

**TELECOM AND BROADCASTING NOTICE OF CONSULTATION
CRTC 2025-227**

***Call for comments – Consumer protections
in the event of a service outage or disruption***

CANADIAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION

RESPONSES TO APPENDIX 2

November 13, 2025

Executive Summary

1. The Canadian Telecommunications Association (CTA or the Association) respectfully submits that no additional consumer protection measures are warranted in respect of service outages or disruptions.
2. Service providers have strong commercial and reputational incentives to maintain reliable services and treat customers fairly. This includes acting swiftly to resolve outages, communicating with customers during significant service interruptions, and often providing voluntary refunds or credits when customers experience material inconvenience. Market forces are working effectively.
3. The Commission has not put forward any evidentiary foundation for its preliminary view that new consumer protections in the event of service outages or disruptions are necessary. There is no record of systemic harm or marketplace failure that would justify new measures, including a mandatory compensation regime. Nor has it provided any analysis demonstrating that existing market forces and industry practices are insufficient.
4. By contrast, the exceptional consumer protection measures recently established for the Far North in Telecom Regulatory Policy 2025-9, including the automatic-credit regime, which many parties opposed, were explicitly designed as a limited and targeted response to a demonstrated reliability problem in a market where competition alone was unlikely to deliver meaningful improvement. Those circumstances are unique to the Far North. They do not exist in the rest of Canada, and similar measures are neither warranted nor appropriate elsewhere.
5. Imposing compensation requirements would create the unrealistic and misleading impression that a one-hundred-percent uptime standard exists or ought to exist. This expectation is unattainable and would be inconsistent with how other critical services are regulated. Electricity distributors, water utilities, and natural gas suppliers, each providing services as critical as telecommunications, are not required to compensate customers for temporary service interruptions that occur despite best efforts to maintain service. The Commission has not explained why telecommunications should be treated

differently, particularly when outages often result from circumstances wholly beyond the provider's control.

6. In summary, in its preliminary view the Commission does not demonstrate (i) that consumers are not being treated fairly today, (ii) that the market is failing to deliver appropriate incentives for reliability and customer care, or (iii) that new measures would address any clearly identified harm. In the absence of such evidence, the conclusion that new measures are needed is not justified. It would instead impose significant and unnecessary administrative and financial burdens on service providers, diverting resources away from strengthening networks and improving customer service in ways that, based on extensive experience with customers, would deliver far greater benefits to consumers.

Introduction

7. Pursuant to the procedure outlined in *Telecom Notice of Consultation 2025-227 - Call for Comments – Consumer protections in the event of a service outage or disruption (Consultation)*, the Canadian Telecommunications Association (CTA or the Association) provides its responses to the questions in Appendix 2 to the Commission's call for comments.
8. CTA is an industry association dedicated to building a better future for Canadians through connectivity. Our members include service providers, equipment manufacturers, and other organizations in the telecommunications ecosystem, that invest in, build, maintain, and operate Canada's world-class telecommunications and broadcasting networks. Failure to address any question should not be construed as our agreement with any assertions made, or preliminary positions taken by the Commission. In addition, to the extent that any comment in this intervention conflicts with a comment of a CTA member, the comment of the member shall prevail with respect to that member.

Answers to Appendix 2 Questions

Q1. Should the Commission impose consumer protections in the event of a service outage or disruption, or are existing protections sufficient? Why or why not?

9. Existing consumer protections and industry practices are sufficient and effective to protect consumers in the event of a service outage or disruption. The Commission should not impose new regulatory mandates in the absence of clear evidence that a specific consumer harm requires intervention. No such evidence has been presented by the Commission in this Consultation.
10. In *Telecommunications in the Far North* (Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2025-9), the Commission identified a clearly defined problem: subscribers in the Far North experience outages “with both a higher frequency and longer duration”¹ than elsewhere in Canada owing to geographic isolation, harsh environmental conditions, and dependence on satellite and microwave transport. The Commission also concluded that because of limited competition in the Far North, the incumbent provider “may have less incentive to improve the reliability of its network”² and that requiring Northwestel to provide automatic bill credits for certain outages “could incentivize Northwestel to reduce the frequency of network outages and address outages more quickly.”³
11. The resulting automatic-credit regime for outages longer than 24 hours was therefore a targeted remedy to address what the Commission considered to be a demonstrable reliability issue in a market where competition alone was unlikely to deliver satisfactory improvement.
12. Those same circumstances do not exist in the rest of Canada. Across the rest of the country, consumers benefit from multiple facilities-based ISPs delivering world-class communications services over modern fibre, hybrid, mobile wireless, and satellite networks, complemented by intense retail competition. Reliability and customer satisfaction are already key competitive differentiators, creating a powerful market incentive to minimize and quickly remedy service interruptions. This is evidenced by the billions of dollars that facilities-based providers invest each year not only to expand network coverage, but also to improve service quality and reliability. Service

¹ Para 135

² Para 144

³ Para 146

providers also provide discretionary refunds or credits when customers experience material inconvenience and proactively communicate during outage events.

