



Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2025-188

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Reference: 2024-213

Gatineau, 30 July 2025

506992 N.W.T. Ltd.

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Vista Radio Ltd.

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Public records: 2023-0253-7 and 2024-0247-8

Public hearing in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

11 February 2025

English-language commercial FM radio station in Yellowknife

Summary

The Commission approves the application by 506992 N.W.T. Ltd. (Cabin Radio) for a broadcasting licence to operate an English-language commercial FM radio station in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories.

Cabin Radio's proposal, which received broad local support on the public record and at the public hearing, meets the Commission's requirements concerning commercial radio. Approving Cabin Radio's proposal will add a new voice to the Yellowknife FM radio market and will contribute to greater programming diversity and ensure access to essential news and information.

To maintain market stability, the Commission has approved only one new station, noting concerns about the economic impact of adding multiple stations – an issue raised by the applicants.

Background

1. The Yellowknife, Northwest Territories radio market is currently served by a single commercial radio station, CJCD-FM Yellowknife (True North FM), which is owned and operated by Vista Radio Ltd. (Vista).
2. This market is also served by several non-commercial radio stations: CFYK-FM Yellowknife (Radio One) and CBNY-FM Yellowknife (CBC Music), operated by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation; CIVR-FM Yellowknife, a French-language community radio station operated by Médias ténois; and CKLB-FM Yellowknife, an

Indigenous (Native Type B) radio station operated by Native Communications Society of the NWT.

3. In addition, since 2018, Yellowknife has been served by an online radio service operated by 506992 N.W.T. Ltd. (Cabin Radio). This service offers an alternative to Vista's licenced commercial FM radio station. Cabin Radio's service produces online programming and serves more than 8,000 unique listeners daily in a city of 20,000 residents. Cabin Radio does not operate any licensed radio stations in Canada.
4. In Broadcasting Decision 2023-33, the Commission found that the Yellowknife market could not support an additional commercial radio station at the time that decision was issued. The Commission noted that, consistent with the approach set out in Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2014-554, it would not generally be disposed to accept applications for new commercial radio stations to serve the Yellowknife market for a period of two years from the date of that decision.
5. On 4 May 2023, Cabin Radio, while acknowledging the above approach to considering applications for new stations, filed an application (2023-0253-7) for a broadcasting licence to operate a commercial FM radio station to serve Yellowknife. Cabin Radio noted that it would offer the same programming on its FM station that it currently offers online.
6. In Broadcasting Notice of Consultation 2024-57 (the Notice), the Commission announced it was issuing a call for applications to serve Yellowknife. The Commission also announced that it would hold a proceeding to consider the application from Cabin Radio and other applications received as a result of the Notice. The Commission acknowledged the impact that major events (notably, the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2023 Northwest Territories wildfires) have had in Yellowknife and the importance of having increased access to radio content in the North.
7. Accordingly, in the Notice, the Commission called for applications for broadcasting licences to operate a new commercial, ethnic, community, campus, or Indigenous radio station in Yellowknife. The Commission noted that in evaluating any applications it received, it would examine, among other factors, the capacity of the market to support any additional stations.
8. In response to the Notice, the Commission received an application from Vista (2024-0247-8) for a broadcasting licence to operate a new English-language commercial FM radio station to serve Yellowknife.
9. In Broadcasting Notice of Consultation 2024-213, the Commission announced that it would consider the two applications at a public hearing to be held starting 11 February 2025.

Cabin Radio

10. Cabin Radio is incorporated in the Northwest Territories. Its President is Andrew Goodwin, and it is owned equally by Andrew Goodwin, Oliver Williams, Sarah Pruys, Jesse Wheeler, and Scott Letkeman (each holding 20% of the voting shares). Effective control of Cabin Radio is exercised by its board of directors, pursuant to the terms of the Shareholders Agreement. The shareholders, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and all members of the board of directors are Canadian. As such, Cabin Radio satisfies the requirements of the *Direction to the CRTC (Ineligibility of Non-Canadians)*¹ (the Direction).
11. At the hearing, Cabin Radio stated that through its online service, it is embedded in the community it serves, providing local news and information with ongoing support for community organizations, events and local musical artists. Cabin Radio indicated that it is supported by local advertisers and produces up to 44 local weekly shows and regular up-to-date newscasts. It noted in particular its coverage of the 2023 Northwest Territories wildfires. Cabin Radio further noted the financial support it provides to local musicians and musical festivals, including Indigenous musical artists and Northern artists, and that it is a key sponsor of a yearly summer music festival in Yellowknife.
12. Cabin Radio stated that it has been working towards obtaining a broadcasting licence for several years and plans to invest long term in the local broadcasting industry and the community it serves.

Vista

13. Vista is incorporated in British Columbia. Its President is Bryan McInnis, and effective control is exercised by Westerkirk Capital Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of SEB Investments Corp., which is majority held by Thomson Investments Limited. The shareholders, the CEO and all members of the board of directors are Canadian. As such, Vista satisfies the requirements of the Direction.
14. Vista owns and operates over 51 radio stations in communities in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and the Northwest Territories, including CJCD-FM (along with its transmitter CJCD-FM-1 Hay River, Northwest Territories), which was licensed in 1979.
15. Vista noted its deep history in the communities it serves and its commitment to professional management and journalistic standards. It stated that it wishes to provide knowledgeable and innovative approaches to the coverage of local news and information with ongoing support for community organizations, events and local musical artists.

