



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

# **INTERIM REPORT ON MEDIA STUDY: THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY**

## **Report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage**

**Hon. Hedy Fry  
Chair**

**DECEMBER 2016**

**42<sup>nd</sup> PARLIAMENT, 1<sup>st</sup> SESSION**

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# **THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON CANADIAN HERITAGE**

has the honour to present its

## **THIRD REPORT**

Pursuant to its mandate under Standing Order 108(2), the Committee has studied the media and local communities and has agreed to report the following:





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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

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APF	Association de la presse francophone
APTN	Aboriginal Peoples Television Network
ARCC	Alliance des radios communautaires du Canada
AWNA	Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association
CHPC	Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage
CRTC	Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission
FCFA	Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada
FNC	Fédération nationale des communications
QCGN	Quebec Community Groups Network
RTDNA	Radio Television Digital News Association of Canada



## **PREAMBLE**

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The following interim report constitutes only a summary compilation of the evidence the Committee has heard as of November 3, 2016. This is not an exhaustive list of all of the witnesses we heard. We have only chosen witnesses who spoke to Canadian content in a digital world.

The report does not include any findings, conclusions or recommendations. Rather, this interim report will provide input (along with evidence heard by the Committee after November 3, 2016, for the final report of the Committee). The Committee will, after all hearings are complete, begin the deliberation process of reviewing the evidence, arriving at findings and drawing conclusions. That final report is also expected to make recommendations. Readers are cautioned that, as a summary of evidence, this report conveys the evidence of those who appeared as witnesses. It does not reflect the views of the Committee at this time.



# INTERIM REPORT ON MEDIA STUDY: THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

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## The Committee's mandate

In 2009, the Committee published a [report](#) that looked at the crisis in local television precipitated by the global economic downturn. In 2011, the Committee looked more specifically at the opportunities and challenges facing emerging and digital media.

Six years later, it is abundantly clear to the Committee that local media continue to face tremendous challenges. On 16 February 2016, the Committee passed the following motion:

That the Committee undertake a study of not fewer than ten (10) meetings on how Canadians, and especially local communities, are informed about local and regional experiences through news, broadcasting, digital and print media; the unintended consequences of news media concentration and the erosion of local news reporting and the impact of new media; [and] that the Committee make recommendations and report its findings to the House.<sup>1</sup>

As of this writing, the Committee's study has extended to 19 meetings. During these sessions, the Committee heard 103 witnesses and received 7 briefs.

## The media as a pillar of democracy

Media play a vital role in society. They transmit information and constitute one of the pillars of a strong and healthy democracy.

Local media are particularly important because they allow citizens to keep abreast of issues in their immediate communities. In Canada, local media participate actively in community life; the news they report reflect the regions, suburbs, cities and towns they serve.

However, there is no mistaking Canadians' continued interest in local news. In 2013, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) asked Harris/Decima to conduct a [survey](#) on the regulatory framework governing television in Canada. The firm's study revealed that approximately 81% of Canadians ranked local news as the type of television news programming most important to them, followed by Canadian national news (78%), documentaries (72%) and international news (68%). In addition, about half of the survey respondents (53%) "value local programming."<sup>2</sup>

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1 House of Commons, Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage (CHPC), *Minutes*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 16 February 2016.

2 Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), [Let's talk TV: Quantitative Research Report](#), 24 April 2014.

The media sector is currently experiencing major upheavals caused largely by the expansion and use of digital technologies. A number of witnesses appearing before the Committee have even described the situation as a “media crisis.”

### **Consultations on Canadian content in a digital world**

On April 23, 2016, the Minister of Canadian Heritage, the Honourable Mélanie Joly, launched consultations “on how to strengthen the creation, discovery and export of Canadian content in a digital world.”<sup>3</sup> Approximately 10,000 Canadians responded to an online questionnaire.<sup>4</sup> Last September, Heritage Canada released the results of this exercise. One of the highlights of this pre-consultation phase is that about 88% of participants responded that they considered having access to local content in their communities to be “somewhat” or “very” important.<sup>5</sup>

On September 13, 2016, the Department of Canadian Heritage launched the second phase of consultations on Canadian content in a digital world. One of the Department’s goals was to give Canadians an opportunity to “actively participate in our democracy by having access to high-quality news information and local content that reflects a diversity of voices and perspectives.”<sup>6</sup>

On September 22, 2016, the Department of Canadian Heritage informed the Committee that the Minister is doing a consultation.

This second consultation phase is guided by three principles:

- Focussing on citizens and creators;
- Reflecting Canadian identities and promoting sound democracy; and
- Catalyzing social and economic innovation.<sup>7</sup>

We believe that the evidence heard so far can contribute significantly to the current consultation on Canadian content.

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3 Department of Canadian Heritage, [Consultations on Canadian Content in a Digital World](#), News Release, 23 April 2016.

4 Ibid.

5 Canadian Heritage, [Results of the Pre-Consultation Questionnaire](#), p. 4.

6 Canadian Heritage, [Canadian Content in a Digital World: Focussing the Conversation. Consultation Paper](#), September 2016, p. 3.

7 Ibid., p. 6.



## PRINT MEDIA: ANALOGUE DOLLARS FOR DIGITAL DIMES

Print media comprise magazines, weekly newspapers, and community and daily newspapers. They include official language newspapers in minority situation as well as ethnocultural and Indigenous publications.