13. In this proceeding, the Commission has not identified a market failure, systemic reliability issue, or evidence of widespread consumer harm that would justify new regulatory intervention. Absent such a finding, the creation of mandatory compensation or communication requirements would be unwarranted and disproportionate to the evidence on record.
14. The Commission has noted that outages can be highly disruptive for affected subscribers. While this may be true in some cases, it does not follow that service providers should be compelled to compensate subscribers for such disruptions. To do so would imply an expectation that communications services are provided with a guarantee of one hundred percent uptime and should never fail, an assumption that is both technically and economically unrealistic. Communications networks are vast, interconnected systems subject to power outages, equipment failure, vandalism, construction damage, and extreme weather, most of which are outside the service provider's control.
15. As with other important services such as electrical and water distribution, telecommunications are delivered on a best-efforts or "as is" basis. Outages are occasional but unavoidable, and providers work diligently to restore service as quickly as possible. Other important service sectors, such as electricity and water distribution, are not held to a one hundred percent continuity standard nor required to compensate customers for temporary disruptions, and the same principle should apply to communications services.⁴
16. Moreover, there is no evidence that introducing a compensation regime would improve reliability. On the contrary, it would divert resources from ongoing network investment and resiliency initiatives, require costly administrative and IT systems to

⁴ See for example, **Hydro One**, [Conditions of Service](#), 2.3.1 Limitations on the Guarantee of Supply Hydro One will make reasonable efforts to provide Customers with a regular and uninterrupted supply of electricity. However, Hydro One does not guarantee a constant supply, or the maintenance of unvaried frequency or voltage, and will not be liable for damages or production losses to Customers by reason of any failure if this occurs.

Hydro Quebec, [Conditions of Service](#), 12.2 Limited liability of Hydro-Québec Hydro-Québec does not guarantee a stable level of voltage and frequency, nor continuity of electricity service and delivery.

City of Vancouver (Water), [Water Works By-Law No. 4848](#), p15-16 "*The City does not guarantee pressure nor continuous supply of water, nor does it accept responsibility at any time for the maintenance of pressure on its lines nor for increases or decreases in pressure.*

manage infrequent and often uncontrollable events, and reduce flexibility in how companies serve customers. If the Commission's objective is to improve reliability, the current competitive market already provides the necessary incentives to continue improving reliability.

17. In summary, the Commission should not establish new consumer protection mandates when no underlying problem has been demonstrated. Existing competitive dynamics and voluntary practices already ensure that Canadian consumers benefit from reliable and continuously improving communications services, are treated fairly when outages occur, and receive communications concerning significant service outages.

Nature and scope of any further consumer protections

Q2. For any type of consumer protections considered in this proceeding, what should be considered a service “outage” or a “disruption”? For example, how long should the service be out before it is considered a service outage or a disruption?

18. The Commission should not impose any new regulatory mandates in this proceeding; accordingly, a formal definition of “outage” or “disruption” is not necessary. However, for discussion purposes only, we note that in Telecom Decision CRTC 2025-225 the Commission defines an outage as “a complete loss of a primary service”.⁵ While it remains to be seen how the Commission intends to apply this term, including any qualifications, conditions or exemptions that may accompany it, this definition could, *prima facie*, be appropriate for use in this discussion, as it provides a clear and objective threshold that distinguishes between temporary quality fluctuations and genuine service unavailability.
19. By contrast, a “disruption” could reasonably be understood as a temporary impairment or degradation of service quality that does not amount to a complete loss of the primary service. It could also mean, as Bell references in its RFI response of October 9, 2025, “any interruption in service, including those at the individual customer level that may stem from network issues, customer equipment malfunctions, local power failures, or customer action (e.g., unplugging or turning off a device)”.⁶ The appropriate definition of “disruption” will ultimately depend on the context in which the Commission intends to use the term, and should be scoped

⁵ Paragraph 30

⁶ Bell Canada Response to Request - (CRTC)4Sep25-3 TBNC 2025-227

accordingly to avoid conflating temporary impairment or degradation of service quality with complete loss of service, or customer-specific issues with systemic network events.

Q3. Should the definition of these terms vary depending on the service in question (i.e., home Internet, telephone, television, or wireless services)? Why or why not?

20. The Commission should not impose any new regulatory mandates in this proceeding; accordingly, a formal definition of “outage” or “disruption” is not necessary. However, to the extent the Commission references definitions for these terms in this proceeding they should remain consistent across all telecommunications services to ensure clarity and regulatory coherence. However, what *constitutes* an outage or disruption, i.e., the technical threshold that distinguishes one from the other, will necessarily vary depending on the service in question.

