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## The VAB Voice



### LEAHY TO SPEAK AT SLC



The NAB's annual State Leadership Conference gives broadcasters from around the country the opportunity to converge on Washington, DC and visit their elected officials at their offices. This month, however, Vermont U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy will be going *to* the broadcasters. Vermont's senior senator has accepted an invitation from NAB President (and former Oregon Republican U.S. Senator) Gordon Smith to be the keynote speaker at the SLC event on March 13. We thank Senator Leahy for making room in his busy schedule, and we'll have a report on his remarks in next month's VAB Voice.

### DID YOU FILE EAS RESULTS?

A reminder for stations that have not yet submitted the results of their participation in the Nationwide Emergency Alert System Test on November 9, 2011 to the FCC. Failure to submit your test results is a violation of FCC rules and could lead to penalties or fines. Although the official deadline for filing your results has passed, stations may still file their test results and should do so as soon as possible. The FCC will no longer accept the required test data electronically. For information on how to file in paper format, please consult the FCC's EAS Nationwide Test website. All nationwide EAS test results reported by radio and television stations will remain confidential. Stations are also reminded to consult their station counsel in completing the report, if appropriate.

March, 2012

## VAB REDUCES STATION ABIP FEES

The VAB Board of Directors is pleased to announce that it is lowering the required station contribution to take part in this year's Alternative Broadcast Inspection Program. Three years ago, the last time ABIP subsidies were offered, the alternative inspection cost \$450, of which the VAB paid \$300 and each station paid \$150.

This year, the overall cost is \$475, but stations will only have to pay \$50 if they complete the required station agreement before July 1, 2012. After that date, stations will be required to pay \$100. The VAB will pay for the difference.

It's one of the most popular member benefits offered by the VAB. To qualify for the subsidy, stations must have scheduled an alternative inspection to occur within the 2012 calendar year.

Under the program, stations undergo a mock inspection by Robert Shotwell of Spectrum Investigative Services.

Once an inspection is scheduled, the VAB notifies the FCC. The FCC agrees not to conduct a regular compliance inspection once a station schedules an inspection.

Once the inspection is successfully conducted, a station receives a certificate of compliance and the FCC agrees not to conduct a regular inspection for a period of three years. Complaint-driven inspections are *not* covered by ABIP.

Robert Shotwell will be in touch with all the stations to discuss participation and scheduling. To learn more about this valuable program and to download the new ABIP Station Agreement, visit the VAB website at [www.vab.org](http://www.vab.org).

## COMMERCIAL AWARD ENTRIES DUE MARCH 9

The deadline is March 9, 2012 to enter your best spots in the VAB 2012 Commercial of the Year Awards.

Every radio station, TV station or advertising agency that is a regular or associate member of the VAB may submit up to nine total entries. Each entry must be submitted separately on CD or DVD and accompanied by a separate official entry form. The entry form is available at [www.vab.org](http://www.vab.org).

Send your best locally-written and produced commercials, promos, spec spots and PSA's. All spots (except for spec spots) must have aired locally between February 1, 2011 and February 1, 2012.

Our judges will determine the radio, television and agency winners in each of those categories for *Most Creative*, *Best Produced* and *Best Copywriting* awards. Also, all entries are eligible for the prestigious "*Radio Best in Show*" and "*Television Best in Show*" awards.

Complete rules are included on the entry form at [www.vab.org](http://www.vab.org). The awards will be presented May 17 during the awards luncheon at the VAB Annual Convention at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Montpelier. Good luck!

## CONGRESS APPROVES SPECTRUM AUCTION

Congress finally has given to the FCC authority to conduct spectrum auctions to reclaim parts of the TV spectrum for wireless users, and most DC-based industry associations, including the NAB, have reacted favorably. For a process that was so controversial, this seems like a very favorable result. Television stations, in particular, will have much relief from concerns about the forced-reallocation of their operations to less favorable spectrum.

The auction rules set by Congress provide limits on how the FCC can conduct the auction, putting in place limits that protect television stations from being forced to change to an undesirable channel without their consent. And it talks a broad view of what a station can get compensation for in a "reverse auction" that establishes how much stations will take to clear spectrum for wireless broadband. The provisions include the following:

- The FCC will need to conduct two sets of auctions – the reverse auction to determine how much a station will be willing to take to abandon spectrum that can be used for wireless, and a "forward auction" looking at how much the wireless carriers will pay for the spectrum
- In the reverse auction, television broadcasters can get paid for any of the following:
  - Turning in their licenses
  - Turning in their channel to share spectrum with another station (e.g. to use part of their digital capacity).
  - Abandoning a UHF channel to move to a VHF channel
  - A fund of \$1,750,000,000 will be established to pay the costs of broadcasters incurred in repacking the spectrum. to make any abandoned spectrum more interesting to wireless bidders.
  - The following limitations on spectrum repacking will limit what the FCC can do:
    - The FCC will "make all reasonable efforts" to preserve the coverage area and population served by each television station
    - No station will be forced to move from a UHF to a VHF channel, or from a high VHF channel to a low VHF channel
    - If there are insufficient funds raised from the forward auction to meet all the costs of the auction, there will be no reassignment of channels and repacking of the spectrum, and parties in the reverse auction will not give up their channels

All in all, these restrictions seem to make television broadcasters secure from their fears that their spectrum would be pulled out from under them, or that their service areas would be undermined to force their participation in an auction. We will be interested to see how the FCC proceeds to implement this auction authority. Look for rulemaking proceeding to implement this legislation in the not too distant future.

- David Oxenford of Davis Wright Tremaine LLP



## 57th VAB Convention May 17th

Registration has started for the 57th annual VAB Convention, set for Thursday, May 17 at the Capitol Plaza Hotel and Conference Center in historic downtown Montpelier. We've put together some exciting seminars designed to help you and your station to make more money. You might also walk away with one of our door prizes--\$100 gas cards to help keep you on the road! You may register today at [www.vab.org](http://www.vab.org) for only \$25 per person for employees of VAB member stations and VAB associate members. The low fee covers:

- \* Morning coffee and snacks
- \* Morning and afternoon seminars of your choice
- \* Tasty luncheon during the VAB Commercial of the Year Awards presentation
- \* Free parking, gifts and prizes!

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

- 8:00 - 9:00 a.m. Registration; coffee and snacks**
- 9:00 - 9:15 VAB business meeting**
- 9:30 - 11:30 Mark Levy of Revenue Development Resources - Morning Sales Seminar**
- 9:30 - 11:00 Political Advertising Refresher Course with David Oxenford of Davis Wright Tremaine and Scott Goodwin of the NAB**
- Noon - 1:15 Commercial of the Year Awards Luncheon**  
**Awards Host: Tom Beardsley, WDEV**
- 1:30 - 3:30 Mark Levy Afternoon Sales Seminar**
- 1:30 - 3:00 Karen Travis of Advantage Systems**  
**Make money with social media!**
- 1:30 - 3:30 John Lund Programming Seminar**

**REGISTER ON-LINE TODAY AT**

**[WWW.VAB.ORG](http://WWW.VAB.ORG)**