



**VIA E-Mail**

July 22, 2003

Mr. Charles Dalfen, Chairman  
Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications  
Commission  
1 Promenade du Portage  
Gatineau, Québec  
K1A 0N2

Dear Mr. Dalfen:

At the February 27, 2003 meeting between the Commission and the Task Force for Cultural Diversity on Television (Task Force), the Task Force provided an overview of its work to date as well as an outline of a very aggressive and far-reaching research strategy on the reflection and portrayal of diversity on Canadian television.

We are very pleased to inform the Commission of the major progress that has been made over the past four months on the Task Force's research strategy. We thought it would be timely to provide the Commission with a brief report on the work of the Task Force, and provide you with an indication of timing going forward.

To date, the Task Force and its research team lead by Solutions Research Group and Johnston and Buchan LLP has:

- Completed a comprehensive review of existing international research on cultural diversity and television;
- Developed and launched a review of best corporate practices in cultural diversity, through direct contact with 20 leading companies in Canada, Europe and the United States which is very near completion with only two companies remaining to be interviewed;
- Organized and completed 20 focus groups in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montréal, Québec and Halifax, which yielded a wealth of qualitative information concerning diversity on Canadian television;

- Completed 55 one-on-one interviews with leading associations, producers, broadcasting executives, academics and others experts in the field;
- Secured some 340 hours of programming tapes and logs from 54 stations and services in the private television broadcasting industry, which will form the basis of the quantitative part of the study;
- Designed comprehensive coding instruments for the detailed analysis of programming along a number of genres, including drama, news/public affairs and other information programming; and
- Conducted targeted public outreach on the mandate of the Task Force through participation at conferences such as Innoversity, and the Association of Canadian Studies conference entitled “Intersections of Diversity”.

In carrying out these very complex, interrelated research components, the Task Force has met regularly, to review progress, approach, methodologies and related research issues. Recently, the Task Force members from across Canada convened for an all day meeting to review and discuss the final coding methodology and criteria that will be applied in the content analysis phase of the research. Each step of the way, the Task Force – with input and recommendations from the research team – has vigorously debated all aspects of the research initiative, fully recognizing the need for a final report that can provide a basis for the implementation of best practices as well as a foundation for research replication.

We would like to emphasize that the major progress to date could not have been achieved without the dedicated commitment of all involved: Task Force members, private broadcasters and the research team. The process of securing programming alone was a highly complex undertaking, which required significant effort on the part of the broadcasters. As well, input and information received from CRTC observer Martine Vallée has been most helpful and appreciated.

At this time, the research team is preparing to move into the key quantitative phase of the project, in coding selected programming received. We anticipate this part of the research will take until the end of August 2003. Further analysis of coded programming will take place in the month of September 2003. With the near-completion of other research phases, the parallel writing and review of related reports, and drafting of recommendations, we expect to be in a position to provide the Commission with research results by December 2003.

In addition, the Task Force has begun work on a communications plan, and is preparing to launch a web page from the Canadian Association of Broadcasters’ website where information about the Task Force and its work will be publicly available. The web page will be completed at the end of July.

We would like to thank the Commission for its continuing support, assistance and advice throughout the research process. Through the participation of Martine Vallée as Task Force observer, we will keep the Commission informed of our progress.

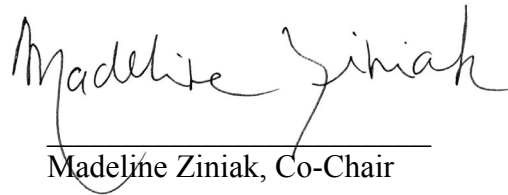
We look forward to a continuing dialogue with you as we move to complete this pivotal part of the Task Force's work.

Yours truly,



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Beverley Oda, Co-Chair



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Madeline Ziniak, Co-Chair