



## Cuts to CBC Will Hurt Canadian Audiences

**For Immediate Release – Toronto – April 10, 2012** – The CBC today announced how it plans to address its drastically reduced budget. Government cuts escalating over three years means the public broadcaster has less than two years to prepare for the full brunt of the impact. And, as we feared, the federal budget cuts to CBC will have a devastating effect on Canadian programming. This comes as CBC dramas in particular are hitting their stride and enjoying strong ratings success with Canadian audiences.

“Canadians want Canadian stories – on all platforms,” says WGC Executive Director Maureen Parker. “Before the cuts, CBC had the third-lowest level of public funding for a national public broadcaster among 18 major Western countries. As today’s news makes clear, the cuts will make it even harder for CBC to make quality Canadian shows and tell truly Canadian stories. Yet audiences are telling us with their remotes that this is what they want – CBC’s *Republic of Doyle*, *Arctic Air*, *The Rick Mercer Report* and *Heartland* regularly draw more than 1 million viewers.”

Word from the Employee Town Hall is that CBC TV plans to air six fewer series in prime time next year, with reductions across the board totalling 175 hours of original programming. Cuts will impact kids programming, documentary production, movies and MOWs, radio drama, half-hour comedy and more. Today’s news validates our concerns that federal budget cuts are severely compromising CBC’s ability to deliver on its mandate under the *Broadcasting Act* to reflect Canada to Canadians.

The WGC is calling for a new business model for the CBC. These funding cuts will trigger further revenue decline for the broadcaster as it becomes more difficult to sell advertising with less original programming. It is a domino effect that will ultimately impact the ability of Canadians to choose quality Canadian programming.

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