



Jan 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Mr. Robert A. Morin  
Secretary General  
Canadian Radio-television and  
Telecommunications Commission  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0N2

Dear Mr. Morin:

Please find attached the Cultural Diversity Corporate Plan - 2008 Annual Report for the S-VOX Group of Companies (S-VOX), which consists of: VisionTV, Joytv 10, Joytv 11, The Christian Channel and ONE: The Body, Mind and Spirit Channel.

As a broadcaster, S-VOX strives to reflect the multicultural and multi-faith communities that receive our programming. It is the growing diversity of our audience that compels us to fulfill initiatives that encourage diversity and increase the representation of the four designated groups – women, Aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities and visible minorities. Indeed our services are dedicated to celebrating Canada's multi-faith and multicultural communities, and promoting understanding and tolerance among peoples of different faiths and cultures.

Should you have any questions or require anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me at [mlafontaine@s-vox.com](mailto:mlafontaine@s-vox.com) or 416-368-3194 ext.800.

Yours very truly,

Monique Lafontaine  
V-P Regulatory Affairs



In 2008, the S-VOX group of companies<sup>1</sup> successfully maintained and implemented a number of initiatives to celebrate Canada's diversity and increase the representation of the four designated groups – women, Aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities and visible minorities - both onscreen and in our workplace. We are very proud of our accomplishments and our role as an industry leader in this area.

The following sets out our Cultural Diversity Corporate Plan - 2008 Annual Report. We begin with the key highlights for 2008.

### **2008 Diversity Highlights:**

- In 2008, VisionTV commissioned and produced its first ever hour-long drama series, ***Soul***. This series features Juno awarding winning R&B singer-songwriter Keisha Chanté as a gospel singer on the verge of leaving behind the safety of the church and family for the fast track to pop stardom. This six-part program has emerged from the DiverseTV initiative launched by VisionTV in partnership with the National Screen Institute – Canada, and is the first DiverseTV project to go before the cameras. It will be aired on VisionTV in the winter of 2009, and a premier screening to celebrate the launch of this wonderfully diverse Canadian program will be held in February 2009.
- In 2008, VisionTV commissioned a second window on the half-hour, six-episode Aboriginal drama series ***Rabbit Fall***.
- VisionTV produced and broadcast a five part, half-hour series, ***Ralph Benmergui: My Israel*** in May 2008 to mark Israel's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Following its success a six-part series, ***God Bless America***, was produced. Featuring Ralph Benmergui, the program's premiere was part of a series of special broadcasts in 2009 on faith and politics, marking the Jan 20<sup>th</sup> inauguration of President Barak Obama.
- During Ramadan, VisionTV broadcast three documentaries as part of a week of celebration in September: 1) ***Koran (The Qur'an)***, an ambitious documentary in search of answers, using a combination of vivid contemporary footage and imaginative flights into the past to convey the Muslim experience (both personal and historical); 2) ***Festival of Sacrifice***, a documentary about the three-day Eid ul Adha (festival of sacrifice) in Morocco to highlight and shed light on the reasons, humor, history and humanity behind this most important of Islamic celebrations; and 3) ***Mashala***, a documentary about a Jewish-Canadian singer now based in Barcelona who performs Sephardic music – a haunting blend of Jewish and Arabic sounds.
- VisionTV produced and broadcasted a two-part documentary series called ***China's Leap of Faith*** that was aired around the Beijing Olympics. This groundbreaking documentary examines the impact of the spiritual rebirth in China and the government's continued efforts to control religious faith. The filmmaker managed to

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<sup>1</sup> The S-VOX Group of Companies consists of VisionTV, The Christian Channel, ONE: The Body, Mind and Spirit Channel, Joytv 10, CHNU-TV Fraser Valley and Joytv 11, CIIT-TV, Winnipeg.

secure an interview with China's Minister of Religion and footage of underground worship; this program breaches a wall of official silence to document the balancing act between devotees of the great religions and their nervous political masters in Beijing.

