

Wisconsin Hosts FCC Commissioner Copps

FCC Commissioner Michael Copps visited Wisconsin for several DTV Transition-related events in November. On Tuesday, December 2, per the Commissioner's request, the WBA sponsored a luncheon for Milwaukee-area TV General Managers at Marquette University in order to discuss how the DTV Transition is going in the Milwaukee area. Discussion focused on what the market has done as a whole (including the DTV Soft Test and Live, Local DTV Answers Phone Bank which was held in the market on September 15; and also the upcoming, at that time, 2nd market-wide test on December 17; the DTV Trekker being at the State Fair and the Market-wide spot they created promoting the transition.), as well as individual thoughts and concerns regarding the transition. In his remarks, Commissioner Copps focused on "The Time Is Now" - stressing that NOW is the time to apply for a coupon, as there is concern about the lag time in between application and the analog shut-off date. As a result of the Commissioner's comments, Milwaukee area television stations got together and filmed, "The Time Is Now", a 30 second PSA using local talent which reiterates the Commissioner's message.

Later that afternoon, the WBA sponsored a Town Hall Meeting at Marquette University to provide information to the public on the DTV Transition. The Commissioner addressed a crowd of close to 150 people; provided a converter box demonstration, and had a Q&A session, as well. Throughout the day, the Commissioner also provided interviews to many Milwaukee-area Television and Radio stations, as well.

On Wednesday, December 3, the WBA sponsored a luncheon for Green Bay-area TV General Managers (with a format similar to the Milwaukee luncheon), which was held at Lambeau Field. President & CEO of the Green Bay Packers, Mark Murphy, graciously stopped by the luncheon to meet Commissioner Copps. The Commissioner asked Mr. Murphy if Green Bay/Appleton market Television stations would be able to broadcast a DTV PSA on the Tundra Vision during a Packers game. As a result, Mr. Murphy and the Packers graciously agreed to provide inventory in the pregame warm-ups of the December 28 game for a DTV PSA featuring all the stations' logos. It was wonderful for the Packers to allow this opportunity. The Commissioner was also able to enjoy a private tour of Lambeau following our luncheon.

That evening, the Commissioner joined us at the Green Bay/Appleton DTV Soft Test and Live, Local DTV Answers Phone Bank. We received notes from Commissioner Copps and Patrick Webre, Southeast Regional Director for the FCC's DTV Transition National Outreach Campaign, who traveled to Wisconsin with the Commissioner, saying that "they have told numerous folks at the FCC about our excellent phone bank event in Green Bay", and they "would like to see an event like that replicated in markets throughout the nation."

The Commissioner grew up in the Milwaukee area, and mentioned several times how good it was to be back in his home state. A special thank you to those in the Milwaukee and Green Bay/Appleton markets who helped make the Commissioner's visit a success.