

March 6, 2014

Dear Montreal Resident,

The Steering Committee for Independent Community TV (ICTV) Montreal has filed a complaint against Videotron that it does not operate its MAtv community channel in accordance to CRTC policy (CRTC 2010-622), which states:

The community channel should:

- ***engender a high level of citizen participation and community involvement in community programming;***
- ***actively promote citizen access to the community channel and provide and promote the availability of related training programs;***
- ***provide feedback mechanisms, such as advisory boards, to encourage viewer response to the range and types of programs aired;***
- ***seek out innovative ideas and alternative views;***
- ***provide a reasonable, balanced opportunity for the expression of differing views on matters of public concern;***
- ***reflect the official languages, ethnic and Aboriginal composition of the community;***
- ***provide coverage of local events; and***
- ***publicize the program schedule.”***

Videotron collects 2% of each cable bill (or about \$1 on each \$50 cable bill) to support a community channel that is supposed to give you and your neighbours a voice on mainstream television. We calculate that in the Greater Montreal Area, this amounts to approximately \$23 million annually.

The CRTC allows for a not-for-profit community group to administer this budget and run the community channel if Videotron is not meeting this mandate. We have therefore simultaneously filed a complaint demonstrating how Videotron does not meet this mandate, as well as an application for a not-for-profit community channel to replace Videotron's MAtv (formerly Vox) channel. It would be of great assistance for the CRTC to hear from others within the Greater Montreal Area who can a) corroborate our claims that Videotron is in non-compliance with the criteria above and b) endorse our own vision for a community channel that would better serve Montreal. We are attaching a sample letter of support. Please note that at this stage in the process, the most important part is to corroborate our analysis that Videotron is in non-compliance (section 3 in the sample letter). Please be as specific as you possibly can.

Note that the terms of Videotron's licence stipulates that **at least 45%** of the content in the programming week must be genuinely made by unpaid volunteer members of the Montreal community. You can read our complaint against Videotron and why we think they do not meet this condition nor the other

conditions above here (Pages 3 to 31 is our complaint. Pages 32 through 60 describe our vision for a community channel to serve Montreal).

To see the documents on the CRTC website :

<https://services.crtc.gc.ca/pub/instances-proceedings/Default-Default.aspx?S=O&PA=A&PT=A&PST=A&Lang=fra>

Or on the tele1.ca site:

<http://tele1.ca/index.php/fr/component/k2/item/54-fichiers-crtc-files>

When you have completed your letter, you can either:

- fax it to the CRTC at 1 (819) 994-0218 before April 10th, 2014 and email us a copy at crtc@tvci-ictv.org
- or e-mail it to the Steering Committee at crtc@tvci-ictv.org, requesting our help and we can upload it to the CRTC site for you at the correct time.

Thanks for your support!

(Anything in **blue** below is part of the standard format of a CRTC submission and should not be modified, except to make it black; for example, paragraphs must be numbered. Anything in **red** is a section title we suggest you include for clarity, although you may want to adjust wording (and make it black). Anything in parentheses and bold--like this comment--is for your guidance, and should be edited out once you have applied it).

Mr. John Traversy
Secretary General
CRTC
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0N2

Dear Mr. Traversy,

Re: CRTC 2013-1746-2
Application by the Steering Committee for Independent Community TV
(ICTV) Montreal

Identification

- 1) (Identify yourself and your interest in the application, or your organization. If you are an organization, say what its mandate is, how many members you have, and what their interest is in the application.)
e.g. My name is x. I have lived in Montreal since I was a teenager, and actively watch local TV to find out what is going on. Or, I am a member of the Canadian Media Guild, which has over 3000 members working in broadcasting. Our members support community media initiatives because they are a training ground for new members.
- 2) I understand that my comments and biographical information will be posted publicly on the CRTC's web site as part of this proceeding.