In recent years, the print media have seen their advertising revenues migrate to Web giants like Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon.<sup>8</sup> These companies dominate the advertising market and offer competitive prices to advertisers.

Bob Cox, Chair of the Canadian Newspaper Association, said that falling advertising revenues have led to financial pressures in the print media sector.<sup>9</sup> Although the economic environment in which the media operate has changed, “the laws and public policy measures addressing the media economy have not.”<sup>10</sup> According to Mr. Cox, those rules date back to the 1980s and are no longer suited to current realities.

According to Duff Jamison, Chair of the Government Relations Committee and Former President of the Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association,<sup>11</sup> and Brian Myles,<sup>12</sup> Editor and Director at *Le Devoir*, revenues from digital advertising are not offsetting content-production losses. Several companies said that, in changing their business model, they were trading analogue dollars for digital dimes.

The print media serving linguistic minorities and the ethnocultural press have also been under pressure. Francis Sonier, President of the Association de la presse francophone (APF)<sup>13</sup> and Richard Tardif, Executive Director of the Quebec Community Newspapers Association,<sup>14</sup> both stated that their newspapers had been hit hard by the migration of advertising revenue to digital media. Thomas S. Saras, President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada, told the Committee that actual revenue from advertising on the Web was rather low.<sup>15</sup> Yuri Bilinsky, Managing Editor with the New Pathway Media Group, said that it was still too soon to tell whether it would be possible to “compensate with digital advertising for the loss of the printed advertisements.”<sup>16</sup> For his part, Jagdish Grewal, Editor and Publisher of the

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8 The acronym GAFAM is sometimes used to refer to Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon.

9 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 31 May 2016, 0845 (Bob Cox, Chair, Canadian Newspaper Association).

10 Ibid.

11 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 22 September 2016, 1110 (Duff Jamison, Chair, Government Relations Committee, Former President, Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association (AWNA)).

12 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 29 September 2016, 1125 (Brian Myles, Editor, Director, *Le Devoir*, La Coalition pour la pérennité de la presse d'information au Québec).

13 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 8 March 2016, 0900 (Francis Sonier, President, Association de la presse francophone (APF)).

14 Ibid., 0945 (Richard Tardif, Executive Director, Quebec Community Newspapers Association).

15 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 10 May 2016, 1025 (Thomas S. Saras, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Head Office, National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada).

16 Ibid., 0855 (Yuri Bilinsky, Managing Editor, New Pathway Media Group).

Canadian Punjabi Post, mentioned that Internet Protocol television channels in the Punjabi language were also competing for advertising dollars.<sup>17</sup>

A number of witnesses raised questions about the federal government's media placement strategy. They complained about the federal government's increasing use of foreign-owned online platforms rather than Canadian media for advertising placements. It was argued that this strategy on the part of the federal government was helping to undermine the financial health of Canadian media.

Guy Crevier, President and Publisher at *La Presse*,<sup>18</sup> and John Honderich, Chair of Torstar,<sup>19</sup> told the Committee that the print newspaper industry was in a state of deep crisis. According to Mr. Crevier, daily print newspapers in North America have lost \$29 billion in revenue in the last seven years. This is coupled with a decline in reading intentions since 1998, particularly among readers in the 20-to-40 age group. To address this situation, *La Presse* replaced its Monday to Friday print issues with a digital version for tablets, called *La Presse+*, which is available to readers free of charge. The newspaper invested \$40 million in this new business model. To this point, *La Presse* says that it has managed to hold on to a large proportion of its advertising revenue since the launch of its digital edition.

Several witnesses identified the Canadian Periodical Fund as one of the potential mechanisms for supporting the print media industry during this transition period. The Committee will further explore this option in its final report.

## DIGITAL MEDIA

Digital media are transforming many areas of society, including the communications sector. Increasingly, Canadians are using them extensively for communication, entertainment and information purposes.

In February 2016, Statistics Canada published data on Canadians' use of media to follow news and current affairs.<sup>20</sup> The proportion of people who reported that they followed news and current affairs on television fell from 90% in 2003 to 78% in 2013. Print newspapers are probably the type of media most affected by the changes in Canadians' habits. In 2003, "69% of people who followed news and current affairs at least several times a month read newspapers to get information. A decade later, this proportion was 51%."<sup>21</sup> During that same period use of the Internet to follow news and current affairs "rose significantly, from 30% in 2003 to 59% in 2013."<sup>22</sup>

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17 Ibid., 0905 (Jagdish Grewal, Editor and Publisher, Canadian Punjabi Post Inc.).

18 CHPC, [Evidence](#) 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 17 May 2016, 0950 (Guy Crevier, President and Editor, *La Presse*).

19 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 29 September 2016, 1110 (John Honderich, Chair, Torstar Corporation).

20 Statistics Canada, [The use of media to follow news and current affairs](#), 15 February 2016.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid.

