell Canada's application to destandardize residential two-party service, effective **29 November 2019**.

Policy Direction

9. In accordance with the 2019 Policy Direction,³ the Commission considers that this order, which is based on a complete record, can promote competition, affordability, consumer interests, and innovation. Specifically, the approval of this application will promote affordability and consumer interests, since it (i) allows for the retention of a low-cost alternative to individual line service for current customers, and (ii) will ensure that new customers have access to high-quality telecommunications services as a result of this service revision.

Secretary General

Related documents

- *Approval processes for tariff applications and intercarrier agreements*, Telecom Information Bulletin CRTC 2010-455-1, 19 February 2016
- *Mandatory customer contract renewal notification and requirements for service destandardization/withdrawal*, Telecom Decision CRTC 2008-22, 6 March 2008

² That bulletin summarizes the Commission's related determinations set out in Telecom Decision 2008-22 and is incorporated by reference in section 59 of the *Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission Rules of Practice and Procedure*.

³ *Order Issuing a Direction to the CRTC on Implementing the Canadian Telecommunications Policy Objectives to Promote Competition, Affordability, Consumer Interests and Innovation*, SOR/2019-227, 17 June 2019