21. For example:

Fixed residential Internet and phone (residential broadband and telephone):

An “outage” should be limited to a complete loss of connectivity at the customer premises, i.e., the inability to access the Internet at all or make or receive a phone call, as applicable. Minor slowdowns, call quality, or other intermittent performance issues should not qualify as outages, as these are phenomena that do not constitute total service loss and are difficult to objectively detect or verify.

Broadcasting distribution (television) services:

BDU networks operate on different technical platforms and consumers typically have access to multiple alternative viewing platforms. For example, if a customer’s cable or satellite television service experiences a temporary outage, that customer can often continue watching programming through online streaming via mobile apps and web platforms. In such circumstances, the subscriber has not experienced a complete loss of service.

Mobile wireless services:

Wireless networks are inherently mobile and distributed, with performance affected by geography, user location, signal strength, network congestion, and device factors. A localized or temporary network event, such as an outage at a

single cell site, rarely results in a total loss of service. It is also typically impossible to identify precisely which customers were affected or for how long.

Q4. Should service outages and disruptions be treated in the same manner or differently, regardless of the service? Why or why not?

22. If by “treated” the Commission means whether the same regulatory measures, if any, should apply uniformly to outages and disruptions across all service types, the answer is no. Outages and disruptions should not be treated in the same manner, because the technical characteristics of each service, and the practical ability to detect or verify the occurrence and impact of such events, differ substantially.
23. As discussed in our response to Question 3, the definitions of “outage” and “disruption” should remain consistent across all telecommunications services. However, the application of any regulatory requirements must reflect the operational realities of each service. A uniform approach would fail to recognize the differences in how outages are experienced, detected, and addressed, and could impose disproportionate or technically unworkable obligations.
24. For example, while it may be technically feasible for some service providers to detect a total loss of connectivity at a customer’s premises for some fixed residential Internet, telephone, and television services, not all service providers are able to do so. More importantly, as noted in service provider responses to the Appendix 1 RFI, requiring service providers to monitor individual customer outages on a 24/7 basis would be impractical and inappropriate.⁷ In either case, further investigation is often required to determine whether the event was caused by a network fault or by customer-side conditions such as a power outage, wiring issue, or equipment being powered-off or disconnected by the customer.
25. Mobile wireless services operate in far more dynamic environments where traffic is distributed among a network of cell sites. A localized cell-site outage may temporarily affect some users while others remain connected through adjacent sites. Subscribers who typically reside in an area impacted by an outage may not be in the affected area when the outage occurs. A device may lose connection to the mobile network because it has been turned off, or the SIM card has been removed or damaged. These factors and more make it technically impractical to determine which subscribers have been affected and for how long.

⁷ See for example, Bragg, Response to Interrogatory, October 9, 2025, question 4, pages 9-11.

26. Considering these differences, a single, uniform set of regulatory measures would be neither practical nor justified. The regulatory treatment of outages and disruptions, if any, should be service-appropriate, technically feasible, and administratively practical, taking into account the nature of the service, the provider's ability to confirm the cause of the event and identify the customers impacted.
27. More broadly, there is no evidence that existing consumer protections or industry practices are insufficient to address network reliability or outage response. Service providers already have strong commercial and reputational incentives to maintain reliable service, treat customers fairly, and communicate with customers when significant service interruptions occur. Imposing new, uniform regulatory requirements would add complexity and cost without a demonstrated consumer benefit.

Q5. What type of service outage and disruption protections should be imposed?

(a) Should the Commission require service providers to issue refunds and/or bill credits (hereafter, refunds)? Why or why not?

28. No. The Commission should not impose mandatory refund obligations.
29. As outlined in our response to Question 1, the Commission's decision to require automatic bill credits for Northwestel in *Telecommunications in the Far North* (Telecom Regulatory Policy 2025-9) was an evidence-based, region-specific remedy addressing unique circumstances in the Far North, with documented reliability concerns and the Commission's view that the level of competition in the region was not sufficient to drive investment in improving reliability. Those same conditions do not exist elsewhere in Canada, where facilities-based competition and significant ongoing investment, from both the private sector and public/private partnerships, are driving network expansion and reliability improvements. A compensation mandate would only divert scarce resources from further improving service performance and reliability.
30. There is also no evidence that existing industry outage responses are insufficient. Service providers have strong commercial and reputational incentives to maintain reliable services and treat customers fairly. This includes providing discretionary refunds or credits when the circumstance of an outage is confirmed and

communicating with customers through appropriate channels when significant service interruptions occur. Imposing new, uniform regulatory requirements would add complexity and cost without a demonstrated consumer benefit.

