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For immediate release

Independent documentary producers need a strong CBC in a fragile market

July 11, 2011 - The Documentary Organization of Canada/l'Association des documentaristes du Canada (DOC) is surprised and disappointed that the CRTC has postponed the CBC/SRC licence renewal until spring 2012.

DOC, alongside the Quebec English-language Production Committee and the Canadian Media Producers Association, recently requested more comprehensive financial data about the CBC/SRC's past activities to bolster its submission but never imagined that the request would lead to such a delay. Indeed, DOC asked the CRTC to pass on the request to the CBC/SRC as quickly as possible in order to meet the previously announced July 18 deadline.

This proceeding is long overdue given that the CBC/SRC's last licence renewal hearing was 12 years ago. Much has changed in the independent documentary production world in the intervening years. The public and industry consultation by the regulatory body is needed to assess what the CBC/SRC's role should be in today's rapidly changing broadcast environment.

DOC and other industry stakeholders were turning to these hearings to get the CBC to account for past programming choices because the broadcaster has moved into programming areas that seem out of step with the mandate of a public broadcaster.

The delay further threatens terms of trade negotiations that are critically needed by the independent production community. "This is a most untimely decision by the CRTC" states DOC chair, John Christou, "one that we find perplexing and damaging to the documentary community which is currently struggling to meet market changes."

About DOC

The Documentary Organization of Canada | L'Association des documentaristes du Canada (DOC) is a bilingual national arts service organization dedicated to supporting the art of independent documentary filmmaking in Canada. It offers member services, professional development, networking events, and collective representation through advocacy. DOC believes that its members and their work play an essential role in Canadian society by promoting the expression of diverse viewpoints on social, political, and cultural realities, thus fostering reflection and debate. DOC advances the documentary genre by supporting artists wanting to develop their craft.

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