The most recent data in the CRTC's [Communications Monitoring Report](#) reveal that:

- Almost three-quarters (73%) of Canadians aged 18 and over owned a smartphone in 2015,<sup>23</sup> compared to 62% in 2013 and 24% in 2010.
- Slightly less than 53% of Canadians 18 years of age and older reported owning a tablet in 2015, compared to 10% in 2011.
- Canadians 18 years of age and older watched 5.8 hours of Internet TV on a weekly basis in 2015, compared to 1.5 hours in 2008.<sup>24</sup>

In his appearance before the Committee, Paul Halucha, Associate Assistant Deputy Minister with the Department of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, argued in favour of innovation and competition. In fact, Mr. Halucha felt there was “a real danger in presenting the Internet and the diversity of voices that it allows as something that is to be overcome.”<sup>25</sup> He also noted that the changes affecting the newspaper industry were really not much different from the new business models cropping up in the taxi industry or the music industry.

The growing expansion of digital media has contributed to the diversity of voices in the Canadian media landscape. Their presence has democratized access to information. Nevertheless, the business model of the digital media has yet to be defined. Moreover, some witnesses criticized the quality of journalism in the digital media.

All of the witnesses agreed that the development and use of digital media would continue to grow in the years to come. In discussing her company's prospects, CTV News President Wendy Freeman told the Committee, “our whole future is about digital first and also about doing stories that in the end will attract people.”<sup>26</sup> As far as Bell Media's representatives are concerned, the growth of new digital news platforms could help solve the problems of local television. However, the cost involved to gather and produce high-quality news remains the same “regardless of the platform on which it is made available.”<sup>27</sup> Louis Audet, President and CEO of Cogeco, for his part, maintains that audience migration to digital platforms is an irreversible trend.<sup>28</sup>

For her part, Colette Watson, Vice-President, Television and Broadcast Operations with Rogers, suggested modernizing “the government's funding tools and programs to

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23 CRTC, [Communications Monitoring Report](#), October 2016, p. 32.

24 Ibid.

25 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 February 2016, 0955 (Paul Halucha, Associate Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy Sector, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada).

26 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 3 May 2016, 0925 (Wendy Freeman, President, CTV News, Bell Canada).

27 Ibid., 0845 (Kevin Goldstein, Bell Canada).

28 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 31 May 2016, 0940 (Louis Audet, President and CEO, Cogeco Inc.).

reflect Canada's digital reality.”<sup>29</sup> For example, the Canada Media Fund’s eligibility criteria could be revised to support local news and information programs.<sup>30</sup> This suggestion was also made by Andy Leblanc, Past President of the Radio Television Digital News Association of Canada (RTDNA).<sup>31</sup>

Mr. Crevier of *La Presse* explained to the Committee that the rapid pace of technological development was altering consumer habits, and he predicted that newsprint would disappear entirely within 10 years.<sup>32</sup> He urged the Committee not to prop up a dying industry, the death of which is inevitable in his view.<sup>33</sup> Mr. Crevier added that regional newspapers will not be spared when the industry makes itself over, and that they would have to adapt to the digital transformation.

James Baxter, Founding Editor of iPolitics, asked the Committee to stop intervening to “preserv[e] the old media.”<sup>34</sup> According to him, the news media have known for some time that they must change to adapt to the digital revolution.

Michael Geist, Canada Research Chair in Internet and E-commerce Law and Professor of Law at the University of Ottawa, said that digital news organizations “can in some instances replace some of [the] traditional organizations.”<sup>35</sup> He gave examples of press gallery newcomers, including *The Huffington Post*, *The Tyee*, *rabble.ca*, *National Observer* and *VICE News*. These digital media provide an opportunity to “reach different audiences and to cover specialized issues in greater depth than is often found in larger newspapers.”<sup>36</sup> He is opposed to proposals for taxes on Internet providers as a source of new revenue, which are the “equivalent of a digital tax on everything.”<sup>37</sup> In his opinion, this tax would make it costlier for Canadians to access the Internet and would “exacerbat[e] the digital divide”<sup>38</sup> between Canadians.

For Robyn Smith, Editor-in-Chief of the news site *The Tyee*, the viability of a digital-only business model remains to be seen. According to Ms. Smith, “[n]o one in Canada has yet figured out a digital-only online business model that easily supports a large number of full-time, paid professional journalists.”<sup>39</sup>

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29 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 19 April 2016, 0845 (Colette Watson, Vice-President, Television and Broadcast Operations, Rogers).

30 Ibid., 0905.

31 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 17 May 2016, 0925 (Andy Leblanc, Past President, Radio Television Digital News Association of Canada (RTDNA)).

32 Ibid., 0955 (Guy Crevier).

33 Ibid., 1010.

34 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 29 September 2016, 1225 (James Baxter, Founding Editor, iPolitics Inc.).

35 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 October 2016, 1105 (Michael Geist, Canadian Research Chair in Internet and E-commerce Law, Professor of Law, University of Ottawa, as an individual).

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid., 1110.

38 Ibid.

39 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 27 September 2016, 1110 (Robyn Smith, Editor-in-Chief, *The Tyee*).

## Measures to facilitate the transition to the digital world

Many witnesses recommended measures that would allow small industry players and the traditional media to adapt to the digital environment.

Pascale St-Onge, president of the Fédération nationale des communications (FNC),<sup>40</sup> Denis Bolduc, General Secretary, SCFP-Québec, Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE),<sup>41</sup> Robert Picard, professor with the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism<sup>42</sup> and the representatives of the Coalition pour la pérennité de la presse d'information du Québec<sup>43</sup> proposed the implementation of payroll and digital production tax credits that would serve to support the hiring of journalists specifically assigned to local programming or other digital technology workers such as programmers and web integrators.