31. Finally, as noted in our response to Question 1, communications services are provided on a best-effort basis, like electricity and water services. Temporary interruptions, while infrequent, do occur given the complexity and scale of modern networks, often for reasons beyond the control of service providers. Establishing an expectation of uninterrupted service, or of automatic compensation for any temporary loss, would be unrealistic and inconsistent with how other critical services are regulated.

(b) Should the Commission require service providers to send out customer communications regarding service outages or disruptions? Why or why not?

32. No. Mandating standardized customer communications for every service disruption is unnecessary and impractical.
33. Service providers already have strong commercial incentives to communicate effectively with their customers regarding service outages or disruptions. Clear and timely communication helps manage expectations, maintain trust, and reduce call volumes to customer care services, all of which align with service providers' business interests and benefit consumers. Through years of experience in dealing with customer communications and based on the uniqueness of each of their operations, service providers are best positioned to determine the most appropriate communication channels and thresholds, consistent with the nature of the event, customer needs, and available technology.
34. However, it must be recognized that during a service outage the affected customers often cannot receive electronic notifications until the service is restored. In such cases, any requirement to send real-time messages would be functionally ineffective, as the very channels used for communication depend on the same networks experiencing the interruption.
35. Given this reality, imposing new or prescriptive communication mandates would add regulatory complexity and increase financial and administrative burdens on service providers, without materially improving consumer outcomes.

(c) What other measures, if any, should service providers undertake in responding to customers before, during, or after a service outage?

36. No additional regulatory measures are required. Competitive market dynamics and existing customer service already ensure that customers are treated fairly and are informed. Imposing new, prescriptive requirements could limit the flexibility that service providers require to tailor customer service measures to specific circumstances and divert resources away from continued improvement in customer-service responsiveness and network reliability.

Q6. What exceptions should be considered? Possible exceptions could include, for example, customer-caused service outages or disruption, service outages or disruption caused by third parties not employed by the service provider, or unforeseen force majeure events.

37. As we do not think any new regulatory measures should be imposed, determining exceptions is not necessary.
38. However, to the extent the Commission imposes any compensation obligations, service providers should not be required to compensate subscribers for outages or disruptions caused by factors outside of the service provider's control. These include force majeure events, including extreme weather and natural disasters, third-party incidents, such as damage caused by construction projects, power outages, or upstream network disruptions, and customer-caused outages. The Commission has previously acknowledged this principle in *Telecommunications in the Far North* (Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2025-9), where it explicitly excluded circumstances beyond the company's reasonable control from Northwestel's compensation obligations.
39. If the Commission were to consider any new compensation obligations in this proceeding, which the Association does not support, those obligations would need to incorporate similar exceptions to ensure fairness, practicality, and consistency with past Commission determinations.
40. Similarly, if the Commission were to consider any new customer communication obligations, which the Association does not support, such obligation should only apply to network-related events that impact a significant number of subscribers for a substantial period of time.

Q7. Should the Commission establish a minimum duration to a service outage or disruption before any potential consumer protections are required? Address each

proposed protection measure, including mandatory refunds and customer communication requirements.

41. As outlined in earlier responses, the Association does not think that any new regulatory measures, such as mandatory refunds or prescribed customer communication requirements, are necessary or justified. In the absence of any need for new measures, determining a duration threshold is not relevant.
42. The Association will address any proposed duration or time-window concepts, should they be raised, in the reply phase of this proceeding.

Application of any consumer protections

Q8. Should any new requirements apply to all telecommunications service providers and broadcasting distribution undertakings (BDUs)? Why or why not?

43. As outlined in earlier responses, the Association does not think that any new regulatory mandates are necessary nor justified.
44. However, if the Commission nevertheless decides to introduce new requirements, they should apply equally to all service providers and BDUs, rather than targeting only a subset of services providers or BDUs. Consistent application would help ensure regulatory neutrality and fairness, prevent competitive distortions, and avoid placing uneven compliance burdens on certain providers.

Q9. More specifically, which retail services warrant the imposition of consumer protections in the event of a service outage or disruption? For example, should the measures apply to all services that are in a typical bundle and covered by the existing Consumer Protection Codes (i.e., home Internet, telephone, television, and wireless services)?

45. As explained in earlier responses, the Association does not think that any new regulatory requirements are necessary or justified.
46. Even if new measures were contemplated, which the Association does not support, it would be inappropriate to apply consumer protections uniformly across all telecommunications and broadcasting services.
47. For example, while a loss of residential internet service can be confirmed through verification of a loss of signal between a customer's modem and the network, it is not feasible for service providers to objectively determine which mobile subscribers were impacted by mobile network performance issues. Even for fixed residential services,

additional investigation is often required to confirm whether the loss of service was caused by the network or by customer-side issues such as faulty equipment or in-home wiring, or by some other external cause.