¹ SOR/97-192, 8 April 1997.

16. Vista also expressed its willingness to invest long term in the local broadcasting industry and the communities its radio stations serve. It noted that all of its radio stations support the local music scenes. Vista noted its active support for Indigenous musical artists, such as a space on its website for its local stations that provides a curated list of musical selections by Indigenous recording artists.

Interventions and replies

17. The Commission received over 370 interventions for Cabin Radio's proposal. Six interveners at the public hearing emphasized the importance of awarding Cabin Radio a broadcasting licence to operate its online service as a licensed FM radio station. Further, Cabin Radio provided as part of its application more than 300 letters of support from a range of residents, businesses and organizations. Cabin Radio did not reply to the interventions.
18. For Vista's proposal, the Commission received over 40 interventions. At the public hearing, the Yellowknife Direct Charge Co-operative, a local business owned by members of the community, noted Vista's partnerships with other stations and its purchase of advertising time through other local media. This co-operative emphasized its longstanding partnership with Vista in a local food drive initiative and the help Vista has provided, including promoting the initiative to the Yellowknife community. As part of its application, Vista provided 17 letters of support from various businesses in Yellowknife and surrounding areas. Vista replied to certain interventions.

Legal framework

19. The Commission has the authority, pursuant to subsections 9(1), 9.1(1) and 11.1(2) of the *Broadcasting Act* (the Act), to issue and renew licences, and to make orders imposing conditions on the carrying on of a broadcasting undertaking that it considers appropriate for the implementation of the broadcasting policy set out in subsection 3(1) of the Act, and to make orders respecting expenditures.
20. The Commission has considered the applications to serve Yellowknife in light of the factors relevant to the evaluation of the applications for new radio services set out in Decision 99-480. These factors include the quality of the application, the diversity of news voices in the market and the impact that approval of an application will have on the market. In evaluating the quality of the application, the Commission considers, among other things, an applicant's plans and commitments regarding local programming (including how those plans and commitments reflect the interests and needs of the population) and the capacity of the proposed business plan to sustain the programming plans set out in the application.

Issues

21. After examining the records for these applications in light of applicable regulations and policies, the Commission considers that it must address the following issues:

- the quality of the applications;
- the economic impact on incumbent stations and market capacity;
- the diversity of voices in the market; and
- diversity and inclusion commitments.

Quality of the applications

Technical information and appropriate use of spectrum

22. Cabin Radio proposed to operate its new station at 93.9 MHz (channel 230A) with an effective radiated power (ERP) of 540 watts (non-directional antenna with an effective height of the antenna above average terrain [EHAAT] of 54.2 metres).
23. Vista proposed to operate its new station at 96.5 MHz (channel 243A) with an average ERP of 500 watts (non-directional antenna with an EHAAT of 61 metres).
24. The proposed FM primary service contour (3mV/m) for each station would serve Yellowknife. Each station's secondary service contour (0.5mV/m) would encompass Yellowknife and the surrounding areas.
25. The Department of Industry (also known as Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada) (the Department) has granted conditional technical acceptability of each of the proposed stations. As such, each applicant's proposal adheres to the Department's rules governing FM spectrum coordination.
26. The Commission notes that the use of the proposed frequencies would make them unavailable in Yellowknife and the surrounding areas. The Commission further notes, however, that there are multiple other frequencies that can provide similar or greater coverage to what the applicants proposed and that there are no other major surrounding markets that would be impacted.
27. In light of this, the Commission finds that Cabin Radio's and Vista's proposals would have a minimal impact on the availability of frequencies in Yellowknife and the surrounding areas and would therefore represent an appropriate use of spectrum.

Proposed business plans

28. Cabin Radio has been operating an online service since 2018. Vista is an experienced radio station operator with a presence in the Yellowknife radio market. As such, the Commission has no concerns regarding the capacity of the applicants' business plans to sustain the programming plans set out in their applications.

Local and news programming

29. Cabin Radio proposed to broadcast 126 hours of programming each broadcast week, all of which would be devoted to local programming. Ten hours would be devoted to

spoken word programming, including one hour of local news, 15 minutes of national news, and 15 minutes of international news.