- In 2008 we also worked with a Mosaic programming producer on a program called **Bollywood Ghupshup**. The program, which is a Bollywood talk show, was broadcast in 2008.
- VisionTV continues to expand and improve its lineup of programming to serve the South Asian community. For instance, the Saturday schedule featured a programming block called **Desi Vision** that included the best of Bollywood feature films as well as cultural and interfaith shows. A launch event was held in February 2008 for *Desi Vision* that was attended by several business and political dignitaries including, the Honourable Gurbax Singh Malhi, MP (Bramalea – Gore - Malton), the Honourable Navdeep Singh Bains, MP (Mississauga-Brampton South) as well as the Honourable Harinder S. Takhar, MPP (Mississauga - Erindale & Minister of Small Business and Consumer Services). VisionTV also received accolades from the Premier of Ontario and the Prime Minister of Canada for this leading multi-cultural programming. In a letter to VisionTV dated February 22, 2008, Premier McGuinty stated:

*“Desi Vision Saturday will allow viewers from all backgrounds to access Hindu, Sikh and Muslim content. My colleagues and I appreciate the tremendous benefits that programs such as this one bring to the South Asian community – and Ontario as a whole.”*

The letter from the Right Honourable Stephen Harper also praised this programming and stated:

*“VisionTV is devoted to providing programs that celebrate diversity and promote understanding among people of different faiths. The new Saturday schedule builds on the successes of previous seasons by introducing Bollywood features films and an expanded lineup of programs designed to better serve Hindu, Sikh and Muslim Canadian viewers.*

*I would like to commend VisionTV for its commitment to delivering high-quality programming to Canada's growing South Asian communities.”*

- Further, VisionTV commissioned two documentaries **Bhangra Nation** and **Monsoon Mela** for broadcast in 2009. VisionTV is a title sponsor of **Bhangra Nation**, which is a live event celebrating the Punjabi in the art, culture and commerce of Bhangra. **Monsoon Mela** features an in-depth look at the culture and tradition of Teeyan Da Mela, a festival exclusive to Punjab women and a unique cultural exhibition in Canada's multi-cultural society.
- In May 2008, Christian Channel Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of VisionTV: Canada's Faith Network/Réseau religieux canadien, acquired CHNU-TV, Fraser Valley and CIIT-TV, Winnipeg from Rogers Broadcasting Limited. As part of the S-VOX group of companies, these services were rebranded in September 2008 as Joytv 10 in B.C. and Joytv 11 in Manitoba. Throughout their history, through these

stations have had a mandate to reflect the multi-faith and multicultural reality of their respective communities, and this mandate has continued to be a high priority under S-VOX's stewardship. The stations' flagship program *The Daily with Mark and Laura Lynn* has diverse hosts and guests. Other original content produced for and by the Joytv stations includes programs reflecting a wide variety of faith perspectives including *Discovering Buddhism*, *The Search with Rafe Mair*, *Discovering Islam*, and *Randall Mark Perspectives*. Programming for South Asian Canadians on Joytv 10 Vancouver has been expanded and now occupies almost the entire Saturday daytime and primetime schedule. Minority faith perspectives are also represented in other parts of the Joytv schedules with programs such as *Asper Lectures*, *Foundations*, *Diya* and *Sikh Virsa*.

