



## Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2004-377

Ottawa, 27 August 2004

### **CKPG Television Limited**

Prince George, Hixon, Mackenzie and Quesnel, British Columbia

*Application 2001-1423-1*

*Public Hearing in the National Capital Region*

*7 June 2004*

### **CKPG-TV Prince George and its transmitters – Licence renewal**

*In this decision, the Commission **renews** the broadcasting licence for the television programming undertaking CKPG-TV Prince George and its transmitters CKPG-TV-1 Hixon, CKPG-TV-4 Mackenzie and CKPG-TV-5 Quesnel, from 1 September 2004 to 31 August 2011.*

#### **The application**

1. The Commission received an application by CKPG Television Limited (CKPG) to renew the broadcasting licence for the television programming undertaking CKPG-TV Prince George and its transmitters CKPG-TV-1 Hixon, CKPG-TV-4 Mackenzie and CKPG-TV-5 Quesnel, British Columbia. CKPG-TV is an affiliate of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's (CBC) English-language television network.
2. The Commission received one intervention from the CBC in support of this application. The CBC stated that an agreement has been signed to extend the CBC's affiliation with CKPG-TV until 31 August 2009.

#### **Local reflection**

3. CKPG-TV now offers 6 hours and 12 minutes of local news, which includes local editorials and local opinion segments where viewers are encouraged to participate. In addition to its news coverage, CKPG produces a locally produced weekly program on the Western Hockey League's Prince George Cougars entitled *Cougar Views*. CKPG also provides fundraising opportunities that support area charities and local citizens.
4. In its application, CKPG stated that it intends to continue to meet the needs of the community and made a commitment to broadcast a weekly average of 6 hours 30 minutes of original programming that would be reflective of the community. This commitment is higher than the commitment made in 1995 in respect of the current licence term. The licensee indicated that its local reflection programming would consist

entirely of news. The Commission expects the licensee to abide by its commitment with respect to the amount of original programming that would be reflective of the community.

#### **Priority programming**

5. The licensee indicated that the priority programming aired by CKPG-TV would originate with the CBC.

#### **Service to persons who are deaf or whose hearing is impaired**

6. In *Licence Renewal for CKPG-TV Prince George and its transmitters*, Decision CRTC 95-112, 24 March 1995, the Commission encouraged the licensee to caption all local news programming and at least 90% of all programming during the broadcast day, by 31 August 2002. The Commission's analysis of CKPG-TV's logs revealed that, during the 2002-2003 broadcast year, CKPG-TV had captioned 95% of overall programming broadcast on CKPG-TV but only 70% of all local news programming.
7. The Commission notes that the licensee made a commitment in its licence renewal application to caption only 35% of all local news programming and 90% of overall programming broadcast on CKPG-TV, despite the fact that nine years have elapsed since the station was encouraged to reach the targets noted above. The Commission considers that the licensee must improve its performance in this area, beginning early in the licence term.
8. Additionally, in the appendix to this decision, the Commission has imposed a **condition of licence** requiring the licensee to provide closed captioning for all news programs and not less than 90% of all programs aired during the broadcast day, beginning not later than 1 September 2009.

#### **Service to persons who are blind or whose vision is impaired**

9. Section 3(1)(p) of the *Broadcasting Act* (the Act) states that, as part of the broadcasting policy for Canada, "programming accessible by disabled persons should be provided within the Canadian broadcasting system as resources become available for the purpose." Accordingly, the Commission expects all broadcasters to work toward improving the accessibility of their programming for persons who are blind or whose vision is impaired.
10. Greater programming accessibility can be achieved through the provision of audio description<sup>1</sup> and/or of video description.<sup>2</sup> All broadcasters can, and should, provide audio description.

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<sup>1</sup> Audio description consists of basic voice-over recitations or descriptions of the text or graphic information that is displayed on the screen. Although a measure of sensitivity and creativity on the part of a broadcaster is necessary to ensure the quality and effectiveness of audio description, no special equipment is required.

<sup>2</sup> Video description, or described video, takes the form of a narrative description of a program's key visual elements which permits the audience to create a mental image of what is on the screen. It is generally provided using the secondary audio program (SAP) channel.