It was suggested that measures which promote experimentation and innovation in the digital media be explored. The representatives of Transcontinental, Postmedia, the Canadian Newspaper Association,<sup>44</sup> *The Tyee*,<sup>45</sup> the Coalition pour la pérennité de la presse d'information au Québec,<sup>46</sup> and professor Picard<sup>47</sup> proposed that the Committee look at ways of using tax credits to foster innovation in digital media. Transcontinental was more specific in its proposal, asking that Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada “subsidize publishers directly and/or give them refundable tax credits to support at least 50% of the capital and labour investments made in digital media.”<sup>48</sup> Postmedia gave the example of the [Ontario Interactive Digital Media Tax Credit](#) which, prior to the 2015 Ontario budget, provided a deduction for news and public affairs programming.<sup>49</sup> Mr. Baxter of iPolitics also believes this type of credit is promising as a model to follow.

Douglas Knight, Board Chair of Magazines Canada, told the Committee that Canadian magazines have been “leaders and innovators in the digital space.”<sup>50</sup> Upwards of 90% of Magazines Canada members are publishing on digital platforms. However, Canadians continue to read magazines in paper format. According to

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- 40 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 19 April 2016, 0855 (Pascale St-Onge, President, Fédération nationale des communications (FNC)).
- 41 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 3 May 2016, 0940 (Denis Bolduc, General Secretary, SCFP-Québec, Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) ).
- 42 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 27 September 2016, 1235 (Robert Picard, Professor, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford, as an individual).
- 43 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 29 September 2016, 1125 (Brian Myles).
- 44 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 31 May 2016, 0850 (Bob Cox).
- 45 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 27 September 2016, 1115 (Robyn Smith).
- 46 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 29 September 2016, 1155 (Brian Myles).
- 47 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 27 September 2016, 1215 (Robert Picard).
- 48 TC Transcontinental, *Presentation to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage – Media and Local Communities*, 19 April 2016, p. 8.
- 49 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 12 May 2016, 0930 (Paul Godfrey, President and CEO, Postmedia Network Canada Corp.).
- 50 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 5 May 2016, 0850 (Douglas Knight, Board Chair, Magazines Canada).

Matthew Holmes of Magazines Canada, “the question is not whether magazines are print or digital (...), the question instead is how to support both print and digital.”<sup>51</sup> Mr. Knight urged the Committee to be careful, because “all digital is not alike.”<sup>52</sup> While digital platforms continue to gain in popularity, for example, “advertising doesn’t work on these devices.”<sup>53</sup>

Ian Morrison, spokesperson, Friends of Canadian Broadcasting, recommended to the Committee that the [exemption order](#)<sup>54</sup> implemented by the CRTC in 2009 be amended to require foreign and Canadian Internet television services to contribute financially to Canadian programming.

Some witnesses told the Committee that Canadian companies selling cultural products online are at a competitive disadvantage internationally. The representatives of Friends of Canadian Broadcasting,<sup>55</sup> Rogers,<sup>56</sup> the Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association and Cogeco<sup>57</sup> expressed concerns on this issue. They were all in favour of requiring foreign over-the-top providers, such as Netflix, to collect the same taxes from Canadians as their Canadian competitors and to contribute to Canadian content production funds. According to the Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association, these foreign companies have an unfair competitive advantage over creators of Canadian content.<sup>58</sup> Bernard Lord, the Association’s President and CEO, suggested that taxing foreign digital services or untaxing Canadian-owned digital services might be options to remedy the situation.<sup>59</sup>

Several witnesses were harshly critical of online news aggregators such as Google News and Yahoo, which gather content from other sources without providing financial compensation to the original producers of that content. This issue was raised by representatives of the Department of Canadian Heritage,<sup>60</sup> Quebec Community Groups

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51 Ibid., 0845 (Matthew Holmes, President and CEO, Magazines Canada).

52 Ibid., 0905 (Douglas Knight).

53 Ibid.

54 CRTC, [Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2009-329](#), 4 June 2009.

55 Ibid.

56 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 19 April 2016, 0930 (Colette Watson).

57 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 31 May 2016, 0955 (Louis Audet).

58 Ibid., 0900 (Bernard Lord, President and CEO, Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association).

59 Ibid., 0915.

60 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 23 February 2016, 0915 (Jean-François Bernier, Director General, Cultural Industries, Department of Canadian Heritage).

Network (QCGN),<sup>61</sup> the FNC,<sup>62</sup> CUPE,<sup>63</sup> Magazines Canada,<sup>64</sup> RTDNA,<sup>65</sup> the Canadian Association of Newspapers<sup>66</sup> and *Corriere Canadese*.<sup>67</sup>

Mr. Geist of the University of Ottawa told the Committee that this practice also has some advantages. Sites like Google and Facebook drive Internet traffic to Canadian sites.<sup>68</sup> In his opinion, competition is still the best way to counter this phenomenon and there are tremendous business opportunities for Canadian organizations operating in the digital world.

Finally, several witnesses suggested that the Committee draw inspiration from the [Digital News Initiative](#) innovation fund established in Europe by Google. With a budget of €150 million, this fund aims to “support high quality journalism and encourage a more sustainable news ecosystem through technology and innovation.”<sup>69</sup> The program is focused on three key areas: product development, innovation support, and training and research.<sup>70</sup> This Google initiative is in response<sup>71</sup> to accusations filed in 2010 by the European Commission that the company “abused its dominant position.”<sup>72</sup> The Commission accused the American Internet giant of using monopolistic practices in the markets for general Internet search services.<sup>73</sup>

### **What is the future of traditional media?**

Several witnesses stated that traditional media (radio, television and print) will not disappear entirely; they will continue to play a role in the years to come.