- The Christian Channel, which we launched in 2005, also continued to provide a variety of faith perspectives on-air, and its programming reflected Canada's diverse communities including African-Canadians, Aboriginal communities, South Asian and Filipino-Canadians.
- Over the past year, ONE: The Body, Mind and Spirit Channel continued to provide programming that reflects members of the four designated groups. For example the Asian Canadian culture was reflected in such programs as *Coconut Coast*, *Flow Yoga*, *Tai Chi with Grandmaster Liang*, *Alternate States*, *Bare Beauty* and *Chinese Medicine for Today*. This specialty service also provided programming that profiled people with disabilities, such as *Healing with Animals* and *Five Seekers*. Additionally, ONE provided a broad range of programs of specific interest to women, including *Ultimate Survival: Everest*, *Travels with Mom* and *Herbalicious*. And, in 2008 ONE aired programming reflective of Aboriginal people, such as *Medicine Woman*, which was aired on a weekly basis.
- VisionTV also sponsored the 2008 imagineNATIVE Film & Media Arts Festival, which features the latest works by and about Aboriginal peoples. This festival includes screenings, parties, panel discussions and cultural events that bring together filmmakers, media artists, programmers, buyers and industry professionals.
- VisionTV continued to be an active participant in Strategic Alliance of Broadcasters for Aboriginal Reflection (SABAR). SABAR is a group of Canadian broadcasters and Aboriginal organizations working to increase the representation of Aboriginal people in all aspects of the Canadian broadcast industry. VisionTV is very pleased to have been one of the founders of SABAR.
- VisionTV also supported and participated in a variety of industry and cultural events over the course of the past year, such as the Canadian Aboriginal Festival, the Reel World Film Festival (a festival dedicated to diversity) and the Hot Docs Film Festival (a Canadian festival dedicated to documentaries).
- Finally, approximately 11% of the average broadcast week on VisionTV is comprised of Mosaic programs from the Sikh, Hindu, and Muslim faith communities that feature visible minorities in leading roles on-camera and in key creative roles including producing and directing. This outstanding diversity in the Mosaic area enhances the diversity of programming we offer in the Cornerstone schedule.

## **Corporate Accountability**

### ***(i) Senior Executive in Charge of Diversity***

#### ***(A) Has a senior executive been identified in the corporate plan?***

In 2008, the Chief Content Officer (CCO) at VisionTV, Mr. Mark Prasuhn, continued as the senior executive responsible for implementing our Corporate Plan for Cultural Diversity across our S-VOX Group of services. Prior to assuming the position of CCO, Mr. Prasuhn was Chief Operating Officer at VisionTV, and was the senior executive responsible for the implementation of our Cultural Diversity Plan. Thus, Mr. Prasuhn has been involved in overseeing our Cultural Diversity Plan since the early days of its implementation within our organization.

#### ***(B) What specific responsibilities have been identified in the corporate plan?***

The CCO has authority to ensure the goals in the plan are being achieved. Specific responsibilities include:

- Setting general direction of the company's diversity plan;
- Informing colleagues of relevant external developments;
- Making recommendations to further the success of the plan;
- Leading in the implementation of corporate diversity initiatives;
- Monitoring progress; and
- Chairing the management and staff advisory committee on cultural diversity.

The CCO is also the current Chair of the CAB Joint Societal Issues Committee, and in that context participates in the development of policy and advocacy relating to diversity issues.

The Director Human Resources, Ms. Sheri Ellis, supplements the efforts of the CCO representing VisionTV in external activities such as SABAR and providing additional oversight of internal functions. Through the Human Resources department, the CCO supports the full annual performance review process for all management and staff, and ensures that they are carried out. Required training or other professional development activities relating to diversity are noted.

The Director of Independent Production, Ms. Joan Jenkinson, articulates S VOX's diversity mandate on panels and in meetings with independent producers at various industry functions including Hot Docs, the Banff World Television Festival, the Atlantic Film Festival, Strategic Partners and DOC forums across the country.

#### ***(C) What has the senior executive responsible for diversity accomplished in this reporting year, particularly with respect to ensuring that management becomes more reflective of Canada's multi-cultural reality?***

Over the past year, the senior executive responsible for diversity put considerable efforts in ensuring equitable representation within the S-VOX Group of companies' workforce, employment practices and on-air programming. With the acquisition of two over-the-air TV services in 2008, he strove to ensure that VisionTV's high standard of representing

the four designated groups would be reflected and maintained at the new broadcast services.

In 2008, VisionTV continued to engage in positive measures, such as creating and maintaining strong working relationships with diverse community organizations, hiring to sustain and enhance the diversity of our workforce, as well as working with diverse organizations such as Canadian Women in Communications (CWC), Women in Film and Television (WIFT), First Nations Technical Institute, and the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). We've also continued to incorporate the Community Outreach Diversity Without Borders and the Aboriginal Job Center websites to our recruitment procedure to ensure more broad recruitment outreach.

