

Jason S. Roberts
Senior Counsel
312/222-3894
jroberts@tribunemedia.com



Tribune Media Company
435 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611
General: (312) 222-4565
Fax: (312) 222-4206
www.tribunemedia.com

Via E-Mail to z7zimsen@hotmail.com

May 3, 2016

Susan Kimmel (Susan.Kimmel@fcc.gov)
Deputy Chief
Disability Rights Office
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: FCC Complaint Ticket 758751 (KCPQ)

Dear Ms. Kimmel:

This letter is written on behalf of Tribune Broadcasting Seattle, LLC, licensee of KCPQ (TV), Tacoma, Washington (“KCPQ”), in response to the above-referenced complaint filed by Mr. Zimsen regarding the accuracy of and delay in captioning aired during the KCPQ evening newscasts.

KCPQ broadcasts over 44 hours of live local news coverage per week, providing a unique and necessary voice for its viewers. As a FOX affiliate located in one of the top 25 television markets (as determined by Nielsen), KCPQ is required to provide real-time captions for its live programming. While KCPQ makes efforts to provide captioning that meets the FCC’s quality standards, because of the immediacy of the live captioning, unavoidable errors occur.

KCPQ uses a third party captioning service that employs voice recognition software, a captioning technique common in the industry. The captioner dials into both the KCPQ audio feed and KCPQ captioning encoder. Using voice recognition software and caption generating machines, the captioner listens and repeats the KCPQ audio, which is processed and fed into the encoder for the on-screen captioning.

KCPQ has been working with the captioning center to explore ways in which it can improve the captioning quality and latency. The center has invested additional resources to further train its employees, including the strengthening of the “voice model” used by the captioner to improve the voice recognition, requesting advance material from KCPQ to be used in the live newscasts to give the captioner a better understanding of the material that he or she is captioning, and avoiding the use of contractions and grammatical shortcuts.

The captioning center informed KCPQ it is also researching making potential upgrades to its equipment, including the encoders and caption generating machines, as well as possibly investing in different captioning software.

KCPQ plans to further educate its master control operators to become better aware of the presence and accuracy of captions – beyond the required hourly log monitoring notations. Upon noticing missing or garbled captions, the operators will be taught to call the captioning service immediately and if necessary, studio maintenance, to determine the cause of the error, and to work towards correcting the issue as quickly as possible. KCPQ also instructs relevant station personnel to maintain detailed notes on any caption disruptions on the transmitter log, as well as any technical steps made to resolve the errors, to help KCPQ in making continued improvements.

KCPQ will continue monitoring the captioning, and if there is not a marked improvement after the efforts set forth above are taken, will explore different alternatives to make sure quality captioning is provided for its viewers, including transferring the services to a different captioning center.

KCPQ regrets these typographical and timing errors, and as shown takes its captioning responsibilities seriously. The Station is sensitive to viewer concerns and appreciates the input Mr. Zimsen in particular has provided. If there are any additional questions, please contact the undersigned.

Sincerely yours,


Jason S. Roberts

cc: DR0carriersupport@fcc.gov
Shavonne Morris (shavonne.morris@fcc.gov)
Sherita Kennedy (sherita.kennedy@fcc.gov)