



Canadian Media Guild
La Guilde canadienne des médias
CWA/SCA CANADA

Canadian Media and a Changing Industry

Media Workers on the Job and Ready to Deliver

The Canadian Media Guild is a union comprised of over 5000 media workers at APTN, The Canadian Press, CBC/Radio-Canada, Corus, Thomson Reuters, TFO, TVO, Vice Media, and ZoomerMedia.

We already work across all available media platforms including digital and online spaces.

CMG is focused on the following principles and objectives:

- ✓ Rebuilding and Expanding CBC/Radio-Canada – Mandate Renewal
- ✓ Securing key components of the Broadcasting Act
 - ✓ The special role of CBC/Radio-Canada
 - ✓ Protecting CBC/Radio-Canada's independence
 - ✓ Support for Canadian Content
 - ✓ Mandatory carriage of Indigenous and community media
 - ✓ The value of local news as a vital public service
 - ✓ Quality jobs for media and cultural workers
- ✓ Supporting the Truth and Reconciliation Commission - Media and Language Preservation
- ✓ Funding for local news and information programming in the public interest



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✓ **Rebuilding and Expanding CBC/Radio-Canada – Mandate Renewal**

The 1991 [Broadcasting Act](#) states that...

"...the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, as the national public broadcaster, should provide radio and television services incorporating a wide range of programming that informs, enlightens and entertains;

...the programming provided by the Corporation should:

- i. be predominantly and distinctively Canadian, reflect Canada and its regions to national and regional audiences, while serving the special needs of those regions,
- ii. actively contribute to the flow and exchange of cultural expression,
- iii. be in English and in French, reflecting the different needs and circumstances of each official language community, including the particular needs and circumstances of English and French linguistic minorities,
- iv. strive to be of equivalent quality in English and French,
- v. contribute to shared national consciousness and identity,
- vi. be made available throughout Canada by the most appropriate and efficient means and as resources become available for the purpose, and
- vii. reflect the multicultural and multiracial nature of Canada."

CBC has endured decades of cuts. The federal government has recently committed an additional \$675-million over five years in order to rebuild the public broadcaster.

CBC management's investment strategy and its overall approach need to likewise reflect that commitment.

Cuts in staffing levels and programming have reduced CBC's in-house production capacity and have led to increased outsourcing at the public broadcaster.

Recently, the trade journal, *Playback*, reported that, "Overall, CBC/Radio-Canada spent \$93.4 million on externally produced programs as of year end (March 31, 2017) [...] That's a sharp increase from the \$57.3 million it spent on externally produced content at the same point in 2016." That \$ 36.1 million increase to external productions comes directly at the expense of CBC's capacity for in-house production. This is an increase of funding proffered to externally produced programs at the expense of internal production capacity at CBC/Radio-Canada.



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The erosion taking place within the public broadcaster must be stopped.

Rebuilding CBC's in-house production capacity supports one of the vital roles of CBC/Radio-Canada in our media system and under the Broadcasting Act. The public broadcaster is meant to function as Canada's lead producer -- a standard-setter for quality and innovative programming and a principal incubator of Canadian talent.

In the words of former CBC President and Canadian cultural icon, Pierre Juneau:

"Public television cannot merely be a programmer. The particular ethics of public broadcasting demand that programs be designed with particular care [...] While public broadcasters may buy or commission some programs, in-house production not only guarantees that programs will adequately meet the purpose of the broadcaster, but also ensures the perennality of expertise—some would say a “culture” of creativity — particular to the public broadcaster.”

✓ **Key components of the Broadcasting Act must be maintained**

The special role of CBC/Radio-Canada

The Broadcasting Act identifies CBC/Radio-Canada as the national public broadcaster and highlights its role as a public asset and service dedicated to informing, enlightening and entertaining people across the country and around the world. The Act also highlights CBC's role in protecting Canadian culture and identity and reflecting the views, values and interests of Canadians.

Public broadcasting has a number of benefits for a population, including educational benefits and social networking benefits, building citizenship and shared cultural identities. CBC/Radio-Canada provides vital services to the Canadian public and its protection under the Act remains crucial.

Protecting CBC/Radio-Canada's independence and governance

The Broadcasting Act clearly protects the independence of the CBC in pursuing its creative and programming objectives. It also explicitly protects the journalistic independence and freedom of the public broadcaster. This is a core function of the Act that remains greatly important and relevant.



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CMG and other media unions welcomed the new open, non-partisan selection process for the President and Board as a step in the right direction.