Additionally, VisionTV added two women to its senior management team, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary and VP Regulatory Affairs. Representation from the designated groups among our senior management team is 57.1% female, 7.1% persons with disabilities, and 21.4% visible minorities. Forty percent of the members of our board of directors are people from the designated groups. We intend to maintain this standard of representation and will strive to make continual improvements over time.

Further and as outlined earlier, a number of programming initiatives were undertaken in 2008 on VisionTV to better serve and profile Canada's diverse communities on-air. As stated above, *Desi Vision*, a full broadcast day of South Asian-Canadian programming, was launched in early 2008. Programming in various South Asian languages reflected the community in major centres including Toronto, Vancouver, Edmonton and Calgary. This programming also showcased the faith practices, music and culture of Sikh, Hindu and Muslim Canadians.

Special programming events celebrating key days in the calendars of various faiths were scheduled and delivered during the past year on VisionTV, such as Guru Nanak's Birthday (Sikhism), Rosh Hashanah and Easter.

Theme weeks were also scheduled on VisionTV to coincide with Israel's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the Beijing Olympics, and the month of Ramadan. Each of these included original documentary programming examining the contemporary practice of Judaism, Buddhism and Confucianism, and Islam respectively.

Further, as in the past year, VisionTV acknowledged Black History Month in February 2008 with a lineup of movies dealing with the historic and the contemporary Black experience. VisionTV also acknowledged the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. with an evening of special programming.

Finally, VisionTV continued to engage in positive measures such as creating and maintaining strong working relationships with diverse community organizations, hiring to sustain and enhance the diversity of our workforce, working with diverse organizations to ensure broad recruitment outreach.

**(D) If applicable, please describe any new initiatives, including those that might have resulted from work in this area.**

Last year, improvements were made at our workplace to facilitate access by people with disabilities. In particular, an elevator was installed in order to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. Also note that VisionTV accommodates employees with hearing disabilities with transcription services during internal meetings.

VisionTV's HR department has also been working with representatives from Innoversity to identify opportunities to support and participate in the 2009 Innoversity Summit.

**(ii) Clear Goals for Station Managers**

**(A) What goals for station managers have been identified in the corporate plan?**

Although VisionTV, the specialty service, does not have a specific "station manager", in many respects the CCO fulfills a similar role with respect to internal management.

The work of the CCO is supported by the Director Human Resources and the Cultural Diversity Advisory Committee ("CDAO"), a group of VisionTV's senior managers responsible for advising the CCO on diversity issues.

Specific goals for these individuals include:

- Meetings to discuss diversity initiatives;
- Implementation of training for employees;
- Annual reporting to the Board of Directors on diversity;
- Maintain policy of positive measures in hiring; maintain or increase overall numerical representation from designated groups; and
- Continue support of SABAR and other industry initiatives on diversity.

In 2008, a station manager was hired for Joytv 10, CHNU-TV Fraser Valley. That individual has been briefed on the importance of on-air and workplace reflection of the four designated groups. The CCO has also discussed the VisionTV Cultural Diversity Corporate Plan with Joytv 10's station manager.

**(B) In this reporting year, which initiatives to meet those goals have been implemented?**

Each of the objectives noted above has been achieved.

**(C) What are the outcomes of those initiatives?**

Completion of performance reviews is a corporate objective and was met. During the past year, representation of visible minorities was also maintained and in some categories increased. We continued to support numerous initiatives including SABAR, Reel World Film Festival, the Canadian National Aboriginal Festival, and Media Access and Participation Initiative. The latter initiative is a partnership between government and Innoversity, which promotes employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the broadcast industry.

***(D) Please identify the timelines for those initiatives that have not yet been implemented.***

Although we conducted a self-identifying survey of our staff in 2005, in 2008 we identified the need to conduct a further self-identifying study of the designated groups. That study will be conducted in 2009.

