



Unifor Local 830M's Position on Multi-Ethnic News

There are 8 applications to the CRTC for a national, multilingual, multi-ethnic television service offering news and information. The licensed broadcaster will receive mandatory distribution on basic service and 9-1-H fees. The Executive Board of Unifor Local 830M, and the National union will be making a submission on behalf of members, asking the CRTC to consider:

Local News Matters!

The successful applicant should agree to specific conditions of license that will require them to produce at least 30 minutes of original, local, daily, news, in-house in each of the six languages identified in their proposals.

No Contracting Out!

Many of the proposals submitted would allow the licensee to contract out the production of News to a third party, like what Rogers is currently doing with Fairchild Broadcasting producing Chinese news for OMNI Regional. Unifor strongly opposes this policy because it reduces the diversity of voices and creates an editorial monopoly for Fairchild, weakening journalistic integrity and independence.

Unifor believes the successful applicant must commit to a fair employment policy as a condition of license that commits them to using sufficient in-house TV Journalists (reporters, anchors, camera ops, videographers, editors, writers, associate producers) to produce high quality daily local news. This policy should contain the approximate size of the editorial and production staff, including structure of permanent, temporary, freelance or contractors, with a compensation package equivalent to the current collective agreements in place for OMNI staff in Vancouver and Toronto.

Transparency & Accountability a Must!

With so much public funding for a successful applicant, there must be transparent use of 9-1-H funds and editorial independence from whichever media enterprise is part of the applicants' ownership group. This editorial oversight must be separate from existing "advisory councils" and should include a majority of members who are not employees of the licensee or any related company.

Specific Conditions of License Needed!

We know from experience with Rogers broadcasting and the CRTC application of policies, only strict and enforceable conditions of license can achieve the goals of the Broadcasting Act and the Commission's Ethnic Broadcasting Policy to the benefit of Canada's multi-cultural communities.

Promises, policies, expectations and aspirations are not enforceable once a license has been granted. Only specific conditions of license can ensure the public interest, as required by the broadcasting act, is upheld. Canadians deserve certainty, and enforceable conditions ensuring that large vertically integrated Companies will live up to their commitments in exchange for use of public airwaves.