



Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2006-140

Ottawa, 2 November 2006

Addition of LBC America and Future Television Channel to the lists of eligible satellite services for distribution on a digital basis

*The Commission **approves** a request to add LBC America and Future Television Channel to the lists of eligible satellite services for distribution on a digital basis and amends the lists of eligible satellite services accordingly. The revised lists are available on the Commission's web site at www.crtc.gc.ca under "Industries at a Glance".*

Introduction

1. The Commission received a request dated 17 May 2006 from Videotron Ltd. (Videotron) for the addition of two non-Canadian third-language services to the lists of eligible satellite services for distribution on a digital basis (the digital lists). Videotron described these services as follows:

LBC America and Future Television Channel are 24-hour-a-day/7-day-a-week general interest services offering a wide range of programming in Arabic (over 90%), including feature films as well as drama, sports, news and commentary, cooking, general interest, entertainment, music and dance, and religious programs. None of the programs are subtitled.

2. The Commission subsequently issued *Call for comments on the proposed addition of LBC America and Future Television Channel to the lists of eligible satellite services for distribution on a digital basis*, Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2006-91, 21 July 2006.

Positions of parties

3. The Commission received over 250 comments in support of the addition of these services to the digital lists. The Commission also received comments from The Council of Lebanese Canadian Organizations (the CLCO), who opposed the addition of only LBC America and Future Television Channel to the lists. The CLCO submitted that neither of these channels is independent, but rather that both are run by Lebanese political parties, whose political points of view they represent. The CLCO expressed concern that the Commission's approval of two Lebanese channels at once could make it more difficult for the Commission to approve other channels, and that this would endanger the balance of the media as presented to the Canadian-Lebanese community, especially given that a proposed new Lebanese electoral law would allow Lebanese abroad to participate in Lebanon's electoral process. Videotron did not file a reply to interventions.

The Commission's analysis and determinations

4. The Commission's approach to the addition of non-Canadian, third-language television services to the digital lists is set out in *Improving the diversity of third-language television services – A revised approach to assessing requests to add non-Canadian third-language television services to the lists of eligible satellite services for distribution on a digital basis*, Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2004-96, 16 December 2004 (Public Notice 2004-96). In Public Notice 2004-96, the Commission stated that, going forward, requests to add non-Canadian general interest third-language services to the digital lists would generally be approved, subject, as appropriate, to new distribution and linkage rules described in the public notice.
5. The Commission has examined the material filed in support of the request to add LBC America and Future Television Channel to the digital lists, and is satisfied that the services are general interest services in the Arabic language, as described by their sponsor. Thus, the services are appropriately subject to the approach for such services set out in Public Notice 2004-96.
6. With respect to the concerns expressed by the CLCO, the Commission notes that there is nothing in the approach set out in Public Notice 2004-96 that would preclude the addition of further Lebanese services in the Arabic language. Rather, requests for the addition of such services would be considered pursuant to the Commission's established approach to non-Canadian, third-language services.
7. In light of the above, the Commission **approves** the addition of LBC America and Future Television Channel to the digital lists and amends the lists of eligible satellite services accordingly. The lists of eligible satellite services are available on the Commission's web site at www.crtc.gc.ca under "Industries at a Glance" and may be obtained in hard copy on request. The Commission notes that the distribution of these services is subject to the distribution and linkage rules that apply to third-language general interest services added to the digital lists after 16 December 2004, as set out in *Linkage requirements for Direct-to-home (DTH) satellite distribution undertakings*, Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2006-134, and *Distribution and Linkage requirements for Class 1 and Class 2 licensees*, Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2006-135, both dated 20 October 2006.

Secretary General

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