***(iii) diversity training for management***

***(A) What specific training initiatives have been identified in the corporate plan?***

The training initiatives identified in the corporate plan consists of the following:

- Management and supervisory staff to participate in an annual review of HR policies and procedures, including those that speak to the issues of diversity, employment equity and anti-harassment;
- specific training on anti-harassment matters offered on an as required basis; and
- all staff encouraged to participate in CWC events; indeed the CEO, Mr. Bill Roberts, regularly invites staff to participate in CWC in addition to WIFT activities, programs and events.

***(C) For those training initiatives that have been implemented, please answer the following questions:***

***i. What kind of training has been received?***

Last year, the Director Human Resources participated in the CAB Diversity webinar in November 2008.

***ii. Please indicate which levels of management have participated in this training and what proportion of management that this represents.***

Senior management participated in this training. One individual participated, Ms. Sheri Ellis, our Director of Human Resources.

***iii. What have been the benefits of this training?***

The webinar was assessed as an excellent source of diversity information, especially with respect to the resources identified in the content.



***(D) Please identify timelines for those training initiatives that have not yet been implemented.***

Diversity training for the entire management team is planned for 2009. Additionally, English-language training for staff whose first language is not English will continue to be provided as requested.

***(iv) staff involvement in plan's progress***

***(A) What specific initiatives have been identified in the corporate plan?***

As diversity is a core value and corporate competency at VisionTV, staff have been involved in all aspects of our successful achievement of diversity goals. The corporate plan references specifically:

- Annual performance reviews;
- Maintenance of Equity and Diversity policies;
- CDAO to advise CCO; and
- Training opportunities.

All policies that impact diversity initiatives are available on the corporate Intranet, which serves as the homepage for staff internet access. Each new employee is provided with the relevant policies and the importance of equity and diversity as a corporate value is explained and emphasized in the recruitment and orientation processes.

***(B) In this reporting year which initiatives have been implemented.***

All of these initiatives were implemented in 2008.

***(C) For those initiatives that have been implemented, please answer the following questions:***

***i. In this reporting year describe the opportunities provided for staff assessment of progress in the area of cultural diversity?***

Staff members and their supervisors provided written commentary and then met as part of the annual performance review. The discussions included an opportunity to review diversity initiatives. The members of the CDAO, with the mandate to be an advisory body, were available as a resource to all employees. In addition, there were regular staff, senior management and departmental meetings that addressed diversity and equity initiatives. Employees of VisionTV are represented by the Canadian Media Guild as bargaining agent. The bargaining unit and the Guild offer another mechanism for staff to provide feedback regarding diversity initiatives.

***ii. How many staff participated in this assessment?***

All staff had the opportunity to participate in these assessments through the performance review process, informal communication and formal staff meetings.

***iii Through staff assessment have future challenges been identified?***

We have continued to experience challenges in attracting and hiring staff from the Aboriginal communities. In fact, the most critical initiative will be the self-identification process, which will allow us to better understand our current staff profile. In addition, our membership in SABAR has been an invaluable learning experience and we hope to implement more of the recommendations and resources into our goal of improving the representation of Aboriginal peoples in our workforce.

***(D) Please identify the timelines for those initiatives that have not yet been implemented.***

All of the initiatives identified in VisionTV's Cultural Diversity Corporate Plan with respect to staff involvement have been implemented.

***(E) If applicable, please describe any new initiatives, including those that might have resulted from work in this area.***

VisionTV's Director Human Resources will continue to explore ways to expand our recruitment and positive measures to improve achievement of our objectives. We also work closely with other broadcasters to specifically address how to better reflect and involve people from Canada's First Nations and persons with disabilities in the broadcast system.

***(v) improving employment practices re visible minorities***

***Hiring***

***(A) What specific hiring initiatives have been identified in the corporate plan?***

Two specific initiatives have been identified in VisionTV's plan:

- Maintain positive recruitment measures to increase representation of Aboriginal peoples and visible minorities; and
- Continue to improve upon the levels of representation of all four designated groups.

***(B) In this reporting year, which hiring initiatives have been implemented?***

Both of these initiatives have been pursued and we have made progress in the areas of recruiting and retaining from the visible minority groups. Our current staff representation from the designated groups includes: 53.8% female, 28.8% visible minority, and 5.0% persons with a disability.