48. Similarly, broadcasting distribution (television) services operate under different technical frameworks and customers commonly have access to multiple alternative viewing options (e.g., streaming, IPTV, and on-demand platforms) even if one means of accessing programming is disrupted. In these cases, it would be extremely difficult to verify whether each individual customer experienced a complete loss of access to programming.
49. The many variables between services, including how outages are defined, identified, and verified, are why customer compensation and communication practices are best left to individual service providers. Service providers have strong commercial and reputational incentives to maintain reliable services and treat customers fairly. This includes providing discretionary refunds or credits once the circumstance of an outage is confirmed and communicating with customers through appropriate channels when significant service interruptions occur. Imposing new, uniform regulatory requirements would add complexity and cost without a demonstrated consumer benefit.

Q10. Should any new requirements apply to retail services that are still subject to a tariff? Comment on which tariff amendments would be necessary, and provide an explanation and rationale.

50. The Association does not have a position on this matter at this time.

Q11. Should the application of any new consumer protections in the event of a service outage or disruption be limited to service providers that are currently required to comply with the Consumer Protection Codes? Or should they be extended to all service providers offering services considered in question 9 of this appendix, including those that are not currently subject to the Internet Code and Deposit and Disconnection Code? Why or why not?

51. As outlined in earlier responses, the Association does not think that any new regulatory mandates are necessary nor justified.
52. However, if the Commission nevertheless decides to introduce new requirements, they should apply equally to all service providers and BDUs, rather than targeting only a subset of services or companies. Consistent application would help ensure

regulatory neutrality and fairness, prevent competitive distortions, and avoid placing uneven compliance burdens on certain providers.

Q12. Should any new consumer protections apply to voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) providers? Why or why not?

53. The Association reserves the right to address responses to this question from other intervenors in the reply phase of this proceeding.

Q13. Who should benefit from any consumer protections considered in this proceeding?

(a) Should any new requirements apply to residential customers only or to small business customers as well? Why or why not?

54. As outlined in earlier responses, the Association does not think that any new regulatory mandates are necessary nor justified.

55. Even if new measures were contemplated, which the Association does not support, they should not apply to small business customers. The Commission has already addressed this distinction in *Telecom Regulatory Policy 2019-269* when it decided that the Internet Code should not apply to small businesses, recognizing that small businesses are commercial entities, not individual consumers, and typically enter contracts that differ in nature and complexity from residential service agreements. These customers often have different service needs, higher usage volumes, and negotiated terms, including service-level commitments, custom pricing, and dedicated account management. Many small businesses also operate in competitive markets where multiple service options exist, providing them with bargaining power and the ability to seek remedies or adjustments directly from their service providers.

56. Applying mandatory outage-related compensation or communication obligations to business accounts would therefore blur the distinction between consumer protection and commercial contracting and could interfere with negotiated service terms that already include remedies appropriate to the business context.

(b) If they should apply to businesses as well, should their application be limited to small business customers as generally defined in the context of the Consumer Protection Codes and by the Commission for Complaints of Telecom-television Services (CCTS)? Why or why not?

57. As explained in our response in paragraph (a), any new requirements should not apply to small business customers.

Possible refund requirement

Q14. If a refund requirement is imposed:

(a) Should the Commission set out how refunds to customers are to be calculated and if so, on what basis? For example, the Commission's *Prohibition of 30-day cancellation policies* provides for refunds for unused services following cancellation, pro-rated on a daily basis.

58. As outlined in earlier responses, the Association does not think that any new regulatory measures, including refunds, are necessary or justified. In the absence of any need for refund obligations, determining how refunds are to be calculated is not necessary.

59. The Association may address any proposed refund calculation methods, should they be raised, in the reply phase of this proceeding.

(b) Should the Commission determine the format of the refunds (for instance, as bill credits, direct payment, or through other means)? Why or why not?

60. As outlined in earlier responses, the Association does not think that any new regulatory measures, including refunds, are necessary or justified. In the absence of any need for refund obligations, determining the format for refunds is not relevant.

61. The Association may address any proposed format of refunds, should they be raised, in the reply phase of this proceeding.

(c) Should the amount of the refund be limited to the cost of the service that suffered a service outage or disruption? Why or why not?

62. The Association may address responses from other intervenors in the reply phase of this proceeding.

(d) Should other factors also be considered, including setting a minimum per service outage or disruption, considering additional compensation in recognition of the impact of a service outage, or a specific process to compensate for potential loss of time or revenues? Why or why not?