If there is an oral hearing into this matter (which I would recommend, due to the importance of this issue for Montreal), I wish to attend

Videotron is in Non-Compliance with Both the Spirit and the Letter of CRTC Policy for Community Television

- 3) (One or More Paragraphs that Supports ICTV's Non-Compliance Argument. This could deal with one or more requirements of current CRTC policy as described on the preceding page):

- Comment on anything you know about individuals or groups that have approached Videotron wishing to produce a program or volunteer, and whom/which have been turned away.
- Comment on any of the personalities on MAtv programs of which you have personal knowledge are broadcast professionals, and clearly paid.
- Comment on the fact that you can't find any English programs on the MAtv Grille Horaire, or programs about Aboriginals or minority groups.
- Comment about the fact that there is no English text on the MAtv web site even describing what programs are about. You may want to stick the dagger in further and comment on the fact that Videotron's application for an exclusively English community channel wasn't available in English either (if you are an anglophone).
- If you are a cable subscriber, comment on whether you recall ever seeing a billing insert or notification on the community channel encouraging you to submit a program proposal, or advertising the availability of training and equipment access. If you didn't know such was available, even better. Say so.
- Videotron's only production facility on the island is located at Rue Alexandre-Sève. Is this easy for you to get to, even if you did know training and equipment access were available?
- You may wish to comment more generally on Videotron's content. Does it really reflect the local community? Does it stimulate debate on important issues going on in the community? Is it providing an alternative to the content on public and private television channels? Is it fostering up-and-coming talent? Is it "alternative" as the policy states? Is it providing access to municipal council meetings (no)?
- If you are in a position to comment on whether you think Videotron has been in non-compliance for a long time, say so. e.g. If you aware of groups who have tried to obtain access to MAtv (formerly Vox) in years past, it's important to establish a track record of non-compliance. Or, if you remember a time when there was more alternative, homegrown content on the community channel, say so. (e.g. "I remember truly alternative shows that you could tell were made by community members; But it was a long time ago... at least the late 1990s or earlier. I didn't even realize it was still a community channel or meant to air programs made by the public.")

Montreal Needs Vibrant and Relevant Community Media

4) (One or more paragraphs about your perception of the need for good community media in Montreal. This could include:

- The need for a live interactive televisual platform where issues of real import to the community can be debated, open for participation by all.
- The need for multiplatform digital skills training, so that those who aren't media-savvy can also have access to new technologies for communication.
- The need for more televisual platforms for local cultural and artistic expression.
- The need for a virtual meeting place in the local media ecosystem for anglophones, francophones, allophones, Aboriginals and all minority voices to not only air their views on mainstream platforms but to exchange them as well.
- Perhaps comment on the need for community media on traditional linear television... that it still draws audiences looking for local information and can function as a one-stop "go-to" clearing-house for the community in Montreal, in a way that social media cannot. It offers the potential for more in-depth analysis, more visibility, and direct access to the events and people of Montreal than Twitter or Facebook or other social media sites can typically offer.

ICTV's Application Would Correct the Longstanding Problems on MAtv/Vox:

5) (Recap why Videotron falls short in meeting the community's media needs, and then comment specifically on how ICTV's proposed channel would meet these needs. e.g.:)

- ICTV would not silo groups by language. You may want to go so far as to comment on Videotron's plan to have an all-French channel, and then an everybody-else channel and how that would be divisive for the community.
- ICTV would multiply access points where people obtain training and equipment, especially in underserved neighbourhoods such as on Aboriginal reserves.
- ICTV would use the latest digital technologies to make ICTV truly interactive and accessible, regardless of how Montrealers receive television and video services.

- ICTV would be operated as a not-for-profit, with no advertising, and would report to a board that is elected by and representative of the community it serves... Board seats would be available particularly for groups traditionally marginalized by mainstream media. Comment on why this is crucial and will shape the resulting content. (If you have experience on not-for-profit boards, this seemingly obvious point needs to be hammered home to the CRTC. They really don't see why a massive cable company can't adequately generate local community media.)
- ICTV has committed to and would deliver a higher percentage of community-access generated content than Videotron and CRTC regulations expect. If you know anyone on the ICTV steering committee and board (like Yakov Rabkin, Jason Lewis, Lorraine Guay, Jooneed Khan and Delores Chew), comment on his/their track record, and the fact that you know they can do it.
- ICTV would generate more hours of content (more than twice as much), and serve a wider user group, including children, seniors, and minority voices such as the disabled community.
- ICTV hiring policies would be inclusive. Staff trainers would support the public with training and production support to tell their stories, not the other way around.
- In short, ICTV would not only meet CRTC policy expectations for community television, where Videotron has failed for more than a decade, but it would set a new benchmark for what community media can achieve in a digital world.

(Please edit these ideas in your own words, or pick and choose the ones that are relevant to you. If phrases are repeated by even a few letter writers, they start to sound as if they came from one template.)

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