



## Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2007-236

Ottawa, 16 July 2007

**Meridian Multimedia Network Inc.**  
Across Canada

*Application 2007-0099-9, received 22 January 2007*  
*Public Hearing in the National Capital Region*  
*28 May 2007*

### **Meridian Multimedia Network – Category 2 specialty service**

*The Commission **approves** an application for a broadcasting licence to operate a new ethnic Category 2 specialty programming undertaking.*

#### **Introduction**

1. Meridian Multimedia Network Inc. filed an application for a broadcasting licence to operate Meridian Multimedia Network, a national, ethnic general interest Category 2 specialty programming undertaking targeted to people of South Asian descent who speak Urdu as their first language, and to families who speak Urdu and English at home. Not less than 85% of all programming broadcast during the broadcast week would be in the Urdu language. Up to 15% of the broadcast week would be devoted to programming in the English language.
2. The Commission did not receive any interventions in connection with this application.

#### **Would Meridian Multimedia Network be directly competitive with existing Category 1 or analog pay or specialty services?**

3. In Broadcasting Public Notice 2005-104, the Commission implemented a revised, open-entry approach for considering applications proposing new third-language ethnic Category 2 services. Under this approach, the Commission no longer assesses the potential competitiveness of new, third-language ethnic Category 2 specialty and pay services with existing analog third-language ethnic specialty services. Instead, such applications are generally approved, subject in appropriate cases to a buy-through requirement<sup>1</sup> and the criteria specified in Broadcasting Public Notice 2005-104. The Commission defined a third-language ethnic programming service as one that provides at least 90% of its programming in languages other than English or French. However, the Commission indicated that applicants proposing new Category 2 services that offer less than 90% of their programming in a third language would continue to be assessed under

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<sup>1</sup> Under the buy-through requirement, third-language, general interest Category 2 services that offer 40% or more of their program schedule in any of the Cantonese, Mandarin, Italian, Spanish, Greek, or Hindi languages, may only be offered to customers who also subscribe to the analog service operating in the same language.

the case-by-case approach set out in Public Notice 2000-6. In that framework, the Commission implemented a competitive, open-entry approach to licensing Category 2 services. While the Commission does not consider the impact that a new Category 2 service might have on an existing Category 2 service, it does seek to ensure that newly licensed Category 2 services do not compete directly with any existing pay or specialty television service, including any Category 1 service.

4. In the present case, the proposed service would offer an Urdu-language service devoted to general programming for the Urdu-speaking community in Canada. Not less than 85% of the proposed service's programming would be in a third language. The Commission is satisfied that Meridian Multimedia Network would not be directly competitive with any existing pay or specialty television service, including any Category 1 service, consistent with the approach set out in Public Notice 2000-6. The Commission is further satisfied that the application is in conformity with all applicable terms and conditions announced in Public Notice 2000-171-1.
5. In light of the above, the Commission **approves** the application by Meridian Multimedia Network Inc. for a broadcasting licence to operate the national, general interest ethnic Category 2 specialty programming undertaking Meridian Multimedia Network. The terms and **conditions of licence** are set out in the appendix to this decision.

Secretary General

#### **Related documents**

- *Revised approach for the consideration of broadcasting licence applications proposing new third-language ethnic Category 2 pay and specialty services, Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2005-104, 23 November 2005*
- *Introductory statement – Licensing of new digital pay and specialty services – Corrected Appendix 2, Public Notice CRTC 2000-171-1, 6 March 2001*
- *Licensing framework policy for new digital pay and specialty services, Public Notice CRTC 2000-6, 13 January 2000*

*This decision is to be appended to the 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>*

## Appendix to Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2007-236

### Terms and conditions of licence for the Category 2 specialty programming undertaking Meridian Multimedia Network

#### Terms

A licence will be issued once the applicant has satisfied the Commission, with supporting documentation, that the following requirements have been met:

- the applicant has entered into a distribution agreement with at least one licensed distributor; and
- the applicant has informed the Commission in writing that it is prepared to commence operations. The undertaking must be operational at the earliest possible date and in any event no later than 36 months from the date of this decision, unless a request for an extension of time is approved by the Commission before 16 July 2010. In order to ensure that such a request is processed in a timely manner, it should be submitted at least 60 days before that date.

The licence will expire 31 August 2013.

#### Conditions of licence

1. The licence shall be subject to the conditions set out in *Introductory statement – Licensing of new digital pay and specialty services – Corrected Appendix 2*, Public Notice CRTC 2000-171-1, 6 March 2001.
2. The licensee shall provide a general interest, ethnic Category 2 specialty programming service devoted to the Urdu-speaking community in Canada.
3. The programming shall be drawn exclusively from the following categories set out in item 6 of Schedule I to the *Specialty Services Regulations, 1990*, as amended from time to time:
  - 1 News
  - 2 (a) Analysis and interpretation  
(b) Long-form documentary
  - 3 Reporting and actualities
  - 4 Religion
  - 5 (a) Formal education and pre-school  
(b) Informal education/Recreation and leisure
  - 6 (a) Professional sports  
(b) Amateur sports

- 7 Drama and comedy
    - (a) Ongoing drama series
    - (b) Ongoing comedy series (sitcoms)
    - (c) Specials, mini-series or made-for-TV feature films
    - (d) Theatrical feature films aired on TV
    - (e) Animated television programs and films
    - (f) Programs of comedy sketches, improvisations, unscripted works, stand-up comedy
    - (g) Other drama
  - 8 (a) Music and dance other than music video programs or clips
    - (b) Music video clips
    - (c) Music video programs
  - 9 Variety
  - 10 Game shows
  - 11 General entertainment and human interest
  - 12 Interstitials
  - 13 Public service announcements
  - 14 Infomercials, promotional and corporate videos
4. The licensee shall broadcast not less than 85% of all programming during the broadcast week in the Urdu language.
  5. The licensee shall not broadcast North American professional sports such as NHL Hockey, Major League Baseball, NBA Basketball or CFL or NFL Football.
  6. The licensee shall not broadcast North American English-language music videos.
  7. Where the licensee broadcasts religious programming as defined in *Religious Broadcasting Policy*, Public Notice CRTC 1993-78, 3 June 1993, the licensee shall adhere to the guidelines set out in sections III.B.2.a) and IV of that public notice with respect to the provision of balance and ethics in religious programming, as amended from time to time.
  8. In order to ensure that the licensee complies at all times with the *Direction to the CRTC (Ineligibility of non-Canadians)*, P.C. 1997-486, 8 April 1997, as amended by P.C. 1998-1268, 15 July 1998, the licensee shall file, for the Commission's prior review, a copy of any programming supply agreement and/or licence trademark agreement it intends to enter into with a non-Canadian party.

For the purposes of the conditions of this licence, including condition of licence no. 1, *broadcast day* means the period of up to 18 consecutive hours, beginning each day not earlier than six o'clock in the morning and ending not later than one o'clock in the morning of the following day, as selected by the licensee, or any other period approved by the Commission.