



Conseil de la radiodiffusion et des
télécommunications canadiennes

Canadian Radio-television and
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26 June 2008

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Glenn O'Farrell
President and CEO
Canadian Association of Broadcasters
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Re: CAB's 2007-08 Report on Diversity in Broadcasting

Dear Mr. O'Farrell:

Thank you for the CAB's third annual Report on Diversity in Broadcasting, filed with the Commission on 30 April 2008, in response to the *Commission's response to the report of the Task Force for Cultural Diversity on Television*, Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2005-24 (PN 2005-24), issued 21 March 2005.

In PN 2005-24, the Commission directed the CAB to report annually on its progress in implementing all of the Task Force for Cultural Diversity on Television's initiatives. This year's report addresses new initiatives such as: communication activities via the CAB's *Special Updates on Diversity*, a newsletter that brings up-to-date information concerning diversity to all its members; and the completion of the creation of the *Equitable Portrayal Code*, designed to ensure fair, accurate and non-stereotypical portrayal of all persons in television and radio programming.

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In staff's opinion, the report shows a high level of commitment on the CAB's part to lead the Canadian broadcasting industry in addressing diversity objectives. Specifically, the CAB continues to guide its members with relevant information, through its CAB Update newsletter and various other communication tools in order to aid the reflection of diversity within broadcasters' own organizations. We note with interest the CAB's newest initiatives in this regard – the creation of *Diversity Webinars*, interactive online discussion seminars, which are geared to assist members with their own diversity planning and strategies, and *Diversity Seminars*, which will be held during annual conferences of Regional Associations. Both projects promise to provide fresh and innovative mechanisms for providing support to broadcasters and are concrete examples of the CAB's continuing leadership in this area. We look forward to learning the results of how these initiatives fared in next year's report.

In addition, under the CAB's leadership and coordination, the past year has seen various other concrete initiatives realized to further the development of a truly diverse broadcasting system that reflects and serves Canada's diversity. For example, the CAB developed its *Diversity Best Practices for Radio*, along with reporting requirements for small radio markets, culminating in a policy framework for diversity in the commercial radio sector, which the Commission adopted in Public Notice 2007-122. Furthermore, in response to the Commission's new policy for closed captioning as set out in Public Notice 2007-54, the CAB created two working groups charged with developing standards for the quality of closed captioning in order to improve service by the broadcasting system to persons with hearing impairments. The Commission looks forward to November 2008, when it will receive the CAB's report detailing its recommendations and timeframes for the implementation of its proposed closed captioning standards.

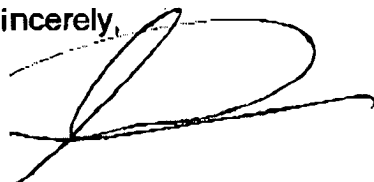
Finally, PN 2005-24 also directed the CAB to develop and implement initiatives that specifically target gaps concerning the severe under-representation of Aboriginal peoples and Asian-Canadians on mainstream television, as identified in the Task Force for Cultural Diversity's research. In response to the CAB's 2006-07 report, dated 5 June 2007, we noted the CAB's efforts to encourage and facilitate the participation of Aboriginal peoples in mainstream television. We also noted at that time that the CAB did not report any specific activities to address the significant under-representation of Asian-Canadians, and encouraged you to do so in 2007-08. It remains unclear from your 2007-08 report whether the CAB intends to take steps to address the participation of Asian-Canadians in television programming. Accordingly, staff requests that the CAB clearly address its plans in this area in its next annual diversity report.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind the CAB and its members that the Commission will be assessing the progress made by the industry overall and in these areas in particular at the renewals of the major over-the-air broadcasters in 2009. The Commission will examine evidence of progress in the reports it receives from both the CAB and in broadcasters' cultural diversity annual reports to assess the extent to which regulatory intervention continues to be required to ensure that Canada's broadcasting

system is reflective of Canada's diversity, including the necessity of replicating the content analysis conducted by the Task Force in 2004.

Given the importance of the CAB report in assessing progress made by the industry overall, we ask that you file your next report by 30 January 2009.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Hutton', written over a horizontal line.

**Scott Hutton
Executive Director, Broadcasting**