11. In the presentation of local news programming, CKPG indicated that every effort will be made to ensure voice-over support of graphic material presented, such as phone numbers, stock information and weather graphics. In the event of an emergency, it will provide voice over support of emergency information that scrolls across the screen. Accordingly, the Commission expects the licensee to provide audio description wherever appropriate.
12. In its last licence renewal decision, the CBC was encouraged to provide programming with video description. Therefore, over the course of the next CKPG-TV licence term, such programming is likely to be included in the CBC programming that CKPG-TV broadcasts. The licensee stated, however, that it does not currently have the capability to use the secondary audio program (SAP) channel, which would allow the station to provide video description to viewers who are visually impaired. Accordingly, the Commission expects the licensee to include the capability to use the secondary audio program (SAP) channel as part of the station's normal technical upgrades, so that the video description associated with programs provided by the CBC may be received by its audience. At the next licence renewal, the licensee will be asked to make specific hourly commitments for described video programming.

#### **Reflection of Canada's diversity**

13. All broadcasting licensees have a responsibility to contribute to the reflection and portrayal of Canada's cultural diversity in furtherance of the policy objectives contained in section 3(1)(d) of the Act. Specifically, broadcasters share responsibility for assisting in the development of a broadcasting system that accurately reflects Canada's ethno-cultural minorities and Aboriginal peoples. Broadcasters must therefore ensure that the portrayal of such groups, through their presence and participation on-screen, is accurate, fair and non-stereotypical.
  14. According to its application, CKPG encourages regular dialogue with multicultural and native organizations and continues to be a major sponsor of the annual multicultural conference in Prince George. As a supporter, CKPG uses public service time and local news programming to promote multicultural and aboriginal communities. The licensee submitted that it supports its commitment to these organizations by providing thousands of dollars in free airtime. CKPG also stated that it is sensitive to and encourages feedback from the community on its programming.
  15. The Commission encourages CKPG to develop a corporate diversity plan, in order to allow the licensee to assess its progress towards meeting the foregoing objectives.
  16. As noted in *Introduction to Broadcasting Decisions CRTC 2004-6 to 2004-27 renewing the licences of 22 specialty services*, Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2004-2, 21 January 2004, the Commission considers that the presence, portray and participation of persons with disabilities is also an important objective. The Commission notes that the Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB) has developed a plan to examine issues
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surrounding the presence, portrayal and participation of persons with disabilities in television programming. The Commission considers that initiatives designed to make programming more reflective and inclusive of Canada's ethno-cultural diversity can, in many cases, be extended or adapted to also ensure fair, balanced and inclusive reflection and representation of persons with disabilities. Accordingly, the Commission expects the licensee to include persons with disabilities in its corporate planning for cultural diversity.

#### **Employment equity and on-air presence**

17. CKPG has provided a wheelchair entrance and wheelchair washroom facilities and all advertisements for staff are tagged with the phrase "employment equity employer." The licensee stated that it communicates the details of its employment equity policies to managers and staff via the company's employee handbook and through its recruitment and training and development initiatives. The licensee also has a management committee in place to monitor and implement any changes needed to employment equity.
18. The Commission encourages the licensee to consider employment equity issues in its hiring practices and in all other aspects of its management of human resources.
19. With respect to on-air presence, the Commission expects the licensee to ensure that its programming is reflective of Canadian society and that members of the four designated groups (women, Aboriginal persons, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities) are presented fairly and accurately.

#### **Conclusion**

20. The Commission is generally satisfied that, during the current licence term, the licensee has adhered to the requirements of the *Television Broadcasting Regulations, 1987* and has complied with its conditions of licence and the Commission's expectations, specifically those regarding Canadian programming. Concerns with respect to closed captioning of local news have been addressed earlier in this decision.
21. On the basis of its review of this licence renewal application and having considered the intervener's comments, the Commission **renews** the broadcasting licence for CKPG-TV, Prince George and its transmitters CKPG-TV-1 Hixon, CKPG-TV-4 Mackenzie and CKPG-TV-5 Quesnel, British Columbia from 1 September 2004 to 31 August 2011. The licence will be subject to the conditions specified therein, and to the **conditions** set out in the appendix to this decision.

Secretary General

*This decision is to be appended to the licence. It is available in alternative format upon request, and may also be examined at the following Internet site: <http://www.crtc.gc.ca>*

## **Appendix to Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2004-377**

### **Conditions of licence for CKPG-TV Prince George and its transmitters CKPG-TV-1 Hixon, CKPG-TV-4 Mackenzie and CKPG-TV-5 Quesnel**

1. The licensee shall operate this broadcasting undertaking as an affiliate of the English-language television network operated by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.
2. The licensee shall provide closed captioning for all news programs and not less than 90% of all programs aired during the broadcast day, beginning not later than 1 September 2009.