FCC OKAYS TV TIME-SHARING FOR KSBW, KMBY ON CH. 8

Commission authorization is for sharing of time on a single vhf channel in the Salinas-Monterey area in California. Approval apparently based on fact AM stations do not overlap in competing for sponsors.

FIRST authorizations for sharing of time on a single TV channel by two stations—considered one practical solution to application deadlocks particularly in "hyphenated" cities—were issued by FCC last week to KSBW Salinas and KMBY Monterey, Calif.

Previously competitors for Ch. 8, allocated to the Salinas-Monterey area, the two stations now will share the same transmitter facilities but will maintain separate studios in their respective markets. Their mutually-exclusive applications were amended a fortnight ago to specify sharing of time pursuant to Sec. 3.622 of the Commission's rules which permit voluntary sharing of TV facilities [B•T, Feb. 16].

FCC's approval of the plan is understood to have been based upon the fact Ch. 8 is allocated to a twin-city area in which the two AM stations involved serve their respective markets without competitive overlap for local sponsors. The TV stations will serve both cities on the vhf facility, FCC noted.

One Commission spokesman indicated, however, there may be policy questions involved should two AM stations in the same market propose to share time on the same channel. He noted that while there have been several outstanding successful share-time operations in radio, notably WENR and WLS Chicago and WBAP Fort Worth-WFAA Dallas, the history of share-time since the medium's early days has weighed against such a policy.

The Commission representative cited the waste of dual transmitter and studio facilities, disproportionate cost of operation over available time to earn income, the eventual demands of the share-time operators for full time facilities and administrative headaches for FCC.

He indicated though, respecting TV, that the Commission will consider each share-time proposal on its individual merits.

KSBY and KMBY plan to use the same transmitter facilities, sharing the cost, and will operate with the same effective radiated power of 10 kw visual and 5 kw aural. The site is on Baldy Peak, some nine miles from Salinas, providing antenna height above average terrain of 2,630 ft. Separate studios will be maintained in Salinas and Monterey, about 14 miles apart.

Each station will program 42½ hours a week, according to the present plan, with a two-week cycle scheduled in which each will have evening hours for every night of the week over the period.

KMBY is owned 30% by President Kenyon Brown, 24% by Vice President-Treasurer Bing Crosby and 30% by Vice President-Secretary George L. Coleman. KSBW is owned 25% each by President-General Manager John C. Cohan, Secretary-Treasurer and Assistant General Manager William M. Oates, Vice President Lewis A. Terven Jr., and The Chronicle Pub. Co., licensee of KRON-AM-FM-TV San Francisco.

The share-time grant came on the heels of other Commission actions approving the joining of forces of previously competitive applicants. These were the grant of Ch. 47 at Macon, Ga., to Macon TV Co., comprising stockholders of both WBML and WNEX there, and the grant of Ch. 10 to WIS-TV Corp., Columbia, S. C., owned chiefly by WIS Columbia with minority interest held by a group of stockholders withdrawing from WMSC there [B•T, Feb. 16].

At Tulsa, competitors for Ch. 2, have joined in a common TV application under the name of Central Plains Enterprises Inc. They are Sen. Robert S. Kerr (D-Okla.), with his wife chief owner of KRMG, and W. G. Skelly, owner of KVOO (see Actions of the FCC, page 99).

The respective licensees of KRMG and KVOO will each hold a major interest in the new firm, with balance of control vested in a minor interest to be shared by Tulsa U. and Oklahoma A & M. Separate, competitive AM operations are promised.

Although the merger bid removed competition between the two stations for Ch. 2, FCC last week received two other new applications for the facility. Oil Capital TV Corp. filed for Ch. 2 while Fryer TV Corp., previously seeking uhf Ch. 23, amended to Ch. 2.

Principals in KUGN and KORE Eugene, Ore., competitors for Ch. 13 there, have joined in a consolidated application soon to be filed with FCC, the stations reported last week. A group of local businessmen not identified with the radio stations are included in the proposed new applicant.