

Dish and Sinclair agree in principle on new contract

August 27 2015, byTali Arbel

Dish Network and Sinclair Broadcast Group, one of the largest TV broadcasters in the U.S., said Wednesday they've agreed on the outline of a new contract, one day after Sinclair's channels went dark for Dish customers.

Dish Network said signals for the Sinclair channels are being restored. The Federal Communications Commission said the deal ends one of the largest blackouts ever.

The companies said Wednesday they've agreed in principle to a long-term deal and will extended their current contract by two weeks while they finalize terms. The sides didn't disclose further details of the new arrangement.

Cable and satellite TV companies negotiate with [channel](#) owners over issues including how much to pay for the channels. Sometimes that leads to fights that result in channel blackouts, which can last less than a day or drag on. In 2013, Time Warner Cable customers lost access to CBS channels for a month, but this one was short-lived.

Sinclair's channels include affiliates of ABC, CBS, CW, Fox and NBC in markets throughout the country, including Washington DC, Seattle/Tacoma, Minneapolis, St. Louis and Pittsburgh.

The contract between satellite TV company Dish Network Corp. and Sinclair Broadcast Group Inc. expired earlier this month and the two

sides agreed to one short-term extension, but Dish Network said some channels went dark for more than 5 million of its customers Tuesday afternoon. The dispute affected 129 local stations in 79 different markets, and the FCC said that in terms of markets, the blackout was the largest in history.

In a news release earlier Wednesday, Dish Network said the two sides were at odds over terms for an unidentified cable channel that Sinclair "hopes to acquire, but does not even own today."

FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler said he was pleased with the news of the agreement. Earlier, Wheeler said he had asked the Media Bureau of the FCC to call an "emergency meeting" with Dish and Sinclair to help get the channels back on for Dish customers.

Dish is based in Englewood, Colorado, while Sinclair has its headquarters in Hunt Valley, Maryland.

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