



For Immediate Release
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PERFORMERS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT CRTC GROUP LICENCE DECISION
Broadcasters finally have to do their part

TORONTO – The CRTC today unveiled new licence requirements for Canadian TV broadcasters.

Of the four main English-language broadcasters, Bell, Corus and Shaw will now be required to spend 30% of their revenues on Canadian programming, while Rogers will have to spend at least 23% of its gross annual revenues on Canadian programming for its conventional television stations. Bell and Shaw will allot 5% of their revenues to programs of national interest, including drama, Corus 9% and Rogers only 2.5%. Performers had hoped the CRTC would require broadcasters to spend at least 10% on programs of national interest.

“We are encouraged by the decision handed down by the CRTC today,” said Stephen Waddell, ACTRA’s National Executive Director. “Their intentions have remained consistent with their 2010 Television Policy. We’re glad to see that the Commission resisted the broadcasters’ requests to water down the group-licence requirements even further.”

“While we didn’t get everything we wanted today, at least now we have a structure to work with,” said Ferne Downey, ACTRA National President. “I hope that broadcasters see their funding requirements as a floor upon which to build new Canadian programming, and not a ceiling to bump up against.”

The CRTC also discarded ACTRA’s request to require conventional broadcasters to air at least two hours of programs of national interest in prime time each week.

“It’s not enough to just fund Canadian programming,” said Downey. “You also have to put it where the most eyeballs are, and that’s on the conventional television networks. We agree that broadcasters need flexibility, but ghettoizing Canadian drama on specialty stations would not be the answer. In a world where Canadian content creation will rise and fall in proportion to broadcasters’ revenues, we’re definitely all in this together.”

“We hope that conventional broadcasters are smart enough to know that in a world where audiences can watch anything at any time, the only way to survive is to make themselves distinct. And the only thing which does that is Canadian programming,” added Waddell.

ACTRA (Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists) is the national organization of professional performers working in the English-language recorded media in Canada. ACTRA represents the interests of 22,000 members across Canada – the foundation of Canada’s highly acclaimed professional performing community.

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