

Stations Get Lump Of Coal From FCC

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Body

The FCC issued a fistful of fines over the holidays to radio stations that had apparently violated commission rules on lotteries and contests.

Bell Broadcasting's WJZZ Detroit was fined \$ 6,250 for apparent refusal to hand out an announced prize for a listener contest. Commonwealth Broadcasting's KMZQ Las Vegas was fined \$ 12,500 for apparently advertising illegal gambling. Sequoyah Communications' WQBB Knoxville, Tenn., got a letter advising a \$ 6,250 fine for a lottery violation. And Calnevar Broadcasting's KBAS/KWAZ Bullhead City, Ariz., got one advising a \$ 12,500 fine, also for apparent lottery violations.

Penfold Communications' noncommercial KRTM Escondido, Calif., received a letter saying a \$ 5,000 fine was forthcoming if it could not explain why 18 station "announcements" about Honda, General Electric ovens, banks, realtors, and other businesses didn't cross the line to commercials.

JOINT BOARD TO MEET

The National Assn. of Broadcasters' joint board will meet over the Jan. 15-17 weekend to discuss an update of NAB's "statement of principles," a more loosely written variant of the old NAB Code, which will include the trade group's stance on so-called indecent or adult radio programming.

NAB, which has filed innumerable comments with the FCC on the indecency issue and safe-harbor hours, as well as on its view that the FCC has overreached with its new "big fine" authority, has not commented specifically on the huge fines slapped on Infinity Broadcasting and Greater Media for their broadcasts of Howard Stern shows, and it won't.

"It's not our policy to comment on individual fines," says NAB spokesperson Lynn McReynolds. "We never have. Of course, those fines are larger, but I think when the board meets there will

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be updated discussions of indecency and the FCC rules and fines as a larger issue, along with violence on TV, in connection with the [NAB] statement of principles."

In related news, Infinity lawyers now say they might consider filing for an extension to the appeal they'd planned to file this month concerning that company's recent \$ 600,000 FCC fine.

FCC RENEWAL: IS ANYBODY OUT THERE

The FCC has announced a proposal to modify its Form 303-S to require licensees of full-power, commercial AM, FM, and TV stations to report whether their stations are on the air or have discontinued operations at the time of license renewal.

The proposal ruling follows a number of reported cases last year where the FCC discovered stations that has discontinued operation without telling the commission. The FCC says the proposal "is in keeping with our policy of withholding action of renewal applications until after stations that are off the air have resumed operation."

Public comments are due Feb. 23; reply comments March 10.

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