

A. INTRODUCTION

On October 17, 1977, the House of Commons broadcasting service was inaugurated. In 1979, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation was granted the first licences by the CRTC for the national distribution of the proceedings of the House of Commons. This new satellite to cable programming service vastly expanded the availability of these proceedings beyond the reach of the written record provided by the House.

This application proposes to maintain the proceedings of the House of Commons as the centerpiece of a new and expanded programming service. This proposed new service, which will be available in both official languages, will include coverage of Parliament and Parliamentary institutions, national political party activities, public discussion and participation, provincial affairs and other public events of national significance. It will be known as the Canadian Parliamentary Channel/La chaîne parlementaire canadienne — or CPaC.

This significant expansion of the existing House of Commons service is made possible by a joint venture (the partnership) between the CBC and the Canadian cable television industry, with each partner bringing particular strengths to the new specialty programming service which is proposed.

The CBC has wide experience and an international reputation as a programmer and distributor of national programming services in both official languages. Moreover, as Canada's national public broadcaster, it brings to this application recognized professional skills and standards.

The Canadian cable television industry has had extensive experience in the origination of that long form coverage programming which is vital to the CPaC service. The industry also brings a proven track record in the marketing, distribution and carriage of specialty services. Most recently, with the successful launch of YTV, members of the industry have had hands-on experience in the introduction of a new, national programming service.

The Canadian cable television industry and the CBC believe that this new specialty programming service, and the unique partnership between the public and the private sectors on which it is based, will result in significant benefits to Canadians and to the Canadian broadcasting system:

- the CPaC service will allow all Canadians to watch the deliberations of Parliament, in whatever time zone and in either of the two official languages, thereby to understand better the role and function of our national democratic institutions, and of those we elect to serve us;
- Canadians will benefit from significantly enhanced access to more detailed and extensive democratic debate and from regular opportunities to express their own views;