30. Interveners who supported Cabin Radio's proposal noted the significant role played by its online service in providing accurate, timely, and culturally relevant information to Yellowknife and the surrounding areas, especially during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2023 Northwest Territories wildfires. Many emphasized the trust and sense of community ownership that Cabin Radio has built as an online operator and intends to maintain with its proposed FM radio station.
31. Interveners submitted that the online programming Cabin Radio wishes to replicate on its proposed FM station is relevant and valuable to Northerners. They considered Cabin Radio to be a trusted source of local news and information, citing the superior quality of its journalism, its reliable coverage of a wide range of topics and significant contribution to the local news ecosystem, including employment, and its role in fostering public engagement and local knowledge, including Indigenous information.
32. At the hearing, interveners noted Cabin Radio's cultural sensitivity and respect for Indigenous communities. They cited, among other things, its intention to include Indigenous music in the station's playlist, to mark National Indigenous Peoples Day, and to ensure Indigenous voices are heard on air, as well as its efforts to properly pronounce Indigenous names. Interveners also praised Cabin Radio's efforts to promote reconciliation and understand Indigenous cultures.
33. Vista proposed to broadcast 126 hours of programming each broadcast week, all of which would be devoted to local programming. Ten hours and 28.5 minutes would be devoted to spoken word programming, including two hours and 50 minutes of local news, 25 minutes of national news, and 25 minutes of international news.
34. Some interveners expressed support for Vista's proposal and considered its radio station CJCD-FM to be a reliable source of news for Yellowknife, while others, including those who appeared at the hearing, mentioned that Vista should not be given a second radio station to serve that community. Certain interveners considered, for example, that in regard to current programming offerings, and spoken word programming in particular, Vista is less rooted in Yellowknife than Cabin Radio. Several interveners who are listeners to CJCD-FM questioned how well the station reflects and represents people of the North, with some noting the on-air mispronunciation of local place names and local Indigenous names.
35. In light of the above, and notwithstanding Vista's proposal to broadcast more news programming than Cabin Radio, the Commission finds that the local programming – including news programming – to be broadcast by Cabin Radio on its proposed station would better reflect and respond to the needs of the local Yellowknife community.

Music programming

36. Cabin Radio proposed to operate its new FM station under an Adult Album Alternative format, targeting an audience from 18 to 64 years of age.²
37. Cabin Radio stated that it would exceed the regulatory requirements relating to the broadcast of Canadian musical selections set out in the *Radio Regulations, 1986* (the Regulations). Specifically, it committed to devote, by condition of service, not less than 40% of its content category 2 (Popular music) musical selections to Canadian selections broadcast in their entirety over the broadcast week and from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday to Friday of the same broadcast week.
38. Cabin Radio also proposed to broadcast French-language programming to showcase French-language music for its audience. To do so, it stated that it would adhere to a condition of service allowing it to devote a maximum of one hour of programming each broadcast week to programming in the French language.
39. Cabin Radio further committed to devote, by condition of service, not less than 35% of the station's Canadian musical selections aired each broadcast week to musical selections from Canadian emerging artists.³ It noted that this commitment would expose the work of Canadian emerging artists to ensure the discoverability of those new artists, sustain a vibrant Canadian musical industry, and provide listeners with the variety they seek. It further confirmed that it would continue to showcase local and territorial artists on the airwaves.
40. At the hearing, Cabin Radio stated that on top of producing special broadcasts to mark Indigenous events, including National Indigenous Peoples Day, its online musical playlist features many northern and Indigenous artists. It further stated that it would maintain this practice if granted a broadcasting licence to operate an FM station in Yellowknife. Cabin Radio also noted its intention to develop a new program aimed at showcasing Indigenous voices.
41. Vista proposed to operate its new station under a HOT Adult Contemporary format, with a young adult offering, targeting an audience from 19 to 49 years of age. All of the programming to be broadcast on the station would be English-language programming.
42. Vista stated that it would exceed the regulatory requirements relating to the broadcast of Canadian musical selections set out in the Regulations. Specifically, it committed to devote, by condition of service, not less than 40% of its content category 2

² This is the format and target audience currently in place for Cabin Radio's online service.

³ This exceeds the Commission's expectation, set out in Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2022-332, for commercial radio station licensees not already required by condition of service to broadcast music by emerging artists to devote, in each broadcast week, at least 5% of the station's musical selections to selections from Canadian emerging artists broadcast in their entirety, and to report annually on how they have met this expectation.

(Popular music) musical selections to Canadian selections broadcast in their entirety over the broadcast week and from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday to Friday of the same broadcast week.

43. Vista further committed to devote, by condition of service, a minimum of 5% of the station's musical selections aired each broadcast week to musical selections from Canadian emerging artists.
44. Vista noted its long-standing commitment to supporting Indigenous music artists. At the hearing, Vista stated that as part of that commitment, it is developing an Indigenous Incubator program in conjunction with its Launchpad program, a company-wide initiative that aims to provide a platform for Indigenous peoples to showcase their work. Vista further noted that it is releasing a new software platform that will provide greater mobility and flexibility for out-of-studio broadcasts from within Indigenous communities in the Yellowknife area, which will allow it to share Indigenous voices, culture, art, and live music and events on air.
45. In the Commission's view, Cabin Radio's and Vista's proposals regarding music programming, including showcasing Indigenous musical selections, are comparable. While both formats would meet the needs of the Yellowknife community, the Commission notes that Cabin Radio would provide more support to emerging artists and is committed to providing French-language programming.