63. As outlined in our earlier responses, the Association does not think that any new regulatory mandates, including mandatory refunds or compensation schemes, are necessary or justified.
64. However, if the Commission were to consider such measures, which the Association does not support, it would be clearly inappropriate to base them on subjective factors such as the perceived impact of a service outage, or on potential loss of time or revenue.
65. As discussed in our responses above, telecommunications and broadcasting services are delivered on a best-effort basis, and it is neither practical nor reasonable to expect providers to compensate customers for indirect or consequential impacts arising from service interruptions. These impacts vary widely depending on each customer's individual circumstances and are not measurable or verifiable by the service provider.
66. Requiring providers to assess or compensate for such subjective losses would create excessive administrative and evidentiary burdens, requiring providers to evaluate claims and potentially adjudicate causation or quantum of loss. It would also expose providers to open-ended financial liability for events that are often outside their control, including power failures, extreme weather, or third-party damage. It would also be out of step other critical service sectors, like electricity, gas, and water services, where providers are not required to compensate customers for service interruptions, including for any indirect or consequential losses.
67. Such an approach would require service providers to assume unpredictable financial risk for events whose scope and impact they cannot measure or control. This would require them to price that risk into their service offerings through higher retail prices. Unbounded liability would also create a disincentive to continue offering services or expand networks into areas where outage risks, due to geography, weather, or infrastructure challenges, are inherently greater. These consequences would directly undermine affordability and investment, the very objectives that the Commission seeks to advance.
68. Any framework that exposes service providers to liability for the indirect or individualized impacts of outages would be economically unsustainable, counterproductive to network investment, and ultimately detrimental to consumers. If the Commission were to consider refunds, which the Association does not support, they should be considered without regard to any secondary impacts such as lost time, productivity, or revenue.

(e) How should bundled services be addressed for the purposes of a refund?

69. As outlined in earlier responses, the Association does not think that any new regulatory measures, including refunds, are necessary or justified. In the absence of any need for refund obligations, determining how bundled services should be addressed for the purpose of refunds is not necessary.
70. The Association may address any proposals regarding bundled services, should they be raised, in the reply phase of this proceeding.

(f) Should refunds be automatically awarded where the service provider detects a service outage or a disruption? Should customers be required to inform their service providers that they were subject to a service outage or disruption before receiving a refund? Or should both approaches be implemented in parallel? Why or why not?

71. The Association does not think that any new regulatory measures, including refunds, are necessary or justified. However, if the Commission were nevertheless to impose a refund or credit obligation, it would be impractical to require automatic compensation in most cases.
72. While it may be technically feasible for some service providers to confirm a total loss of connectivity at a customer's premises for some services without first being informed by the customer, not all service providers are able to do so. More importantly, as noted in service provider responses to the Appendix 1 RFI, requiring service providers to monitor individual customer outages on a 24/7 basis would be impractical and inappropriate.⁸ In either case, further investigation is often required to determine whether the event was caused by a network fault or by customer-side conditions such as a power outage, wiring issue, or equipment being powered-off or disconnected by the customer. For these reasons, any compensation scheme should require the customer to contact their service provider to inform them that they experienced a service outage and provide reasonable information requested by the service provider.

(g) How should refunds be assessed for services billed on a different basis? For example, how should refunds be assessed in the case of prepaid or pay-as-you-go services or in the case of services that are purchased as an add-on?

⁸ See for example, Bragg, Response to Interrogatory, October 9, 2025, question 4, pages 9-11.

73. The Association may address responses to this question from other intervenors in the reply phase of this proceeding.

(h) Should refunds be issued within a prescribed deadline? Why or why not?

74. The Association may address responses to this question from other intervenors in the reply phase of this proceeding.

Q15. Address the feasibility of service providers detecting and measuring service outages and disruptions for the purpose of assessing refunds. Explain your position.

75. We defer to our service provider members' responses to this question. We may respond to responses from other intervenors in the reply phase of this proceeding.

Possible customer communication requirement

Q16. If a customer communication requirement is imposed:

(a) Should the customer communication requirement be required in the event of planned service outages or disruptions, unplanned service outages or disruptions, or both? Why or why not?

76. The Association does not believe that any new customer communication obligation is necessary or justified. As explained in earlier responses, service providers already communicate effectively with customers and have strong commercial incentives to do so.

(b) Should the customer communication requirement differ in nature or content depending on whether the service outage or disruption is planned or not? Why or why not?

77. The Association does not think that any new customer communication obligation is necessary or justified. However, if the Commission were nevertheless to impose such a requirement, which the Association does not support, it would be inappropriate for the Commission to prescribe the specific nature, format, or content of communications to customers. Service providers already have extensive experience managing customer communications and are best positioned to determine how, when, and what to communicate based on the scale, duration, and cause of an outage.

78. The circumstances surrounding an outage, including whether it is planned or unplanned, vary widely across networks, technologies, and regions. These differences make a standardized or prescriptive approach impractical and

counterproductive, as it would prevent providers from using the tools, language, and timing that are most effective for their customers. In short, a rigid, one-size-fits-all model would add administrative burden without improving customer understanding or outcomes.