Support for Canadian Content

The Broadcasting Act currently emphasizes the value of supporting and promoting the creation of Canadian content. The Act's foundational position is that Canadian content helps build and support Canadian identities that reflect Canadian attitudes, opinions, ideas and values. Indeed, since its inception in 1936 the Act has protected the ability of Canadians to tell our own stories and to sustain a thriving industry from it. This principle, embedded within the Broadcasting Act, is still important and relevant in the current environment. Canadian stories still need to cross borders and boundaries, find homes across multiple platforms, and be available through both private and public media.

It is hard to overstate the extent to which this principle is aligned with the public interest. The ability of people to reach across to each other, to connect and share understandings, or to discover and acknowledge real differences, is at the heart of any national cultural project worth pursuing. Cultural exchange is the lifeblood of every dynamic and ongoing process of community formation.

Accordingly, our union supports specific, tangible measures to increase the creation, production, and exhibition of a full diversity of Canadian content across all platforms. A commitment to Canadian content is no less important now that it was in 1936.

Mandatory carriage of Indigenous and community media

The Broadcasting Act currently has a special provision that allows for local, regional, Indigenous or community based broadcasters to receive mandatory carriage status. Given the significance and importance of local, regional, and community-based media, mandatory carriage provisions remain a relevant part of the Broadcasting Act.

The value and relevance of local news as a vital public service

The Broadcasting Act also protects and highlights the value of local news. High-quality local news is an essential public service that leads to more engaged and informed citizens which in turn can result in



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mature political discourse and generate greater accountability among governments. According to a recent Nanos study, 92% of Canadians surveyed either agree or somewhat agree that local TV news is valuable to them.

Quality jobs for media and cultural workers

Canada's cultural policies must always emphasize quality jobs as part of healthy creative industries.

In order to perform at our best, media workers and our fellow creative workers of all ages, experience levels, and backgrounds require good working conditions as well as stable and secure employment.

Not only should workers be treated fairly, Canada's cultural policies and its broadcast system ought to support employment opportunities that "serve the needs and interests" and "the circumstances and aspirations" of Canadians.

Among other commitments, Canada's [Broadcasting Act](#) specifies that:

"The Canadian broadcasting system should [...] through its programming and **the employment opportunities arising out of its operations, serve the needs and interests, and reflect the circumstances and aspirations**, of Canadian men, women and children, **including equal rights, the linguistic duality and multicultural and multiracial nature of Canadian society and the special place of aboriginal peoples within that society** [...]"

As such, expectations for quality employment as well as for diversity in the Canadian broadcasting system should be both elaborated and strengthened.

✓ Supporting the Truth and Reconciliation Commission - Media and Language Preservation

Our union supports the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) as they pertain to Media and Reconciliation. Accordingly, we agree that the national public broadcaster, CBC/Radio-Canada, and the leading global Indigenous broadcaster, APTN, must be strengthened. The TRC's recommendations on CBC and APTN are as follows:

84. We call upon the federal government to restore and increase funding to the **CBC/Radio-Canada**, to enable Canada's national public broadcaster to support reconciliation, and be properly reflective of the diverse cultures, languages, and perspectives of Aboriginal peoples, including, but not limited to:



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- i. Increasing Aboriginal programming, including Aboriginal-language speakers.
 - ii. Increasing equitable access for Aboriginal peoples to jobs, leadership positions, and professional development opportunities within the organization.
 - iii. Continuing to provide dedicated news coverage and online public information resources on issues of concern to Aboriginal peoples and all Canadians, including the history and legacy of residential schools and the reconciliation process.
85. We call upon the **Aboriginal Peoples Television Network**, as an independent non-profit broadcaster with programming by, for, and about Aboriginal peoples, to support reconciliation, including but not limited to:
- i. Continuing to provide leadership in programming and organizational culture that reflects the diverse cultures, languages, and perspectives of Aboriginal peoples.
 - ii. Continuing to develop media initiatives that inform and educate the Canadian public, and connect Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

We also support the TRC's call to action on Indigenous language preservation. Recognizing that **"Aboriginal languages are a fundamental and valued element of Canadian culture and society, and there is an urgency to preserve them,"** requires that Canada's media and cultural policies include specific commitments and measures that preserve, enrich, and support Indigenous languages today and ensure conditions in which they may flourish for generations to come.

✓ **Funding for local news and programming in the public interest**

Quality and reliable journalism plays a central role in supporting our country's democracy.

Likewise, maintaining a diversity of editorial voices improves the relevance and value of news and information services across communities.

Alongside the other funding mechanisms that have been put forward for consideration, CMG has proposed that a *Public Service Media Fund* be created to fund local and regional news and information programming on all platforms, including in minority language communities.

Provincial educational broadcasters such as TFO, TVO, Knowledge Network, TéléQuébec; The Canadian Press and APTN; and other media ventures in a variety of languages, across all platforms, would all be eligible.