

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Viya Regains CBS, ABC After Agreeing To Lilly Broadcasting's Fee Increases

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Viya said on Friday that after agreeing to Lilly Broadcasting fee increases for channels ABC, CBS, CW and One Caribbean, its cable business regained the aforementioned channels, which are now available to its cable TV subscribers.

On January 4, Lilly Broadcasting interrupted the transmission of the four channels because of the rate increase dispute. Viya said it "vigorously defended its customers against these and other significant programming rate increases, which will directly impact our customers."

"Despite Viya's best efforts to protect Virgin Islands subscribers, Lilly Broadcasting, who owns the right to transmit these signals in the USVI, insisted that Viya either pay the dramatic rate increases or not have the channels at all. In the end, the company felt that customer access to the aforementioned programming is too important and agreed to Lilly Broadcasting's demands. The channels were restored last evening at 7:00 p.m.," Viya CEO Geraldine Pitt said.

Viya will most likely pass the cost of the rate increases to its customers, although the firm did not provide information relative how much or when.

"Most programmers increase fees every year and we have successfully negotiated reasonable increases from other providers. Viya continued to negotiate in good faith, but we were not able to avoid an immediate rate increase," Ms. Pitt added.

Viya said its cable TV customers should anticipate a pro-rated bill credit, which will be based on the number of days and the number of channels that were off the air. Customers can expect the credit to appear in the February billing cycle, the company said.

"We encourage subscribers to share their objection to Lilly's decision to substantially increase rates for CBS, ABC, CW and OCTV by calling Lilly Broadcasting at (814)-454-5201," Viya concluded.