Professor Dwayne Winseck of Carleton University pointed out that digital media “do not replace traditional media, but ... interact with them in complex ways.”<sup>74</sup>

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- 61 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 12 April 2016, 0855 (Hugh Maynard, Past President, Quebec Community Group Network (QCGN)).
- 62 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 19 April 2016, 0950 (Pascale St-Onge).
- 63 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 3 May 2016, 0940 (Denis Bolduc).
- 64 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 5 May 2016, 0905 (Douglas Knight).
- 65 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 17 May 2016, 0900 (Ian Koenigsfest, President, RTDNA).
- 66 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 31 May 2016, 0845 (Bob Cox).
- 67 Ibid., 1025 (The Hon. Joseph Volpe, Publisher and President, *Corriere Canadese*).
- 68 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 October 2016, 1110 (Michael Geist).
- 69 Google, [The Digital News Initiative](#).
- 70 Ibid.
- 71 Sommers, Jack, “[Google Sets Up Digital News Initiative With European Papers, Including Guardian And Financial Times](#)”, *The Huffington Post*, 28 April 2015.
- 72 European Commission, [Antitrust: Commission sends Statement of Objections to Google on comparison shopping service; opens separate formal investigation on Android](#), Brussels, 15 April 2015.
- 73 European Commission, [Antitrust: Commission probes allegations of antitrust violations by Google](#), 30 November 2016.
- 74 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 25 February 2016, 0910 (Dwayne Winseck, Professor, School of Journalism & Communication, Carleton University).

The representatives of Alliance de radios communautaires du Canada (ARCC)<sup>75</sup> and the National Campus and Community Radio Association<sup>76</sup> felt that over-the-air community radio stations still had solid support from the community, despite the preponderance of new media platforms.

The representatives of CUPE,<sup>77</sup> the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada (FCFA du Canada),<sup>78</sup> ARCC,<sup>79</sup> QCGN<sup>80</sup> and RTDNA<sup>81</sup> argued that investments in digital media should not be made at the expense of traditional media.

Ethnocultural press representatives acknowledged that their readers are increasingly turning to digital media, especially the younger generations. However, “a strong demand for print media”<sup>82</sup> still exists among older immigrants and new immigrants.

Mr. Bilinsky of the New Pathway Media Group confirmed that “the impact of digital media is quite substantial.”<sup>83</sup> He noted that “digital media, by its nature, is very democratic,”<sup>84</sup> in the sense that such media can be accessed by anyone in the entire Ukrainian community. He noted that it was still too soon “to tell whether we will be able to compensate with digital advertising for the loss of... printed advertisements while still preserving the printed version of our newspaper.”<sup>85</sup>

## ACCESS TO BROADBAND INTERNET SERVICES

In its 2016 [Communications Monitoring Report](#), the CRTC defines broadband service as any service including a 1.5 megabits per second (Mbps) or greater download speed.<sup>86</sup> This speed allows for standard definition video streaming, real-time video gameplay and music downloads. Speeds of 5 Mbps and higher allow for high-definition video streaming.<sup>87</sup> In 2015, broadband download speed of at least 5 Mbps was available to about 96% of Canadian households,<sup>88</sup> although the cost varied from one region of the country to the next.

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75 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 8 March 2016, 0905 (François Côté, Secretary General, Alliance des radios communautaires du Canada).

76 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 5 May 2016, 0900 (Luke Smith, Membership Coordinator, National Campus and Community Radio Association).

77 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 3 May 2016, 0935 (Denis Bolduc).

78 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 8 March 2016, 0850 (Sylviane Lanthier, Chair, Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada (FCFA du Canada)).

79 Ibid., 0910 (Mr. François Côté).

80 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 12 April 2016, 0855 (Hugh Maynard).

81 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 17 May 2016, 0915 (Andy Leblanc).

82 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 10 May 2016, 0850 (Jagdish Grewal).

83 Ibid., 0855 (Yuri Bilinsky).

84 Ibid., 0915.

85 Ibid.

86 CRTC, [Communications Monitoring Report](#), October 2016, p. 248.

87 See also Dillan Theckedath, [The State of Broadband Internet in Canada](#), (HillNotes), 4 May 2016.

88 CRTC, [Communications Monitoring Report](#), October 2016, p. 246.



Several witnesses told the Committee that there are still parts of Canada where access to broadband Internet is problematic or non-existent.

Mr. Winseck of Carleton University pointed out to the Committee that Internet access is far from being universal in Canada and that this situation is related to income inequality.<sup>89</sup>

Jean-François Bernier, Director General, Cultural Industries, with the Department of Heritage Canada, told the Committee that access to broadband capacity is needed to view various digital products. Like other witnesses, he commented that in certain areas, access to this type of connection is “not obvious.”<sup>90</sup>

Mr. Geist of the University of Ottawa, for his part, said that access to affordable broadband service for all Canadians is essential to reducing the “digital divide”<sup>91</sup> that currently exists in Canada.

