



## **WGC Says CRTC Hits Right Notes on Local and Upcoming Policy Review**

### **For Immediate Release**

**Toronto** – July 06, 2009. The Writers Guild of Canada applauds the CRTC's decision today to temporarily increase the Local Programming Improvement Fund to about \$100 million, and to defer higher-impact policy and licence decisions until after the more complete hearings in the coming Fall and Spring.

“Providing Canadians with programming that makes an immediate connection with their sense of place - whether as a community or a nation - is a critical function of the Canadian broadcasters,” says Maureen Parker, Executive Director, Writers Guild of Canada. “The CRTC's interim increase to the LPIF to cover local program costs is the right solution to help the broadcasters over this difficult economic period.”

The WGC was pleased to see the CRTC reject the broadcasters' requests to reduce or eliminate priority programming as a way of weathering the tough times. Eliminating Canadian programming is not the solution for Canadian broadcasting; it is its death knell.

The WGC also appreciates that, in today's Public Notice for September's policy review, the commission recognized the “important role of Canadian talent and production in the broadcasting system.” The CRTC made explicit its goal of a broadcasting system “distinctly Canadian in its content,” and noted that “flexibility” in the regulatory framework “should result in greater support for Canadian programming...such as drama and documentaries.” This language is most encouraging, and the WGC looks forward to participating in the proceedings.

The WGC is also pleased that the CRTC is proposing to make finalized Terms of Trade agreements with independent producers a pre-condition for a full seven-year licence-renewal application. Defining a distinct rights market in which multiple exploitations of programs are compensated fairly will allow those who create successful programming the chance to see royalties.

Parker added, “the boost to the LPIF and the commission's reference to high-quality Canadian programming are indications that the CRTC recognizes the essential role of Canadian content - in all its forms - in the Canadian broadcasting system, and will work to ensure its strength. We support that effort.”

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