



CRTC Renews Commitment to Original Canadian Programming

Toronto — Aug. 30, 2018 — The WGC is pleased that the CRTC has ensured Canadian broadcasters must uphold their financial contributions to the creation of original Canadian programming. Today's CRTC response to the government's Order-in-Council that the Commission reconsider its decision of May 2017, which essentially slashed private broadcaster's minimum spending on Canadian programs by up to 40 per cent, proves that the CRTC has listened to the creative community and to audiences for Canadian programming.

"It's extremely heartening that the Commission, under the leadership of Chairman Ian Scott and Vice-Chairperson (Broadcasting) Caroline J. Simard, have righted the wrong created by the earlier decision," says WGC Executive Director Maureen Parker. "It's almost unprecedented to have an appeal to the federal Cabinet go forward and meet with this kind of success. It's also a marker of the Liberal government's commitment to Canadian culture, as it was at the government's behest that the appeal went forward. Kudos to the CRTC for taking it over the goal line."

Today's CRTC announcement means that, effective September 1, expenditure requirements on programs of national interest (PNI) — the drama, documentary, children's programming etc. that is at the backbone of original Canadian on-screen storytelling — will move from the 5 per cent of previous year's revenues to 7.5 per cent for Bell and 8.5 per cent for Corus. (Requirements for Rogers remain at 5 per cent.) The new, higher percentages are based on historical spending on PNI (the basis for determining PNI spending) created by the CRTC itself in 2010, and the principle that the WGC has espoused for the last two years. This means up to \$289 million *more* in broadcaster spending on PNI over the remaining four years of the licence term, based on revenue projections.

Operating under the May 2017 decision for the past year, the WGC noted a decline in production of original programming. And while Netflix and others' increased involvement in Canadian programming has been and is welcome, if Canada is to have a robust broadcasting system, it's crucial that private broadcasters step up.

"As the president of the WGC, as a storyteller, and as a Canadian, I am thrilled with the CRTC's announcement today," says Dennis Heaton, showrunner of the upcoming drama *The Order*. "I'd like to thank the staff at the Writers Guild of Canada, the council, and the membership for their tireless efforts in the campaign to ensure that the strength of the Canadian voice is not diminished."

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The Writers Guild of Canada represents 2,200 professional English-language screenwriters across Canada, the creators of Canadian entertainment enjoyed on all screens.