Over-and-above Canadian content development contributions

46. Subsection 15(2) of the Regulations sets out the basic contributions to Canadian content development (CCD) that radio licensees must make.
47. As part of their applications for new licences, applicants can make specific CCD commitments that go beyond (over and above) the requirements in the Regulations. These commitments are imposed by way of order under subsection 11.1(2) of the Act. Stations that make over-and-above contributions must direct a minimum of 20% of the total annual amount to FACTOR or Musicaction. Stations may also make contributions to other eligible initiatives, at their discretion.
48. Cabin Radio proposed, upon commencement of operations, to make an over-and-above contribution of \$147,000 over seven consecutive broadcast years to CCD. Of this amount, \$24,500 (equal to the minimum 20% requirement) would be allocated to FACTOR or Musicaction and the remainder (\$122,500) would be allocated to the local Folk on the Rocks festival to support the performers.
49. Vista proposed, upon commencement of operations, to make an over-and-above contribution of \$140,000 over seven consecutive broadcast years to CCD. Of this amount, \$105,000 (above the minimum 20% requirement) would be allocated to FACTOR and the remainder (\$35,000) would be used to establish the True North Bursary, to be awarded to an Indigenous student pursuing a career in journalism or broadcasting.

50. Cabin Radio's and Vista's proposals regarding CCD contributions are comparable and adhere to the Commercial Radio Policy 2006,⁴ as amended by the Revised Commercial Radio Policy.⁵ Further, both proposals would benefit and aid the development and promotion of Canadian musical and spoken word content.

Conclusion

51. In light of the above, the Commission finds that Cabin Radio's proposal is stronger than Vista's proposal in regard to the factors relating to the quality of the applications.

Economic impact on incumbent stations and market capacity

Economic impact

Cabin Radio

52. Cabin Radio stated that it has been competing in the Yellowknife audio market for several years as an online audio service. As part of its application, it included letters of support from businesses stating they are prepared to increase spending on advertising if Cabin Radio becomes an FM radio broadcaster.
53. Vista, in its intervention, expressed concern that the addition of another licensed service belonging to a new owner would be detrimental to its existing service, CJCD-FM.
54. The Commission notes that Cabin Radio has demonstrated that it has been a growing and profitable operation for several years in Yellowknife. Furthermore, since submitting the application, Cabin Radio has achieved its first-year projections without the addition of an FM licence. Despite its current success and its projections for greater revenues for the first four years of operation, Cabin Radio is projecting more modest growth in its broadcasting advertising revenues when compared to Vista's projections.
55. Granting Cabin Radio a broadcasting licence to operate an FM radio station may make it more competitive in the Yellowknife market, which could have an impact on that market. However, with the existing listener and advertiser base for its online service, the Commission considers that Cabin Radio would not be a truly new entrant to the Yellowknife market.
56. In light of the above, the Commission finds that approval of Cabin Radio's application would not have an undue economic impact on incumbent stations in the market.

⁴ Broadcasting Public Notice 2006-158.

⁵ Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2022-332.

Vista

57. In Vista's view, the Yellowknife market can only sustain a new station if it is operated by Vista, as that station would benefit from improved synergies and shared costs with CJCD-FM. Despite anticipating some growth in the overall market's advertising revenues due to the availability of a new station operating in a different format, Vista acknowledged that some of its proposed station's revenues may come at the expense of CJCD-FM.
58. The Commission notes that while Vista projected broadcasting revenues for the first four years of the operation of its proposed station that are less than those projected by Cabin Radio for its proposed station, Vista projected higher revenue growth that would surpass the revenue growth of Cabin Radio's proposed station before the end of the first licence term. Further, Vista's projected revenues are for a new radio service, unlike Cabin Radio, who has demonstrated its presence in Yellowknife operating as an exclusively online service.
59. Finally, given that Vista owns and operates the only licensed commercial radio station in the Yellowknife radio market, granting it a new licence would increase the possibility of a competitive imbalance in that market.
60. In light of the above, the Commission finds that any economic impact resulting from a new station operated by Vista would, in part, be mitigated by improved synergies and shared costs with its incumbent station CJCD-FM. As such, any economic impact would likely not be undue. However, the Commission remains concerned by the competitive imbalance that could be created by Vista operating the only two commercial radio stations in the Yellowknife market.

Capacity of the market to support one or two new radio stations

61. At the hearing, the Commission questioned Cabin Radio and Vista on the possibility of granting broadcasting licences to operate both of the proposed services.
62. Cabin Radio expressed confidence regarding its place in the Yellowknife market and considered that granting two licences would not impact its projections.
63. Vista stated that approving one of the two applications would have an impact on its radio station CJCD-FM, and that the impact would be greater if the Commission were to approve both applications. It added, however, that its application would still be viable as the stations would serve different demographics with different clients.
64. The Commission notes that the combined impact of granting each applicant a new licence increases the risk of undue economic impact. Vista projected negative profit margins for its proposed station for most of the first licence term, without the assumption of a new FM competitor. Cabin Radio's projected profit margins are less than Vista's projected revenues for its proposed new service, which would indicate that granting a licence to Vista could eliminate Cabin Radio's expected returns. As

noted by Vista, approving both applications would likely have a negative impact on those projections.