79. Service providers have a clear commercial incentive to communicate effectively during outages, and they already tailor their messages accordingly. The Commission should trust these existing practices rather than attempt to dictate them through regulation.

(c) Should the Commission determine the means and time frame for communications regarding service outages and disruptions with customers? Why or why not?

80. The Association does not think that any new customer communication obligation is necessary or justified. However, if the Commission were nevertheless to impose such a requirement, which the Association does not support, the Commission should not dictate the means and time frame for communications regarding outages and disruptions.
81. Service providers already have extensive experience managing customer communications and are best positioned to determine how, when, and what to communicate based on the scale, duration, and cause of an outage.
82. The circumstances surrounding an outage, including whether it is planned or unplanned, vary widely across networks, technologies, and regions. These differences make a standardized or prescriptive approach impractical and counterproductive, as it would prevent providers from using the tools, language, and timing that are most effective for their customers. In short, a rigid, one-size-fits-all model would add administrative burden without improving customer understanding or outcomes.
83. Service providers have a clear commercial incentive to communicate effectively during outages, and they already tailor their messages accordingly. The Commission should trust these existing practices rather than attempt to dictate them through regulation.

(d) What information should be required to be included in these communications?

84. The Association does not think that any new customer communication obligation is necessary or justified. However, if the Commission were nevertheless to impose such

a requirement, which the Association does not support, the Commission should not dictate what information should be required in communications with customers.

85. As mentioned in our previous answers to this Question 16, outage situations differ substantially depending on the circumstances. A uniform, prescriptive communication model would fail to account for these differences and would limit the flexibility providers need to respond effectively to their customers. The methods, timing, and type of information and level of detail appropriate for one network or service type or situation may not be suitable for another. Imposing standardized content or information requirements procedures would create an unnecessary administrative burden without meaningfully improving the customer experience.
86. Service providers are already highly motivated to communicate clearly and promptly during both planned and unplanned outages, as doing so directly supports customer satisfaction and retention. These well-established practices are best managed operationally, not through regulatory prescription.

(e) What should the means of communications be and why? Possible options include mailing lists, social media, announcements on the provider's website, up-to-date service outage maps, etc.

87. The Commission should not prescribe the means of communications.
88. Service providers already use a range of tools and channels to communicate with their customers. The choice of communication method depends on the nature, scope, and duration of the outage, as well as on what is most effective for the provider's particular operations and customer base.
89. Mandating specific communication means would be impractical and unnecessary, forcing providers to divert scarce resources away from network investment toward developing or maintaining systems that may not improve consumer outcomes. Worse, prescriptive requirements could disincentivize providers from using newer or more effective communication methods simply to ensure compliance with a less effective regulatory standard.
90. Because service provider IT systems, operations capacity, and customer preferences differ widely, a flexible approach is essential. The Commission should allow service providers to determine the most appropriate means of communication using the means of their choice and based on the circumstances of each event.

(f) Should the communications be sent to account holders only or to account users as well to ensure that anyone using the service is kept informed of service outages or disruptions? Why or why not?

91. If the Commission imposes a customer communications obligation, which the Association does not support, communications should be required to be sent to account holders only.
92. Service providers generally maintain contact information for the account holder, not for every individual user of a service. In many cases, it is not possible to identify or contact all users. Depending on the communication method, such as email, text message, or customer-portal notification, providers may not even have the necessary contact details for other users.
93. Extending obligations to reach all potential users would therefore be impractical, intrusive, and potentially inconsistent with privacy laws, as it would require collecting and storing additional personal information that providers do not need for service delivery.
94. Account holders already act as the primary point of contact and contractual party with the service provider, and it is reasonable for all formal notifications, including outage communications, to be directed to them. Attempting to reach every end user would add cost and complexity without materially improving the flow of information or consumer outcomes.

Additional or different protections for persons with disabilities, people residing in rural or remote areas, and other types of customers

Q17. In the context of the protections considered above, is the experience of persons with disabilities with service outages or disruptions different from the experience of other customers? If so, should the Commission consider additional or different protections for these customers? Explain your rationale.

95. The Association will address responses to this question from other intervenors in the reply phase of this proceeding.

Q18. In the context of the protections considered above, is the experience of people residing in rural or remote areas with service outages or disruptions different from the experience of other customers? If so, should the Commission consider additional or different protections for these customers? Explain your rationale.

96. The Association will address responses to this question from other intervenors in the reply phase of this proceeding.

Q19. In the context of the protections considered above, is the experience of any other types of customers different? If so, should the Commission consider additional or different protections for these customers? Explain your rationale.

97. The Association will address responses to this question from other intervenors in the reply phase of this proceeding.

Wholesale implications

Q20. Should any new service outage and disruption protection measures apply to wholesale-based service providers regarding their retail customers? Why or why not?

