

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)**

### **How do I apply for a Radio or TV Broadcast Licence?**

You must complete the “APPLICATION FOR A RADIO LICENCE UNDER SECTION 5 OF THE BROADCASTING ACT CAP 274B” available in hard copy from the Barbados Broadcasting Authority (BBA) Secretariat, Prime Minister's Office, Bay Street, Bridgetown or downloadable from this website. Completed forms must be submitted to the BBA.

### **Can I apply for both Radio and TV Broadcast Licence at the same time?**

Yes

### **Can you explain the process in applying for a TV or Radio Licence?**

There are several steps and conditions that are associated with the process.

1. Once you have completed the Application Form and have submitted all the requisite documents, you will be invited to an interview with the Barbados Broadcasting Authority (BBA) to discuss your application.
2. If you have satisfied the BBA that your application merits further consideration, you will be invited, in writing, to apply to the Telecommunications Unit for the allocation of spectrum for the operation of a Broadcast Station. The spectrum requested is usually broadcast spectrum and studio to transmitter (STL).
3. Once you have submitted your completed Application for Spectrum\* to the Telecommunications Unit (TU) on the prescribed form, along with your fee of \$500 per spectrum application, the TU will process it within ten (10) working days. Note that the Telecoms Unit must complete the technical analysis on your application; consequently, all technical questions on the application forms must be completed.

*\*If your telecommunications medium for Broadcast is not Radio Frequency Spectrum, you are required to apply to the Telecommunications Unit for the requisite licences to broadcast on the particular telecommunications medium you indicated on your application form. In any case, a licence cannot be granted by the BBA without the TU granting the telecommunications media licences which may be used for broadcasting.*

4. The Telecommunications Unit will inform you and the BBA of the spectrum reserved as a result of your application to the TU or, if applicable, the status of your application for the requisite telecommunications media.

5. The Broadcasting Authority will inform you of the status of your application for the Radio or TV Licence.

6. If your application for the Licence is approved by the Minister, you will be invited to pay the licence fee for a Radio or TV Licence and pay the annual operating licence fee to the Telecommunications Unit for the allocated spectrum *or telecommunications media*.

### Where can I get a copy of the Broadcasting Act and the Regulations made under the Act?

Copies of the Broadcasting Act and the Regulations made under the Act are available from the Government Printery, Bay Street, Bridgetown. Copies are also available from the BBA Secretariat. You may also download them from this website.

### What is IPTV in a nutshell?

IPTV – Internet Protocol Television – is a method by which you could receive regular television content via the Internet, on your computer, by using a telecommunications device such as a set top box or directly to your television set.

Your local IPTV Service Provider downloads television broadcast content from TV content providers such as CNN etc., to its servers located in Barbados. The IPTV Service Provider servers are connected to the internet via an Internet Service Provider (ISP). Once you have subscribed to the service, you can access the contents of the IPTVSP by using your set top box remote to contact the server and select your programming on demand. [Diagram 1](#) shows a typical IPTV service.

### What is Internet TV and how does it differ from IPTV?

Internet TV is similar to IPTV but without the Quality of Service (QoS) and Broadcast television content.

### Has the BBA issued any Broadcast Licence any provider to broadcast IPTV in Barbados?

At present, there are no Broadcast Licences issued to IPTV providers in Barbados.

### Do I need a Broadcast Licence to for what is commonly called Internet TV?

No

### Is there an application fee to apply for a Broadcast Licence?

No. However, there is a \$500 fee per application for Broadcast Spectrum payable to the Telecoms Unit.

How long does the process take between application and the final granting of a licence?

The time-frame is listed in the Regulations

When do I apply to the Telecommunications Unit for a spectrum licence to operate my broadcasting facilities and can you explain the application process and the time frame?

See “Can you explain the process in applying for a TV or Radio Licence?”

What is Digital Television Broadcasting? Explain the advantages.

Digital Television Broadcasting (DTB) is the transmission of audio and video by digital signals as oppose to analog signals. One TV channel transmission of analog TV requires more bandwidth than a Digital TV (DTV) channel and DTV is of higher quality with less noise, snow and static. As a matter of fact, the standard television channel bandwidth of 6MHz can support up to 6 Digital TV and at least 10 digital audio channels. In Barbados, Multi-choice television (MCTV) and DirectTV are examples of digital television while CBC TV8 (channel 8) free-to-air is an example of analog television.

Presently, there is only one (1) Free to Air Broadcast Television Station which operates an analog service CBC TV8 on channel 8. Will the Broadcast Authority be issuing any analog broadcast TV licence or, in light of the current digital format and the obsolescence of analog technology, will the Broadcast Authority issue licences for the digital format only?

The Telecommunication Unit is the agency responsible for allocating spectrum in Barbados. Digital Broadcasting Policy is actively under consideration by the Telecommunications Unit.

Where can I find a list of the Broadcast Radio and Television Stations in Barbados?

The list can be found on Telecommunications Unit website. <http://www.telecoms.gov.bb>

I am receiving my TV signals from a satellite and paying subscription to an agent. Do I need any licences?

If you are receiving TV signals from a satellite then you must apply to the Telecoms Unit for a licence to keep or use a satellite television receiver antenna, except in the case where your service provider is Starcom’s Network Direct TV. The licence cost is \$500 per antenna for domestic use and is valid for the lifetime of the applicant. The annual licence fee for business use is \$600.

I am receiving many of the regular broadcast television channels via the Internet. Am I in violation of any existing laws under the Broadcasting Act or Telecommunications Act?

No licensee of the telecommunications in Barbados has been granted permission to use any telecommunication licence to broadcast television to the public in Barbados. Similarly, no licence has been issued by the BBA for the broadcasting of television via the Internet from any location in Barbados.

**What is an Internet Service Provider (ISP) and what is the relationship between ISP services and broadcast television?**

Internet Service Providers are holders of a Value Added Licence from the Telecommunications Unit which permits them to establish, install and maintain a public Internet access facility or system to provide public Internet access services in Barbados. ISP's can transport IPTV (Internet Protocol Television) broadcast TV content at a Quality of Service comparable to or surpassing standard broadcast television received over the air, satellite or cable.

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