



WGC Calls on BCE to Step Up Benefits

Urges Full Commitment to Development & Production of Canadian Drama

For Immediate Release – Gatineau – February 3, 2011 – The Writers Guild of Canada (WGC) today called on the CRTC to apply its benefits policy to BCE's acquisition of CTV in a manner consistent both with the policy and with past precedent. The WGC argued that BCE should be required to provide incremental benefits worth no less than 10% of the final determined value of the transaction for the television assets. There should be no discounts.

WGC Executive Director Maureen Parker noted that "this is not a fire sale – the CTV assets are strong businesses which BCE is acquiring for shareholder benefit. It is building a fully integrated organization to carry it into a cross-platform future. BCE needs to live up to its obligation and step up its benefits package. In keeping with past practice, we expect 85% to 90% of the benefits to be allocated to the production and development of quality Canadian shows. Putting this money on screen is how it will most benefit Canadian audiences."

The WGC also proposed a new development initiative as part of the on-screen benefits. WGC President Jill Golick said "investing benefits money in development pays off in program success. A perfect example is CTV's hit, *Flashpoint*. This new benefits package is an opportunity for BCE and CTV to launch the next wave of great Canadian shows. A strong benefits commitment to development is a commitment to both the industry and the audience."

The WGC warned against allowing BCE to claim as benefits self-serving expenditures such as conversion to HD. Infrastructure expenses like this are the cost of doing business as a broadcaster in Canada, and work ultimately to the competitive advantage of no one but BCE. This money would be better and more appropriately allocated where it is needed most – on the screen.

For more information, please contact David Kinahan, Writers Guild of Canada, at d.kinahan@wgc.ca

The Writers Guild of Canada (WGC) represents more than 2,000 professional English-language screenwriters across Canada. These are the creators who write the distinctly Canadian entertainment we enjoy on our televisions, movie screens and digital platforms.