65. In the Commission's view, licensing two new FM radio stations in Yellowknife is more likely to have an undue economic impact on incumbents as well as on the new stations. Accordingly, the Commission finds that it would be appropriate to grant one broadcasting licence for a new FM commercial radio station to serve the Yellowknife market.

Diversity of voices

66. The common objective of the Diversity of Voices Policy⁶ is to ensure the provision of varied viewpoints either through ownership regulations or by means of programming obligations. That policy specifies that the concept of diversity in the Canadian broadcasting system should be approached at three distinct levels: diversity of elements (i.e., public, private and community elements), plurality of editorial voices within the private element, and diversity of programming. Given that the present applications are for private commercial broadcasting licences, only the second and third levels are relevant to the Commission's examination of Cabin Radio's and Vista's proposals.
67. Plurality of editorial voices in the private element is necessary to maximize the different choice of voices in the broadcasting system. In the Commission's view, allowing a second, independently owned operator (i.e., Cabin Radio) to enter the Yellowknife radio market with its own editorial and programming resources would increase the plurality of ownership in that market.
68. Diversity of programming includes the expression of Canadian voices, the availability of different genres and formats, or airing content made by a variety of producers, including independent producers. It is the Commission's view that the broadcasting system should include and offer a variety of programming nationally, regionally and locally, in accordance with subparagraph 3(1)(i)(ii) of the Act.⁷
69. Examining the programming format of a proposed radio station allows the Commission to determine the extent to which an overlap in format or target audience may exist with competing applicants. Based on the programming format for each of the proposed stations, the Commission considers that approving either Cabin Radio's or Vista's applications would bring diversity of programming to the Yellowknife radio market.

⁶ Broadcasting Public Notice 2008-4.

⁷ Specifically, "the programming provided by the Canadian broadcasting system should be drawn from local, regional, national and international sources, including, at the local level, from community broadcasters who, through collaboration with local organizations and community members, are in the unique position of being able to provide varied programming to meet the needs of specific audiences."

70. The Commission notes, however, that Cabin Radio's proposal would also bring diversity of programming through its other commitments to the Yellowknife community. Cabin Radio proposed to favour different artists and producers compared to what is currently offered by FM radio stations in Yellowknife. Further, it committed to devote not less than 35% of the station's Canadian musical selections aired each broadcast week to musical selections from Canadian emerging artists and would continue to showcase local and territorial artists. In comparison, Vista committed to devote 5% of its Canadian musical selections to selections from Canadian emerging artists, a level that is consistent with the expectation regarding selections from such artists set out in the Revised Commercial Radio Policy.
71. Interveners who supported Cabin Radio's proposal emphasized the importance of an additional choice for radio listeners in Yellowknife. In their view, alternative viewpoints and a larger variety of music would enrich the community. They also considered Cabin Radio to be a truly local broadcaster with ownership and staff that are in touch with the pulse of the community, reporting on issues in real time, as seen during the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2023 Northwest Territories wildfires. Vista also received interventions in support of its proposal, with some noting that the programming on CJCD-FM has been a reliable source of news and has contributed to various community initiatives. However, some interveners submitted that Vista should not be given a second radio station in Yellowknife, with some questioning the relevance of the local programming and music broadcast on Vista's existing radio station. Interveners further noted gaps in Vista's coverage of the 2023 Northwest Territories wildfires.
72. In light of the above, the Commission finds that granting a broadcasting licence to Cabin Radio would more effectively contribute to the objectives of the Diversity of Voices Policy.

Diversity and inclusion commitments

73. Cabin Radio has fewer than 100 employees and is therefore exempt from the *Employment Equity Act*. Its employment equity commitments remain subject to Commission review.
74. Cabin Radio stated that its ownership includes both Indigenous and non-Indigenous members, and that it aims to reflect the community demographic in its leadership.
75. In regard to support for workforce diversity, Cabin Radio described a six-week paid internship program specifically targeted at Indigenous and racialized communities. It also outlined structured community feedback mechanisms, including direct engagement with local groups, social media interactions, and a long-term partnership with the Northern Journalism Training Initiative (NJTI) to support Indigenous journalism training.
76. In addition, Cabin Radio emphasized its commitment to amplifying Indigenous and Northern voices, integrating inclusive employment practices outlined in its staff

handbook, and participating in the Canadian Association of Journalists (CAJ) newsroom diversity survey as part of its accountability. Cabin Radio noted that it does not have formal numeric workforce diversity targets, relying instead on participation in the CAJ newsroom diversity survey to informally track its progress and ensure accountability.

