



Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2006-92

Ottawa, 24 March 2006

International Harvesters for Christ Evangelistic Association Inc.
Montréal, Quebec

Application 2004-0473-1
Public Hearing in the National Capital Region
14 November 2005

Christian music FM radio station

*The Commission **denies** the application for a French- and English-language, specialty FM radio station in Montréal that would broadcast Christian music.*

The application

1. The Commission received an application by International Harvesters for Christ Evangelistic Association Inc. (IHC) for a broadcasting licence to operate a predominantly French-language Christian music FM radio programming undertaking in Montréal, Quebec. The proposed station would operate at 106.3 MHz (channel 292A) with an average effective radiated power (ERP) of 324 watts (maximum effective radiated power of 1,200 watts).
2. This application was placed on the agenda for the public hearing of 14 November 2005 along with two other technically competing applications: an application by Astral Media Radio Inc. (Astral) to modify the authorized contours of CFEI-FM Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec, and an application by Mr. René Ferron, on behalf of a company to be incorporated (Mr. René Ferron), to operate a specialty French-language commercial FM radio station in Montréal at 106.3 MHz (channel 292B1) with an average ERP of 500 watts. Separate decisions relating to these other two applications have been published today.¹
3. The applicant indicated that the proposed station would broadcast 126 hours of programming in each broadcast week, including 10 hours of local and regional news. All music broadcast would be drawn from subcategory 35 (Non-classic religious), as set out in *Revised content categories and subcategories for radio*, Public Notice CRTC 2000-14, dated 28 January 2000. During each broadcast week, the proposed station would broadcast a minimum of 20% Canadian content.

¹ See *CFEI-FM Saint-Hyacinthe – Technical changes*, Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2006-94, 24 March 2006, and *Specialty FM radio station in Montréal*, Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2006-93, 24 March 2006.

4. During each broadcast week, the applicant indicated that the proposed station would broadcast a minimum of 20 hours of religious spoken word programming, as defined in *Religious Broadcasting Policy*, Public Notice CRTC 1993-78, dated 3 June 1993.
5. With respect to Canadian talent development, the applicant proposed to direct funding to FACTOR, although no specific level was indicated.

Interventions

6. The Commission received interventions in support of this application, one offering general comments, submitted by the Association québécoise de l'industrie du disque, du spectacle et de la vidéo (ADISQ) and three in opposition to it, by Canadian Hellenic Cable Radio Ltd. (CHCR), Astral, and Mr. René Ferron. As noted above, Astral and Mr. René Ferron are also applicants at this hearing.
7. In its comment, ADISQ emphasized the importance of the commitments that applicants make in respect of Canadian content, French-language vocal music, and the promotion of Canadian artists.
8. CHCR is the licensee of CKDG-FM Montréal, a commercial ethnic radio station licensed in 2003. CHCR expressed the concern that the Commission had not issued a call for competitive applications to serve the Montréal market prior to the consideration of this application. CHCR also urged the Commission to not license any further new services in Montréal, less than two years after the launch of CKDG-FM. The intervener was of the view that the introduction of another service to the market would be premature, and could result in financial harm to CKDG-FM.
9. Astral and Mr. René Ferron stated that the IHC application did not represent the best use of the 106.3 MHz frequency. Astral also noted that its own application to enhance the technical operation of its radio station CFEI-FM Saint-Hyacinthe was technically mutually exclusive with the IHC proposal, and expressed the view that the signal of IHC's proposed station could result in interference to CFEI-FM.
10. The applicant did not reply to the interventions.

Commission's analysis and determination

11. With respect to CHCR's contention that a call should have been issued, the Commission considers that the proposed service would have rather limited commercial impact on the Montréal market. The proposed station would target a small specialized audience, and the projected advertising revenue would be modest. Consequently, the Commission determined that it was not necessary in the circumstances to issue a call for applications, given that the Commission stated in *The Issuance of Calls for Radio Applications*, Public Notice CRTC 1999-111, 8 July 1999, that it would not issue calls for applications in certain specific situations, among them applications for low-power stations and other proposals with little or no commercial potential.

12. The Commission recognizes the scarcity of available frequencies on the FM band in the Montréal market, and carefully scrutinized the manner in which IHC's proposed programming would be complementary to that of the incumbents. The Commission also noted the ways in which IHC proposed to address cultural diversity and local reflection in its programming.
13. The Commission notes that the programming plans for the new station were largely formulated based on the applicant's experience in operating a Christian music radio station, CITA-FM Moncton, New Brunswick. While an applicant's experience can highlight its successes and achievements, the specific plans for a proposed service should also reflect the distinct community to be served. This is particularly appropriate in a market with a range of communities and diversity such as Montréal.
14. The Commission considers that IHC's application contained little specific detail for local Montréal-based programming. The program descriptions offered were of a general nature and did not identify any specific programs or contributors that would have demonstrated a reflection of the local community. The sample program schedule listed program titles, but no descriptions of specific programs that would provide programming diversity or that were clearly targeted to the multi-faith communities in Montréal.
15. In conclusion, the Commission finds that the applicant provided a very poor quality application that did not demonstrate sufficient evidence of concrete plans for a service that would adequately reflect a large and diverse community such as Montréal.
16. In light of the foregoing, the Commission **denies** the application by International Harvesters for Christ Evangelistic Association Inc. for a broadcasting licence to operate a predominantly French-language Christian music FM radio programming undertaking in Montréal.

Secretary General

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