Representatives of the FCFA,<sup>92</sup> Aboriginal People Television Network (APTN),<sup>93</sup> the QCGN,<sup>94</sup> the FNC<sup>95</sup> and the Public Interest Advocacy Centre<sup>96</sup> told the Committee that access to broadband services remained problematic in some regions. According to Mr. Sonier of the APF, access “can be difficult in places ... such as northern Manitoba, the Northwest Territories, or even some areas of Newfoundland and Labrador.”<sup>97</sup> Mr. La Rose of APTN explained that his network was having difficulty delivering its digital signal in some parts of the North, such as Nunavut.<sup>98</sup>

Several companies echoed the community network in stressing the importance of ensuring that all Canadians have access to broadband Internet services. Ann Mainville-Neeson, Vice-President of Broadcasting Policy and Regulatory Affairs at TELUS, told the Committee that private investment is the “best way to achieve the highest connectivity for our country.”<sup>99</sup> While TELUS welcomed the \$500-million investment in broadband services announced by the government in its last budget, Ms. Mainville-Neeson pointed out that, in the company’s estimation, it is still not enough.<sup>100</sup>

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89 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 25 February 2016, 0915 (Dwayne Winseck).

90 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 October 2016, 1225 (Jean-François Bernier).

91 Ibid., 1110 (Michael Geist).

92 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 8 March 2016, 0845 (Sylviane Lanthier).

93 Ibid., 1020 (Jean La Rose, Chief Executive Officer, Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN)).

94 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 12 April 2016, 0900 (Walter Duszara, Board Secretary, QCGN).

95 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 19 April 2016, 0900 (Pascale St-Onge).

96 Ibid., 1000 (Alysia Lau, Legal Counsel, Public Interest Advocacy Centre).

97 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 8 March 2016, 0855 (Francis Sonier).

98 Ibid., 1030 (Jean La Rose).

99 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 12 April 2016, 1015 (Ann Mainville-Neeson, Vice-President, Broadcasting Policy and Regulatory Affairs, TELUS).

100 Ibid., 1025.

Mr. Audet of Cogeco also believes that these new investments are good news. Nonetheless, he urged the government to think about remote communities that do not have access to broadband Internet, as well as low-income Canadians.<sup>101</sup>

## **CBC/RADIO-CANADA AND CANADIAN CONTENT**

The legislative mandate of CBC/Radio-Canada mentions that the Corporation's programming must reflect Canada and its regions to national and regional audiences, while serving the special needs of those regions.<sup>102</sup> Several witnesses made certain to remind the Committee that the CBC plays a central role in showcasing and supporting Canadian content in all of its platforms.

Like commercial television stations, the national public broadcaster has suffered advertising revenue losses on its traditional services. The Corporation is trying to offset these losses with higher digital advertising revenue.<sup>103</sup> Most witnesses who commented on this practice were strongly in opposition.

Mr. Cox of the Canadian Newspaper Association explained that the broadcaster is sometimes also competing with print media on digital platforms.<sup>104</sup> Mr. Honderich from Torstar Corporation said that CBC/Radio-Canada was Torstar's biggest competitor, "spending incredibly on its website"<sup>105</sup> and generating advertising revenue via its digital platforms.

Mr. Baxter of iPolitics expressed a similar position as Mr. Honderich. He asked the government to stop "funding the CBC's massive expansion into digital-only news in markets"<sup>106</sup>. According to Mr. Baxter, the funding granted to the Corporation is "the biggest single obstacle to there being a vibrant and innovative marketplace of ideas in the media space."<sup>107</sup> Mr. Baxter also suggested "that any CBC content, because it's publicly funded – video, audio, and digital – be available in real time in the public domain for any other approved news sites to use."<sup>108</sup> Meanwhile, Mr. Geist from the University of Ottawa, suggested that the Corporation be required "to adopt an ad-free approach to its online news presence."<sup>109</sup> This approach would ensure that the Corporation does not compete directly with the private sector for advertising dollars.

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101 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 31 May 2016, 1005 (Louis Audet, Cogeco Inc.).

102 [Broadcasting Act](#), SC 1991, c. 11, subparagraph 3(1)m)(ii).

103 CBC/Radio-Canada, [Canada's Public Space. 2015-2016 Annual Report](#), p. 32.

104 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 31 May 2016, 0850 (Bob Cox, Canadian Newspaper Association).

105 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 29 September 2016, 1200 (John Honderich, Torstar Corporation).

106 *Ibid.*, 1225 (James Baxter).

107 *Ibid.*

108 *Ibid.*

109 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 6 October 2016, 1110 (Michael Geist).

CBC/Radio-Canada representatives appeared before the Committee on May 19. CBC/Radio-Canada shows a strong commitment to the new digital platforms to distribute content and interact with users, as a core component of its services to Canadians.

They particularly emphasized the fact that radio, television and digital services were now integrated into a single service. According to Michel Cormier, Director General of Information with the Corporation's French-Language Services, the Corporation "can no longer simply offer programming at set times."<sup>110</sup>

CBC/Radio-Canada's [Strategy 2020: A Space for Us All](#) commits the Corporation to becoming more local, but at less cost.<sup>111</sup> The Corporation intends to continue offering news and information services on traditional media, but it will put more emphasis on digital media in the years to come. CBC/Radio-Canada's Michel Cormier told the Committee that bringing the national public broadcaster back to where it was even five years ago was entirely out of the question.<sup>112</sup>

## SUMMATION

This interim report provides a sample of the concerns raised by industry stakeholders and of the measures proposed to improve the situation. The Committee will continue its study and thanks all those who participated in its work. In the coming months, the Committee plans to make its own recommendations in its final report.