77. Vista is a company with over 100 employees and is therefore subject to the *Employment Equity Act*.
78. Vista stated that in terms of gender, it has a balanced senior management team.
79. Vista described an internal accelerator program to foster leadership development within its organization. It highlighted its Indigenous Incubator program for supporting Indigenous artists and The True North FM Community Voice Fund, which provides promotional airtime to local organizations.
80. In addition, Vista outlined a corporate-level diversity and inclusion strategy that includes bias-aware recruitment practices, inclusive language in job postings, and internal benchmarking across its network. It noted that to track the effectiveness of its diversity initiatives, it relies on internal human resource reviews. Vista added that it does not set specific numeric diversity targets, relying instead on internal benchmarks and industry standards to assess and track its diversity progress. However, it did not provide station-specific diversity benchmarks or numeric targets for its proposed Yellowknife station.
81. In light of the above, while both Cabin Radio and Vista presented valuable strategies that would contribute to diversity and inclusion in Yellowknife, the Commission finds Cabin Radio's approach to be more locally focused and better tailored to the unique needs of that community. The Commission also finds that Cabin Radio's commitment to amplifying Indigenous and Northern voices, along with its dedicated internship programs and community engagement efforts, positions this applicant as an impactful and accountable choice for fostering local diversity.

Conclusion

82. In the Commission's view, the proposals by Cabin Radio and Vista would both benefit Yellowknife. The proposed programming formats and the applicants' plans to broadcast Indigenous musical selections would fill a gap in Yellowknife and meet certain needs of the community. The applicants proposed the same amount of local programming, with Vista proposing more spoken word programming, including news. Their similar proposals relating to over-and-above CCD contributions would benefit and aid the development and promotion of Canadian musical and spoken word content in Yellowknife. Both applicants also expressed a willingness to make long-term investments in the broadcasting industry and the Yellowknife community.
83. Cabin Radio has demonstrated its willingness to provide a comprehensive reflection of the community it is rooted in, expanding access to news and information that is essential for the Yellowknife community, increasing local engagement, and striving

to ensure that the community it serves is adequately represented. Vista, as the incumbent FM commercial radio operator in Yellowknife, has a history of serving that community over the radio and could benefit from synergies with its station CJCD-FM.

84. The Commission is of the view that Cabin Radio's proposal overall is the stronger of the two. Approving Cabin Radio's proposal would lessen the possibility of competitive imbalance in the Yellowknife radio market. Cabin Radio's proposal would add a new voice to that market, thereby increasing the diversity of voices in that market. It would also have a stronger impact on fostering diversity and inclusion in Yellowknife and would provide more support to emerging artists in the community.
85. Finally, Cabin Radio's application received many submissions from interveners who supported the application and expressed an appreciation for the quality of Cabin Radio's news, and the timeliness and relevance of information for the Yellowknife community.
86. In light of all of the above, the Commission approves the application by 506992 N.W.T. Ltd. for a broadcasting licence to operate an English-language commercial FM radio programming undertaking in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. The licence will expire 31 August 2031.
87. Further, given the Commission's decision to licence only one new station to serve the Yellowknife market, the Commission denies the application by Vista Radio Ltd. for a broadcasting licence to operate an English-language commercial FM radio station in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories.
88. As noted above, in the Notice, the Commission stated that the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2023 Northwest Territories wildfires highlighted the importance of having increased access to radio content in the North. Given these major events in the region, the Commission considers news to be a crucial element of any new radio offering in the Yellowknife radio market. While Cabin Radio proposed to devote a portion of its programming to local, regional, national and international news, and to support local journalism, including through training, the Commission encourages the licensee to explore ways to increase news content, in particular, local news content.

Conditions of service

89. There are standard conditions of service that apply to all undertakings of a particular class. In this case, the Commission considers it appropriate that the licensee should adhere to the standard conditions of service for commercial radio stations set out in the appendix to Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2022-334.
90. Further, pursuant to subsection 49(2) of the *Online Streaming Act*, any regulation made under paragraphs 10(1)(a) or 10(1)(i) of the old *Broadcasting Act* is deemed to be an order made under section 9.1 of the new *Broadcasting Act*. As a result, the

Commission considers it appropriate to require the licensee to adhere to these requirements as conditions of service.

91. Accordingly, pursuant to subsection 9.1(1) of the Act, the Commission **orders** 506992 N.W.T. Ltd. to adhere to the standard conditions of service for commercial FM radio stations set out in the appendix to Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2022-334, as well as to all applicable requirements set out in the Regulations, that were made under paragraphs 10(1)(a) or 10(1)(i) of the old Act.
92. Consistent with Cabin Radio's proposal to exceed the standard requirements relating to the broadcast of Canadian content category 2 musical selections and pursuant to subsection 9.1(1) of the Act, the Commission **orders** 506992 N.W.T. Ltd., as an exception to subsections 2.2(8) and 2.2(9) of the Regulations, to devote a minimum of 40% of its musical selections from content category 2 to Canadian selections broadcast in their entirety each broadcast week and between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. from Monday to Friday.
93. Consistent with Cabin Radio's proposal regarding the broadcast of French-language programming and pursuant to subsection 9.1(1) of the Act, the Commission **makes an order** allowing 506992 N.W.T. Ltd. to devote a maximum of one hour of the programming broadcast on the station each broadcast week to programming in the French-language.
94. Consistent with Cabin Radio's proposal regarding an over-and-above contribution to CCD and pursuant to subsection 11.1(2) of the Act, the Commission **orders** 506992 N.W.T. Ltd. to make an annual contribution of \$21,000 over seven consecutive broadcast years that is over and above the basic CCD contribution required in the Regulations.
95. The Commission considers that the full participation of the broadcasting industry is important for the National Public Alerting System (NPAS) to be effective in safeguarding and warning Canadians.
96. Consequently, the Commission has implemented obligations with respect to the broadcast of emergency alerts. For reference, see section 16 of the Regulations as well as Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2014-444. The licensee must implement the public alerting system for each of its transmitters, and ensure that any alert broadcast decoders (e.g., ENDEC) used for the purposes of broadcasting emergency alert messages are installed and programmed to properly account for the applicable contour (as set out in paragraph 16(2)(b) of the Regulations) of the station as well as that of any rebroadcasting transmitter that may appear on the licence for that station.
97. Accordingly, pursuant to subsection 9.1(1) of the Act, the Commission **orders** 506992 N.W.T. Ltd. to implement the NPAS **by the station's launch** and to make the appropriate associated information filings.
98. The specifics of these orders will be reflected in the conditions of service for the undertaking.