***(C) For those initiatives that have been implemented please describe what has been accomplished.***

We have engaged in positive measures hiring in a number of areas in order to enhance the diversity of our work force. 58.3% of our new hires in 2008 were female; and 45.8% were visible minorities.

***(D) Please identify the timelines for those initiatives that have not yet been implemented.***

All of the initiatives have been implemented, however we will continue our efforts to attract applicants of Aboriginal background.

***(E) If applicable please describe any new initiatives including those that might have resulted from work in this area.***

In 2009, we will conduct a survey to measure, through self-identification, all aspects of diversity applicable to VisionTV staff. This will then allow us to measure our future progress against new benchmarks.

***Retention / training***

***(A) What specific initiatives including training have been set out to address retention of culturally diverse employees in the corporate plan?***

In addition to the training initiatives discussed previously, VisionTV engages in the following practices that encourage the retention of culturally diverse employees:

- Maintain availability of multi-purpose rooms for meditation or prayer;
- Policies that permit flexibility to honour faith obligations such as allowing substitution of statutory/public holidays for alternate days;
- CDAO will continue to meet, advise and review the optimal ways to meet the needs of the designated groups and to reflect them on-air;
- Strong representation of women (57.1%), people with disabilities (7.1%), and visible minorities (21.4%) among senior and executive Management team;
- Reflection of diversity in our on-air presentation. In addition to the Saturday (Mosaic) programming, we air about eight hours per week of Christian ministry Mosaic programming from visible minority ministers or ministries and approximately another 12 hours per week of weekday (Cornerstone) programming featuring subject matter and participants from visible minorities, Aboriginal peoples and people with disabilities;
- Cultural diversity identified as a core value of the organization.

***(B) In this reporting year, which initiatives have been implemented?***

Diversity is an ongoing commitment at VisionTV. All of these initiatives have been actively pursued in 2008.

***(C) For those initiatives that have been implemented please describe what has been accomplished?***

Because cultural diversity is a core value of the organization it is reflected in all aspects of our day-to-day operations. It is our goal to ensure people of all backgrounds feel welcome at VisionTV. We strive to achieve that objective, and believe we are highly successful, on a daily basis. We refer to our diverse workforce and culture as an important aspect of our recruitment process and describe it to candidates as one of the best reasons to join VisionTV. We have also worked to implement these priorities at our new broadcasting services.

**(D) Please identify the timelines for those initiatives that have not yet been implemented.**

All of the initiatives identified in the corporate plan have been implemented.

**Reflection of Diversity in Programming**

**Non-News**

**(i) Diversifying casts; and (iii) Diversifying Acquisitions**

**(A) What specific initiatives have been identified in the corporate plan?**

The Programming department licenses, acquires and schedules programming for all of the S-VOX group of companies' services to ensure wide representation and a fair and accurate portrayal of culturally diverse groups on-screen. Among the key decision makers include Directors of Independent Production, Director of Acquisitions and Director of Network Scheduling who are all women and one of whom is also a visible minority. Specific responsibilities of the programming team include:

- Leading the implementation of on-air diversity initiatives;
- Monitoring progress;
- Enforcing VisionTV's Code of Ethics;
- Reviewing and hiring on-air personalities;
- Adhering to VisionTV's Guidelines for Independent Productions;
- Liaising with the Mosaic Program Management Group; and
- Working with a diverse group of producers, many from among the designated groups and regionally represented across the country.

Each programming director has cultural diversity identified as a performance goal and is responsible for ensuring diversity policies are followed in their area of responsibility. The directors have regular department meetings and individual meetings with the CCO who then reports to the President & CEO and the Board of Directors on a regular basis regarding diversity in the program schedule.

The Director of Independent Production is responsible for the implementation of VisionTV's Guidelines for Independent Producers, which includes a statement emphasizing the importance of cultural diversity and the fair and accurate reflection of visible minorities.

In seeking out programs for our Mosaic schedule, we focus efforts on identifying shows from under-represented groups and ensuring that all programs meet the standards set out in VisionTV's Code of Ethics, including the references to diversity.

