



Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2015-534

PDF version

Reference: Part 1 application posted on 26 June 2015

Ottawa, 1 December 2015

The Sports Network Inc.
Across Canada

Application 2015-0625-5

ESPN Classic – Licence amendments

1. The Commission **approves** an application by Bell Media Inc. (Bell Media), on behalf of The Sports Network Inc., to amend the broadcasting licence for the national, English-language specialty Category B service ESPN Classic by deleting the service's current nature of service conditions of licence and by adding conditions of licence allowing the service to broadcast programming drawn from all program categories and limiting the amount of live professional sports programming that it may broadcast. The Commission did not receive any interventions in regard to this application.
2. Bell Media's requests are consistent with Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2015-86, in which the Commission stated that it would eliminate its genre exclusivity policy and, consequently, no longer enforce conditions of licence relating to nature of service, with certain exceptions, such as the condition of licence relating to the broadcast of live professional sports programming by services other than mainstream sports services.
3. Accordingly, the Commission deletes the following conditions of licence for ESPN Classic:¹
 2. (a) The licensee shall provide a national English-language specialty Category B service dedicated to showcasing some of the world's greatest sporting moments and the momentous impact these events had in our lives. The service shall provide a retrospective on sports events that occurred at least 6 months prior to the broadcast day on which they are aired by the service.
 - (b) The programming must be drawn exclusively from the following categories set out in item 6 of Schedule I to the *Specialty Services Regulations, 1990*:

¹¹ ESPN Classic's current conditions of licence are set out in Appendix 20 to Broadcasting Decision 2011-444.

- 2(a) Analysis and interpretation
- (b) Long-form documentary
- 6(a) Professional sports
- (b) Amateur sports
- 7(d) Theatrical feature films aired on TV
- 11(a) General entertainment and human interest
- (b) Reality television
- 12 Interstitials
- 13 Public service announcements
- 14 Infomercials, promotional and corporate videos

(c) No more than 15% of all programming broadcast during the broadcast week shall be drawn from category 7 Drama and comedy.

(d) The licensee shall not provide any news, information or highlight coverage of current sports events.

(e) The licensee shall not provide any live event coverage.

4. The Commission adds the following **conditions of licence**:

The licensee may draw programming from all of the program categories set out in Item 6 of Schedule 1 to the *Specialty Services Regulations, 1990*, as amended from time to time.

The licensee shall devote not more than 10% of the programming broadcast during the broadcast month to live professional sports programming, which falls under program category 6(a) Professional sports.

5. As set out in Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2015-86, licensees must provide the Commission with a name and a brief description of the service, to be listed on the Commission's website, and update this name and description any time it changes. This will allow both Canadians and the Commission to continue having basic information about the discretionary services in operation. Pursuant to that requirement, Bell Media provided the following description for ESPN Classic:

The licensee provides a national English-language discretionary service showcasing some of the world's greatest sporting moments and events.

Secretary General

Related documents

- *Let's Talk TV: The way forward – Creating compelling and diverse Canadian programming*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2015-86, 12 March 2015
- *Bell Media Inc. – Group-based licence renewals*, Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2011-444, 27 July 2011

**This decision is to be appended to the licence.*