99. The Commission notes that the formal broadcasting licence document issued to a licensee may set out additional requirements for the undertaking, relating to, for example, technical parameters or prohibitions on transfer. The licensee shall, therefore, also adhere to any such requirements set out in the broadcasting licence for the undertaking.
100. The terms, conditions of service, expectations and encouragement are set out in the appendix to this decision.
101. Finally, the Commission notes that this application, including the matters set out in the above orders, was subject to a public proceeding that provided both Cabin Radio and Vista, and other interested parties, notice of and an opportunity to make representations with respect to the proposed orders. The Commission is satisfied that, in this case, the public proceeding was sufficient to achieve the purposes of the publication and consultation requirement set out in subsections 9.1(4) and 11.1(7) of the Act.

Reminders

Force and effect of broadcasting licences

102. Pursuant to section 22 of the Act, the broadcasting licence will cease to have any force or effect if the broadcasting certificate issued by the Department lapses.

Local news

103. Radio stations are an important daily source of local news and information for communities. Carrying on a broadcasting undertaking comes with conditions, regulatory obligations and responsibilities, which include contributing to the Canadian broadcasting system by ensuring that Canadians have access to local programming that reflects their needs and interests and informs them of important current issues.
104. Although the Revised Commercial Radio Policy does not specify a minimum level of weekly news to be broadcast, it does specify the type of spoken word material that must be included as part of a station's local programming. In accordance with that regulatory policy, the Commission reminds the licensee that its station, in its local programming, must incorporate spoken word material of direct and particular relevance to the communities served, and that this programming must include local news, weather, sports coverage, and the promotion of local events and activities. In addition, the Commission encourages the licensee to ensure that a reasonable amount of daily local news and information is made available to those communities.

Employment equity

105. In accordance with Public Notice 1992-59, the licensee should consider employment equity in its hiring practices and in all other aspects of its management of human resources.

106. The amendments to the *Broadcasting Act* resulting from the *Online Streaming Act* place greater emphasis on the inclusion of Indigenous persons, Canadians from Black or other racialized communities, and Canadians of diverse ethnocultural backgrounds, socio-economic status, abilities and disabilities, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and ages, in the Canadian broadcasting system. The Commission has announced consultations on diversity and inclusion in its [Regulatory plan to modernize Canada's broadcasting framework](#). In the meantime, the Commission expects the licensee to reflect this emphasis in its operational decisions.

Secretary General

Related documents

- *Notice of hearing*, Broadcasting Notice of Consultation CRTC 2024-213, 19 September 2024
- *Call for applications – Radio station to serve Yellowknife, Northwest Territories*, Broadcasting Notice of Consultation CRTC 2024-57, 14 March 2024
- *Findings regarding market capacity in the Yellowknife radio market*, Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2023-33, 15 February 2023
- *Revised conditions of licence for commercial AM and FM radio stations*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2022-334, 7 December 2022
- *Revised Commercial Radio Policy*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2022-332, 7 December 2022
- *A targeted policy review of the commercial radio sector*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2014-554, 28 October 2014
- *Amendments to various regulations, the standard conditions of licence for video-on-demand undertakings and certain exemption orders – Provisions requiring the mandatory distribution of emergency alert messages*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2014-444 and Broadcasting Orders CRTC 2014-445, 2014-446, 2014-447 and 2014-448, 29 August 2014
- *Diversity of Voices – Regulatory Policy*, Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2008-4, 15 January 2008
- *Commercial Radio Policy 2006*, Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2006-158, 15 December 2006
- *Implementation of an employment equity policy*, Public Notice CRTC 1992-59, 1 September 1992
- *Introductory statement – Licensing new radio stations*, Decision CRTC 99-480, 28 October 1999

This decision is to be appended to the licence.

Appendix to Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2025-188

Terms, conditions of service, expectations and encouragement for the English-language commercial FM radio programming undertaking in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Terms

The licence will expire 31 August 2031.

