

Declaration of Philip Scharf

Philip Scharf declares as follows:

1. I am the Director of Operations of Television Station WCAX-TV, Burlington, Vermont.
2. Burlington is located in the Burlington-Plattsburgh Designated Market Area. According to Nielsen, the Burlington-Plattsburgh Designated Market Area is, for 2016, the 98th largest television market in the United States.
3. I submit this Declaration in response to the complaint about closed captioning on WCAX-TV submitted to the FCC by Ms. Marjorie Wells.

WCAX Captioning Policy

4. WCAX uses the electronic newsroom technique (ENT) to provide captions for its local news programming. It follows the best practices established by the FCC in 2014 for “enhanced ENT.”

Weather Forecasts

5. The Wells complaint states that “Weather captioning is erratic [sic].” Every time that the weather person is on air and presenting weather information, WCAX-TV provides captioning. Although it is not captioned verbatim, we do provide the main information in the closed captioning. In a recent news program, the following text was provided in captioning during the weather forecast:

Unsettled weather through end of week as frontal boundary wobbles around the northeast. Snow/rain showers this morning, then mostly cloudy in afternoon as front moves south. Overnight, front moves back north with snow (trace – 3”) and a wintry mix. That will last into the first part of Thursday, then taper off. More rain moves in Thursday night with windy conditions, possibly a t-storm or two. Rain showers linger into Friday with warm temperatures. Then sharply colder Friday night with rain showers ending with a few snow showers mixed in. Weekend looks nice – lots of sun & warmer. Early next week – chance for rain.

6. Combined with the weather maps and other visual information shown in WCAX’s weather segments, captions like this convey the forecast for the WCAX viewing area and the current weather conditions. WCAX-TV will in addition in the near future begin requiring its meteorologists to prepare a more extensive script for programs with multiple weather segments that will provide smoother captions for weather programming.

Captioning of Live Interviews

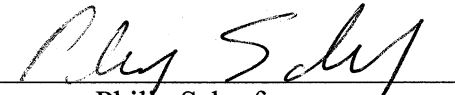
7. A second element of the Wells complaint is that, during a segment of WCAX-TV's evening news titled "*The 30*," which features live interviews, the entire interview is not captioned. Ms. Wells concedes that reporters' questions during these live segments are captioned, but complains that guest answers are not.

8. WCAX-TV's policy is that, as the interviewee is responding to questions during live interviews, on the screen there are lower-third graphics describing what the interviewee is speaking about. For example, in an interview about a car crash, these lower-third graphics did appear: "Kennedy Drive crash; Drag racing; Distracted driving; Hundreds of tickets." Further, to the extent that clips from live interviews are used in later newscast segments, WCAX transcribes the portion of answers that are reused and they are fully captioned.

9. I have read the response of Mt. Mansfield Television, Inc. to the Complaint filed by Ms. Marjorie Wells. To the best of my knowledge, the factual matters recited in that response are true and correct.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on May 12, 2016.


Philip Scharf