**(B) In this reporting year, which initiatives have been implemented?**

All of the initiatives in the corporate plan have been pursued this year.

***(C) For those initiatives that have been implemented please describe how each initiative has contributed to diversifying casts /acquisitions.***

VisionTV's long history of success in reflecting Canada's cultural diversity continued in 2008. Descriptions of a few of our notable achievements in diversifying casts this year are set out below.

Many Mosaic programs on VisionTV from Sikh, Hindu, and Muslim faith communities feature visible minorities in leading roles and created by visible minority producers. This outstanding diversity in the Mosaic area is enhanced by the diversity of programming we offer in our Cornerstone schedule.

As mentioned earlier, some of the Projects in production or on air in 2008 include **SOUL**, an hour-long drama series featuring Keisha Chanté; **Ralph Benmergui: My Israel**, a feature documentary; and **Bhangra Nation**, a half-hour documentary on this Punjabi dance form.

More than 30% of the independent productions commissioned by VisionTV were by or about people of visible minority backgrounds during prime time. This does not include a number of series that aired last year that were by or about members of the visible minority community.

***(D) Please identify the timelines for those initiatives that have not yet been implemented.***

All of the initiatives are currently being implemented on a day-to-day basis.

***(ii) Diversifying scripts***

***(A) What specific initiatives have been identified in the corporate plan?***

As an organization, we identified a need for enhanced training of scriptwriters of culturally diverse backgrounds. As a result, in 2005 VisionTV initiated **DiverseTV** with the National Screen Institute. This groundbreaking program provides visible minority and Aboriginal writers the chance to create a dramatic television series or feature film for national broadcast. The six participants in the program included two First Nations writers, two Asian Canadians, and two Canadians of Caribbean descent. The DiverseTV initiative provides emerging talent with an opportunity for training, professional development, and mentorship by Mickey Rogers, of the National Screen Institute and veteran writer, Peter Lauterman.

In 2008, two of the projects resulting from this program are moving forward: **Rising Sun**, a feature film in development. Angel Entertainment of Saskatchewan will produce the film; and **SOUL**, a six-part, one-hour drama series was produced with Halifaxfilm.

***(F) If applicable, please describe any new initiatives, including those that might have resulted from work in this area.***

VisionTV continued to take a leadership role through its involvement in **DiverseTV** and working with diverse communities, individuals, industry partners and other stakeholders to engage and skilled, experienced writers from diverse backgrounds.

## ***Community Involvement***

### ***(i) Community input and feedback***

#### ***(A) What specific initiatives have been identified in the corporate plan?***

The following specific initiatives for community input and feedback have been identified:

- Regular meetings of Mosaic Program Management Group ("MPMG");
- Website posting seeking suggestions and feedback;
- Maintain diversity of Board of Directors and consult on a regular basis;
- Urge CAB Joint Societal Issues Committee to examine how to best measure audience trends of visible minority and Aboriginal viewers. VisionTV's CCO is a long-standing member of that committee.

#### ***(B) In this reporting year, which initiatives have been implemented?***

Each of the ongoing initiatives was pursued this year.

#### ***(C) For those initiatives that have been implemented, please answer the following questions.***

##### ***i. What kind of input and feedback has been solicited?***

From the MPMG we have sought feedback:

- a. to address the needs of the various faith groups;
- b. to ensure diversity and balance between the Mosaic and Cornerstone schedules;
- c. on implementation of VisionTV's Code of Ethics in specific situations and on general matters of policy;
- d. on matters pertaining to programming;
- e. regarding the creation and broadcast of on-air promotions for Mosaic programs;
- f. about faith and cultural events advertised by VisionTV and attended by VisionTV representatives.

Our website solicits feedback from viewers on all aspects of our programming. We receive a wide range of correspondence from viewers. From time to time we ask for commentary on specific issues, including feedback on the diversity of our program schedule, either through online questions, polls, or the use of surveys. Visitors to our website are able to respond online providing immediate feedback to us.