The station will operate at 93.9 MHz (channel 230A) with an average effective radiated power (ERP) of 540 watts and an effective height of the antenna above average terrain (EHAAT) of 54.2 metres.

Pursuant to subsection 22(1) of the *Broadcasting Act*, no licence may be issued until the Department of Industry (also known as Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada) notifies the Commission that its technical requirements have been met and that a broadcasting certificate will be issued.

Furthermore, the Commission will only issue a licence for this undertaking once 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 24 months from the date of this decision, unless a request for an extension of time is approved by the Commission before **30 July 2027**. In order to ensure that such a request is processed in a timely manner, it should be submitted in writing at least 60 days before that date.

Conditions of service

1. The licensee shall adhere to the conditions of service set out in the appendix to *Revised conditions of licence for commercial AM and FM radio stations*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2022-334, 7 December 2022. Further, the licensee shall adhere to the requirements set out in the broadcasting licence for the undertaking.
2. The licensee shall adhere to all applicable requirements set out in the *Radio Regulations, 1986*, that were made under paragraph 10(1)(a) or under paragraph 10(1)(i) of the old *Broadcasting Act*.
3. The licensee may devote a maximum of one hour of the programming broadcast on the station each broadcast week to programming in the French language.
4. As an exception to the percentage of Canadian musical selections set out in subsections 2.2(8) and 2.2(9) of the *Radio Regulations, 1986* (the Regulations), the licensee shall devote:

- (a) in each broadcast week, a minimum of 40% of its musical selections from content category 2 (Popular Music) to Canadian selections broadcast in their entirety;
- (b) between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., in any period beginning on Monday of a week and ending on Friday of the same week, a minimum of 40% of its musical selections from content category 2 (Popular Music) to Canadian selections broadcast in their entirety; and
- (c) a minimum of 35% of the Canadian musical selections required under a) and b) above to musical selections by emerging Canadian artists.

For the purposes of this condition, the terms “broadcast week,” “Canadian selection,” “content category” and “musical selection” shall have the same meanings as those set out in the Regulations. The term “emerging Canadian artist” shall have the meaning set out in *Revised Commercial Radio Policy*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2022-332, 7 December 2022.

5. The licensee shall, upon commencement of operations, in addition to the basic annual contribution to Canadian content development (CCD) set out in section 15 of the *Radio Regulations, 1986*, make an annual contribution of \$21,000 (\$147,000 over seven consecutive broadcast years) to the promotion and development of Canadian content.

Of this amount, the licensee shall allocate not less than 20% per broadcast year to FACTOR or Musicaction. The remainder of this additional CCD contribution shall be allocated to parties and initiatives fulfilling the definition of eligible initiatives set out in paragraph 108 of *Commercial Radio Policy 2006*, Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2006-158, 15 December 2006, as amended by paragraph 131 of *Revised Commercial Radio Policy*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2022-332, 7 December 2022.

6. The licensee shall implement the National Public Alerting System (NPAS) **by no later than 180 days following the station’s launch** in the manner set out in subsection 16(2) of the *Radio Regulations, 1986*, and in *Amendments to various regulations, the standard conditions of licence for video-on-demand undertakings and certain exemption orders – Provisions requiring the mandatory distribution of emergency alert messages*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2014-444 and Broadcasting Orders CRTC 2014-445, 2014-446, 2014-447 and 2014-448, 29 August 2014.

The licensee shall file a letter with the Commission to attest to the implementation date of its NPAS **within 14 days after the installation**. This letter must contain evidence that the system is properly configured to receive and distribute alerts from the National Alert Aggregation and Dissemination (NAAD) System (e.g., an attestation by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO), president or person exercising a similar supervisory role in the licensee’s operations, as to the installation of functioning alerting equipment). The letter should be filed electronically by using the secured service [My CRTC Account](#).

Expectations

Diversity

The *Broadcasting Act* places significant emphasis on the inclusion and reflection of Indigenous persons, Canadians from Black or other racialized communities, and Canadians of diverse ethnocultural backgrounds, socio-economic status, abilities and disabilities, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and ages, in the Canadian broadcasting system. The Commission expects the licensee to take concrete measures to ensure it contributes to this inclusion and reflection in both its programming and employment practices.

Indigenous musical selections

Consistent with the Commission's determination set out in *Revised Commercial Radio Policy*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2022-332, 7 December 2022 (Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2022-332), the Commission expects the licensee to include Indigenous musical selections on the station's playlist. The licensee should report annually on the amount of Indigenous content aired on the station throughout the broadcast year (i.e., from 1 September to 31 August), including the percentage of Indigenous musical selections out of the total number of musical selections that were aired, and the number of distinct artists whose music has been aired. The licensee should also be able to provide, upon request, information such as a list of all titles, artists, and International Standard Recording Code (ISRC) numbers.

For the purposes of the above paragraph, the licensee may use the provisional definition of "Indigenous-Canadian musical selection" set out in paragraph 441 of Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2022-332 to determine whether a musical selection can be considered an Indigenous musical selection.

Encouragement

Local news

The Commission encourages the licensee to explore ways to increase news content, in particular, local news content, on the station.