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110 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 19 May 2016, 0900 (Michel Cormier, Director General of Information, French-Language Services, CBC/Radio-Canada).

111 CBC/Radio-Canada, [Local Offer](#).

112 CHPC, [Evidence](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 19 May 2016, 0950 (Michel Cormier).



# APPENDIX A LIST OF WITNESSES

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
<p><b>Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission</b></p> <p>Michael Craig, Manager English Television Applications</p> <p>Scott Hutton, Executive Director Broadcasting</p> <p><b>Competition Bureau</b></p> <p>Jeanne Pratt, Senior Deputy Commissioner Mergers and Monopolistic Practices Branch</p> <p><b>Department of Canadian Heritage</b></p> <p>Jean-François Bernier, Director General Cultural Industries</p> <p>Marthe Bujold, Director Strategic Policy, Broadcasting and Digital Communications Branch</p> <p>Helen C. Kennedy, Director General Broadcasting and Digital Communications</p> <p>Luc Marchand, Director Periodical Publishing Policy and Programs</p> <p><b>Department of Industry</b></p> <p>Paul Halucha, Associate Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy Sector</p>	2016/02/23	4
<p><b>Carleton University</b></p> <p>Dwayne Winseck, Professor School of Journalism &amp; Communication</p> <p><b>Forum for Research and Policy in Communications</b></p> <p>Monica Auer, Executive Director</p> <p>Al MacKay, Director</p> <p><b>Université Laval</b></p> <p>François Demers, Professor Centre des études sur les médias</p>	2016/02/25	5
<p><b>Aboriginal Peoples Television Network</b></p> <p>Joel Fortune, Legal Advisor</p> <p>Jean La Rose, Chief Executive Officer</p> <p><b>Alliance des radios communautaires du Canada</b></p> <p>François Côté, Secretary General</p> <p>Simon Forgues, Development and Communications Officer</p>	2016/03/08	6

<b>Organizations and Individuals</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>
<p><b>Association de la presse francophone</b>  Jean-Patrice Meunier, Executive Director and Director of Legal Affairs  Francis Sonier, President</p>	2016/03/08	6
<p><b>Canadian Media Guild</b>  Carmel Smyth, President of the Canadian Media Guild  Jeanne d'Arc Umurungi, Communications Director</p>		
<p><b>Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada</b>  Sylviane Lanthier, President  Serge Quinty, Director of Communications</p>		
<p><b>Quebec Community Newspapers Association</b>  Richard Tardif, Executive Director</p>		
<p><b>Friends of Canadian Broadcasting</b>  Peter Miller, Expert on Local Broadcasting  Ian Morrison, Spokesperson</p>	2016/04/12	8
<p><b>Quebec Community Groups Network</b>  Walter Duszara, Board Secretary  Hugh Maynard, Past President</p>		
<p><b>TELUS</b>  Frédéric April, Manager  maCommunauté, TELUS Télé Optik  Ann Mainville-Neeson, Vice President  Broadcasting Policy and Regulatory Affairs</p>		
<p><b>DBC Communications inc</b>  Benoit Chartier, President, Director General</p>	2016/04/19	10
<p><b>Fédération nationale des communications</b>  Pierre Roger, Secretary General-Treasurer  Pascale St-Onge, President</p>		
<p><b>Public Interest Advocacy Centre</b>  Alysia Lau, Legal Counsel  Geoff White, External Counsel</p>		
<p><b>Rogers</b>  Colette Watson, Vice-President  Television and Broadcast Operations  Susan Wheeler, Vice-President, Regulatory, Media</p>		
<p><b>Transcontinental Inc.</b>  François Olivier, Chief Executive Officer</p>		

<b>Organizations and Individuals</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>
<p><b>Bell Canada</b></p> <p>Wendy Freeman, President CTV News</p> <p>Kevin Goldstein, Vice-President Regulatory Affairs, Content and Distribution</p> <p>Richard Gray, Vice-President and General Manager Radio and TV, Ottawa and Pembroke, and National Head, CTV Two News</p> <p>Pierre Rodrigue, Vice President Industry Relations</p> <p><b>Canadian Association of Community Television Users and Stations</b></p> <p>André Desrochers, Board Member</p> <p>Catherine Edwards, Executive Director</p> <p><b>Canadian Union of Public Employees</b></p> <p>Nathalie Blais, Research Advisor SCFP-Québec</p> <p>Denis Bolduc, General Secretary SCFP-Québec</p>	2016/05/03	12
<p><b>Magazines Canada</b></p> <p>Matthew Holmes, President and Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>Douglas Knight, Board Chair</p> <p><b>National Campus and Community Radio Association</b></p> <p>Luke Smith, Membership Coordinator</p>	2016/05/05	13
<p><b>Canadian Punjabi Post Inc.</b></p> <p>Jagdish Grewal, Editor and Publisher</p> <p>Jagdeep Kailey, Associate Editor</p> <p><b>National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada</b></p> <p>Thomas S. Saras, President and CEO Head Office</p> <p>Mohammad Tajdolati, Ombudsman</p> <p><b>New Pathway Media Group</b></p> <p>Yuri Bilinsky, Managing Editor</p>	2016/05/10	14
<p><b>Postmedia Network Canada Corp.</b></p> <p>Paul Godfrey, President and Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>Doug Lamb, Executive Vice-President and Chief Financial Officer</p> <p>Gerry Nott, Senior Vice-President Content and Senior Vice-President, National Post</p>	2016/05/12	15