The Board of Directors has representation from at least four different faith communities, Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism and Native Spirituality, and representation from women and Aboriginal peoples. We consult with the Board on a regular basis regarding diversity initiatives by reviewing the program schedule, showing video clips, viewing excerpts from specific shows, and reporting on employment and corporate challenges and achievements.

***ii. Please indicate the communities and/or groups from whom input and feedback has been received.***

Lists of VisionTV's Board of Directors and the active members of the MPMG are on file with the Commission.

We receive comments from thousands of viewers each year, from coast-to-coast, representing a diversity of faith communities and cultural backgrounds. We also liaise with a diversity of Canadian faith institutions on a regular basis such as, the Council of Canadian Imams, Canadian Jewish Congress, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, the United Church of Canada, and the Institute for Canadian Values.

***iii Who within the organization reviews this input and feedback.***

The CCO attends MPMG meetings to receive and review feedback and reports to the board on diversity matters. The President & CEO receives regular feedback from Canadian faith leaders directly.

Feedback from viewers is received and sorted by Audience Relations who is then responsible for reviewing and sharing comments with other members of the executive management team as appropriate. Survey data is also managed by the Director Audience, Brand & Marketing who meets with the Senior VP Programming to review and discuss the results.

***iv. How is the input and feedback being used?***

The input is used to shape our program schedule and make adjustments to ensure we are achieving appropriate levels of balance and diversity. We believe the feedback will assist us in achieving higher standards of cultural diversity on screen.

***(D) Please identify the timelines for those initiatives that have not yet been implemented.***

The initiatives identified in VisionTV's Corporate Cultural Diversity Plan have all been implemented. We continue to examine opportunities to improve our performance with respect to diversity on an ongoing basis and implement improved best practices as resources permit.

***(F) If applicable please describe any new initiatives including those that might have resulted from work in this area.***

The VisionTV continued to support its diverse program initiatives by maintaining and constantly updating our website at [www.visiontv.ca](http://www.visiontv.ca). The information found online includes scheduling, promotional materials and video clips of the programs featured on VisionTV which reflects the diversity found in its programming. For example, for the release of the six part mini-series drama *SOUL*, a website is currently being designed in partnership with Halifax Film Digital that will contain video blogs from the cast and crew as well as embedded links to third-party site sites such as Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Flickr and Wikipedia. *SOUL* features a predominantly black cast with a female in the lead role.

In December of 2007 VisionTV launched it's first venture into the delivery of content on demand. VisionTV On Demand (VOD) delivers Flash format previews, program clips and exclusive original content. VisionTV On Demand allows viewers to stream video from more than a dozen different content "channels." The offerings include documentary clips, promos and sneak previews of upcoming specials as well as original programming on themes such as "Religion 101" and "Religious Etiquette". The programming available online is diverse and reflective of the broad community that we serve, including members of the designated groups. Six major faith groups have clips available on VOD those groups include the Buddhist, Bahai, Roman Catholic, Jain, Jewish, and Wiccan faiths. In addition 13 episode clips of the popular show *Medicine Woman*, hosted by Dr. Daniele Behn of the Dene Nation, have been made available on VOD. Since its launch the available content has been updated and increased. Currently VOD has over three hours of programming accessible online.

As we begin to explore how to better leverage multi-media applications in celebrating Canada's diversity, we are pleased to have the opportunity to engage citizens directly and to encourage dialogue among and between Canadians of different backgrounds.

### ***ONE: the Body, Mind and Spirit Channel***

As VisionTV has adopted cultural diversity as a core value, and VisionTV provides all management services for the operation of ONE, the pursuit of greater representation among the four designated groups also apply to ONE.

As mentioned earlier, ONE continued to achieve remarkable success in broadcasting programming that enhanced the diversity of the Canadian broadcasting system. Such programming included *Medicine Woman*, featuring an Aboriginal female lead, and *Living Yoga With Padma*, also with a female lead.

ONE will continue to look for new and innovative ways to expand VisionTV's leadership in reflecting the cultural diversity of Canada through each of our services. Three new Canadian factual series were developed for ONE in 2008, which will be produced in 2009. These series will reflect the practices of other cultures, such as Hindu yoga and Chinese traditional medicine.