



## Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2005-109

Ottawa, 23 March 2005

### **Vidéotron Ltée, CF Cable TV Inc. and Videotron (Regional) Ltd.**

Ascot Corner, Gatineau (zone Buckingham), Trois-Rivières (zone Cap-de-la-Madeleine), Saguenay (zone Chicoutimi), Coaticook, Cowansville, East-Angus, Granby, Gatineau (zone Hull), La Malbaie, La Pocatière, Lachute, Lennoxville, Montebello, Montréal, Princeville, Québec, Rivière-du-Loup, Saint-André-Avelin, Sainte-Pétronille, Saint-Félicien, Saint-Joachim-de-Montmorency, Saint-Pascal, Sherbrooke (zone Lennoxville), Sorel-Tracy (zone Sorel), Terrebonne, Thurso, Victoriaville, Waterloo, Quebec and Rockland (Ontario)

*Application 2004-1073-8*

*Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2004-98*

*23 December 2004*

### **Distribution of additional signals on a discretionary digital basis**

1. The Commission received an application by Vidéotron Ltée, CF Cable TV Inc. and Videotron (Regional) Ltd. (collectively, “Vidéotron”) for authority to distribute the signals of the transitional digital television undertakings CFTO-DT, Toronto (CTV Digital Toronto) and CIII-DT-41, Toronto (Global Digital Toronto), as part of its high definition (HD) digital service. The applicant submitted that distribution of the Toronto transitional digital television undertakings would enhance the diversity of Canadian programming in the markets that Vidéotron serves. Vidéotron stated that it would broadcast the signals of CTV Digital Toronto and Global Digital Toronto until Montréal digital television undertakings that provide CTV and Global programming in HD begin broadcasting
2. Vidéotron submitted letters from the licensees of the two Toronto transitional digital television undertakings giving their consent for distribution in Quebec and confirming that that they would not accept local advertising in any of the markets served by Vidéotron.
3. In order to make it easier for viewers to watch the CTV Digital Toronto and Global Digital Toronto, Vidéotron stated that it would place them in the same channel position as the Montréal analog CTV and Global stations, but in the 600 series. For example, on systems where Vidéotron distributes the CTV station CFCF-TV Montréal on channel 11, it would distribute CTV Digital Toronto on channel 611.
4. The Commission did not receive any interventions in connection with this application.

5. The Commission notes that this application supersedes application 2003-1772-8, which was published in Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2004-31, 5 May 2004. In that application, Vidéotron proposed to temporarily operate and distribute an HD television programming service that would consist of HD programming compiled from television signals from distant markets that were not available in HD in Quebec.

### **The Commission's analysis and determination**

6. In *The regulatory framework for the distribution of digital television signals*, Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2003-61, 11 November 2003 (Public Notice 2003-61), the Commission stated:

... one of the purposes of introducing digital technology is to provide viewers with a superior technical format. The Commission considers that the greater the opportunity that consumers have to be exposed to the superior technical quality of digital, and particularly of HD services, the greater their incentive will be to purchase digital television receivers, which will in turn increase the demand for digital television services. The faster the consumer take-up, the shorter the time period during which broadcasters and distributors will have to provide services in both analog and digital formats. A shorter transition period will reduce the overall costs of the transition for both broadcasters and distributors.

7. The Commission considers that Vidéotron's proposal is consistent with Public Notice 2003-61 in that it will increase the amount of HD programming available to Vidéotron subscribers.
8. The Commission further notes that the licensees of CTV Digital Toronto and Global Digital Toronto have provided their consent for the distribution of their signals in Quebec and have made a commitment not to solicit local advertising in the communities served by Vidéotron, consistent with the policy with respect to the carriage of distant television signals set out in *Structural Public Hearing*, Public Notice CRTC 1993-74, 3 June 1993.
9. Accordingly, the Commission **approves** the application by Vidéotron and authorizes it to distribute the signals of the transitional digital television undertakings CFTO-DT, Toronto and CIII-DT-41, Toronto, as part of its HD digital service, until Montréal digital television undertakings that provide CTV and Global programming in HD begin broadcasting. Specifically, the authorization to distribute CFTO-DT Toronto will lapse once a Montréal digital television undertaking that provides CTV programming in HD begins broadcasting, and the authorization to distribute CIII-DT-41, Toronto will lapse once a Montréal digital television undertaking that provides Global programming in HD begins broadcasting.

10. The Commission reminds the licensee that the simultaneous substitution requirements, as set out in section 30 of the *Broadcasting Distribution Regulations* and in paragraph 99 of Public Notice 2003-61, apply to transitional digital television undertakings.

Secretary General

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