<b>Organizations and Individuals</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>
<p><b>La Presse</b>  Guy Crevier, President and Editor  Caroline Jamet, Vice-President  Communication</p> <p><b>Radio Television Digital News Association</b>  Ian Koenigsfest, President  Andy LeBlanc, Past President</p>	2016/05/17	16
<p><b>Canadian Broadcasting Corporation</b>  Andrew Cochran, Senior Managing Director  Strategy, CBC News  Michel Cormier, General Manager  News and Current Affairs, French Services  Marco Dubé, Executive Director of Regional Services  French Services  Jennifer McGuire, General Manager and Editor in Chief  CBC News</p>	2016/05/19	17
<p><b>Canadian Newspaper Association</b>  Bob Cox, Chair  John Hinds, President and Chief Executive Officer</p> <p><b>Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association</b>  Kurt Eby, Director  Regulatory Affairs and Government Relations  Bernard Lord, President and Chief Executive Officer</p> <p><b>Cogeco Inc.</b>  Louis Audet, President and Chief Executive Officer  Nathalie Dorval, Vice-President  Regulatory Affairs and Copyright</p> <p><b>Corriere Canadese</b>  Dan Montesano, Chair  Community Advisory Board  Hon. Joseph Volpe, Publisher and President</p>	2016/05/31	18
<p><b>Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association</b>  Dennis Merrell, Executive Director  Duff Jamison, Chair  Government Relations Committee, Former President (AWNA)</p> <p><b>Canadian Association of Journalists</b>  Hugo Rodrigues, Past President  Nick Taylor-Vaisey, President</p> <p><b>Glacier Media Group</b>  Peter Kvarnstrom, President,  Community Media</p>	2016/09/22	25



<b>Organizations and Individuals</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>
<p><b>Télé Inter-Rives Ltée</b></p> <p>Pierre Harvey, Director CHAU-TV</p> <p>Jean-Philippe Nadeau, Director Information, CIMT-TV / CKRT-TV Rivière-du-Loup</p> <p>Cindy Simard, Vice-Chair Information, Télé Inter-Rives Ltée, CIMT-TV / CKRT-TV</p> <p><b>The Tyee</b></p> <p>Michelle Hoar, Cofounder Former Business Director</p> <p>Robyn Smith, Editor in Chief</p> <p><b>As an individual</b></p> <p>Robert Picard, Professor Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford</p>	2016/09/27	26
<p><b>Coalition pour la pérennité de la presse d'information au Québec</b></p> <p>Hon. Martin Cauchon, Executive Chairman Groupe Capitales Médias</p> <p>Brian Myles, Editor and Director Le Devoir</p> <p>Pierre-Paul Noreau, President and Publisher le Droit</p> <p><b>iPolitics Inc</b></p> <p>James Baxter, Founding Editor</p> <p><b>Torstar Corporation</b></p> <p>John Honderich, Chair</p>	2016/09/29	27
<p><b>Department of Canadian Heritage</b></p> <p>Marthe Bujold, Director Strategic Policy, Broadcasting and Digital Communications Branch</p> <p>Helen C. Kennedy, Director General Broadcasting and Digital Communications</p> <p>Luc Marchand, Director Periodical Publishing Policy and Programs</p> <p>Jean-François Bernier, Director General Cultural Industries</p> <p><b>As individuals</b></p> <p>Michael Geist, Canada Research Chair in Internet and E-commerce Law Professor of Law, University of Ottawa</p> <p>April Lindgren, Principal Investigator, Professor Local News Research Project, Ryerson University School of Journalism</p>	2016/10/06	29

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
<b>Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission</b>	2016/10/20	31
Christianne Laizner, Senior General Counsel, Executive Director Jean-Pierre Blais, Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer Scott Hutton, Executive Director Broadcasting		
<b>Competition Bureau</b>	2016/11/01	34
Julien Brazeau, Associate Deputy Commissioner Competition Promotion Branch Jeanne Pratt, Senior Deputy Commissioner Mergers and Monopolistic Practices Branch		
<b>Department of Industry</b>		
Mark Schaan, Director General Marketplace Framework Policy Branch, Strategic Policy Sector Adam Scott, Director Business and Regulatory Analysis, Telecommunications Policy Branch, Strategic Policy Sector		
<b>Department of Public Works and Government Services</b>		
Louise de Jourdan, Director Advertising Coordination and Partnerships Marc Saint-Pierre, Director General Government Information Services Sector		

# **APPENDIX B LIST OF BRIEFS**

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## **Organizations and Individuals**

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**Boswell, Randy**

**Buchanan, Carrie**

**Canadian Union of Public Employees**

**Fédération nationale des communications**

**Latham, Mark**

**Observer Media Group**

**Quebec Community Groups Network**



# MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

A copy of the relevant *Minutes of Proceedings* ([Meetings Nos. 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 25, 26, 27, 29, 31, 34, 35, 38, 39](#)) is tabled.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Hedy Fry  
Chair