98. The Association does not take a position on this question at this time but may address responses to this question in the reply phase of this proceeding.

Q21. What are the implications if the cause of the service outage or disruption is not the wholesale-based service provider?

99. The Association does not take a position on this question at this time but may address responses to this question in the reply phase of this proceeding.

Q22. Should wholesale providers have requirements to have a service outage and disruption policy regarding their wholesale customers through their tariffs or contractual provisions or imposed by the Commission? Why or why not?

100. The Association does not take a position on this question at this time but may address responses to this question in the reply phase of this proceeding.

Administration and enforcement

Q23. As the independent organization that handles telephone, cable, and Internet complaints between service providers and their customers and administrator of the Consumer Protection Codes, should the CCTS administer any new consumer protections in the event of a service outage or disruption that may be imposed? Why or why not?

101. The Association does not take a position on this question at this time but may address responses to this question in the reply phase of this proceeding.

Q24. Should the CCTS be required to report specific information? Why or why not?

102. The Association does not take a position on this question at this time but may address responses to this question in the reply phase of this proceeding.

Q25. Should the Commission be responsible for enforcing compliance with any new requirements? If so, how?

103. The Association does not take a position on this question at this time but may address responses to this question in the reply phase of this proceeding.

Q26. Should service providers be required to report periodically on their compliance? If so, what information should service providers be required to provide for compliance assessment purposes and when?

104. The Association does not take a position on this question at this time but may address responses to this question in the reply phase of this proceeding.

Implementation and promotion

Q27. How should any new consumer protections considered in this proceeding be implemented? For example, in the case of telecommunications service providers, should they be imposed as a condition of service for telecommunications services under sections 24 and 24.1 of the *Telecommunications Act*? In the case of BDUs, should they be imposed as a condition of service under paragraph 9.1(1)(j) of the *Broadcasting Act*?

105. The Association does not take a position on this question at this time but may address responses to this question in the reply phase of this proceeding.

Q28. When should any new consumer protections for service outages or disruptions be implemented? Could they be implemented within three months of the publication of a Commission decision?

106. While the Association does not think any new regulatory measures are required, if the Commission nevertheless decides to impose new requirements, the implementation timeline should not be determined until the details of those requirements are known.

107. Depending on the nature and complexity of the obligations, service providers may need to update existing IT systems or develop entirely new systems and internal processes to comply. These types of system changes often require a lengthy planning and development period, as they must be integrated into broader operational frameworks and compete for limited resources with other critical IT and network projects. Such projects are typically scheduled well in advance to ensure efficiency, stability, and cybersecurity.

108. For these reasons, the Commission should defer setting any implementation date until the specific obligations are established and affected parties have had an opportunity to make representations regarding the time, resources, and system changes necessary to implement them effectively.

Q29. Comment on whether, if a service provider faces unique barriers that would make implementing a specific provision virtually technically impossible or financially unreasonable for itself, it should be able to submit a Part 1 application prior to the provisions coming into effect, seeking an extension to the implementation of those provisions.

109. The Association does not think any new regulatory requirements are necessary or justified. That said, if the Commission were nevertheless to impose new obligations, the need for individual service providers to seek extensions through a Part 1 application would suggest that the underlying requirements are too onerous in general, not merely for one provider. If a requirement could be technically unworkable or financially unreasonable for one service provider, then before imposing such obligation on anyone, the Commission should re-examine the proposed requirement itself rather than rely on individual exemption processes. A rule that cannot be reasonably or uniformly implemented across the industry would fail the test of proportionality and would be inconsistent with sound regulatory design.

110. Accordingly, rather than creating a mechanism for case-by-case extensions, the Commission should ensure that any new requirements are feasible, proportionate, and broadly achievable, and, as the Association has consistently argued, avoid imposing new mandates altogether.

Q30. What promotion mechanisms would be appropriate to effectively promote any new service outage and disruption protections that may be imposed? Which entities should be responsible for the promotion of any new service outage and disruption protections?

111. The Association does not believe that any new regulatory requirements are necessary or justified. Accordingly, there is no need to establish promotion mechanisms for measures that are not required.

112. However, if the Commission nevertheless decides to implement new requirements, the task of promoting or publicizing those requirements should not fall to service

providers. Promotion of new regulatory obligations is properly the responsibility of the Commission itself and/or relevant government departments and agencies, which have the mandate and communications infrastructure to inform Canadians about regulatory changes.

113. Service providers will, as always, comply with any requirements that apply to them, but the responsibility for explaining or promoting new regulatory measures to the public rests with the regulator, not with the regulated entities.

Review

Q31. How and when should the effectiveness of any consumer protections in the event of a service outage or disruption be reviewed? Provide justification for your position.

114. The Association does not take a position on this question at this time but may address responses to this question in the reply phase of this proceeding.

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