



Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2026-172

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Reference: 2026-37

Gatineau, 14 July 2026

Arsenal Media Inc.
Various Locations, Quebec

Public record: 2025-0585-0

Public hearing in the National Capital Region
30 April 2026

Various radio stations in Quebec – Change in ownership and effective control

Summary

The Commission approves an application by Arsenal Media Inc. (Arsenal), on behalf of RNC MEDIA Inc. (RNC), for authority to change the ownership and effective control of the French-language commercial FM radio programming undertakings operating the radio stations CFTX-FM Gatineau and its transmitter CFTX-FM-1 Gatineau (Buckingham); CKLX-FM Montréal; and CHXX-FM Donnacona and its transmitter CHXX-FM-1 Sainte-Croix-de-Lotbinière, Quebec. Through this transaction, Arsenal will acquire from RNC the assets related to the operation of these stations.

The Commission also approves Arsenal's request for new broadcasting licences to continue the operation of the stations.

The Commission finds that approving this transaction is in the public interest, as it will help ensure that the stations continue to provide local programming to the communities of the locations.

A dissenting opinion by Commissioner Ellen C. Desmond, K.C. is attached to this decision.

Application

1. On 30 November 2025, the Commission received an application from Arsenal Media Inc. (Arsenal), on behalf of RNC MEDIA Inc. (RNC), for authority to change the ownership and effective control of the French-language commercial FM radio programming undertakings operating the radio stations CFTX-FM Gatineau and its transmitter CFTX-FM-1 Gatineau (Buckingham); CKLX-FM Montréal; and CHXX-FM Donnacona and its transmitter

CHXX-FM-1 Sainte-Croix-de-Lotbinière, Quebec. Through this transaction, Arsenal would acquire from RNC the assets related to the operation of these stations.

2. Arsenal also requested new broadcasting licences to continue the operation of the stations under the same terms and conditions as those currently in effect for most of the stations, with the exception of CHXX-FM and its transmitter CHXX-FM-1. For the latter, Arsenal has requested an exception from the requirements to maintain a studio in Donnacona and to produce a minimum of 14 hours of local programming at that studio to serve the Portneuf region. The other conditions of service would remain the same.
3. Arsenal is 75.12% owned by Sylvain Chamberland and 24.88% owned by Gestion DR (2001) Inc. Sylvain Chamberland exercises effective control.
4. RNC is wholly owned by Groupe Radio Nord Inc. Pierre R. Brosseau and Jean Bach Royer exercise joint effective control over RNC.
5. On 7 November 2025, Arsenal entered into an agreement with RNC to acquire the assets of CFTX-FM and its transmitter CFTX-FM-1; CKLX-FM; and CHXX-FM and its transmitter CHXX-FM-1.
6. Arsenal proposed a value of the transaction for the assets of \$1,803,495, which includes the purchase price and the total value of leases payable over five years. No liabilities would be assumed and no working capital would be transferred at closing. Arsenal did not propose tangible benefits and requested an exception from the requirement to pay tangible benefits.

Interventions

7. The Commission received an intervention from 11733630 Canada inc. (11733630 Canada), licensee of CHOC-FM Saint-Raymond-de-Portneuf, Quebec. The intervener suggested that the Commission should change the station's designation from CHXX-FM Donnacona to CHXX-FM Québec. Arsenal did not respond to the intervention.
8. The intervention is addressed below.

Regulatory framework

9. The review of ownership transactions is an essential element of the Commission's regulatory and supervisory mandate under the *Broadcasting Act* (the Act). Obtaining a licence to operate a broadcasting undertaking (in this case, radio stations) is a regulatory privilege granted by the Commission. A licensee does not have the authority to transfer a licence to a new operator as they see fit.
10. For this reason, licensees must obtain the Commission's approval before concluding any action, agreement, or transaction that changes, directly or indirectly, the effective control of the radio

station. This requirement is set out in subsection 11(4) of the *Radio Regulations, 1986* (the Regulations).

11. When seeking the Commission's approval, the applicant must demonstrate that the benefits of the transaction are commensurate with the size and nature of the transaction and that the application represents the best possible proposal under the circumstances. The Commission will consider the application on its merits and will approve the transaction if the change in ownership and effective control is in the public interest. The public interest is reflected in the Canadian broadcasting and regulatory policy set out in subsections 3(1) and 5(2) of the Act.
12. Under subsection 18(1) of the Act, the Commission must conduct a public hearing for the issuance of a broadcasting licence. Broadcasting Information Bulletins 2011-222 and 2008-8-2 outline that the Commission generally reviews applications related to the acquisition of assets through public hearings, either appearing or non-appearing. Applications are non-appearing where the Commission is satisfied that the applicant and interested parties had an opportunity to present their views and that the written record is sufficient and further discussion is not necessary.

Issues

13. After examining the record for this application in light of applicable regulations and policies, the Commission considers that it must address the following issues:
 - whether the applicant's ownership structure satisfies the requirements for Canadian ownership and control;
 - whether the proposed transaction is in the public interest;
 - the value of the transaction;
 - the allocation of tangible benefits; and
 - whether the proposed transaction fulfills the regulatory requirements.

Canadian ownership and control

14. Pursuant to paragraph 3(1)(a) of the Act, the Canadian broadcasting system shall be effectively owned and controlled by Canadians. As required by the *Direction to the CRTC (Ineligibility of Non-Canadians)*¹ (the Direction), no broadcasting licence can be issued to a non-Canadian.
15. Arsenal is a corporation incorporated in Quebec. Its effective control is exercised by Sylvain Chamberland, the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer and principal shareholder, who is a

¹ SOR/97-192, 8 April 1997.

Canadian. As such, the proposed transaction satisfies the eligibility criteria set out in the Direction.

Public interest of the proposed transaction

16. When the Commission evaluates whether a transaction is in the public interest, it examines the extent to which the transaction improves the Canadian broadcasting system and contributes to meeting the policy objectives of the Act. Section 3 of that Act describes a broadcasting system that contributes to the creation and presentation of Canadian programming, and through its programming reflects the multicultural and multiracial nature of Canadian society. Furthermore, the programming that the system provides should be drawn from local and regional sources and should ensure that a diversity of news voices is offered to the public.
17. RNC noted it intends to sell CFTX-FM, CKLX-FM, and CHXX-FM due to cumulative financial losses over the past five years. Despite various changes to its programming, as well as investments in programming and marketing, RNC has been unable to restore its stations' profitability and considers a sale to be the only way to prevent their closure.
18. Arsenal stated that the acquisition of these three stations, would align with its strategy for expansion and consolidation in Quebec. It highlighted its expertise in turning around struggling stations. In addition, it stated that it could improve the operational efficiency of these stations by sharing facilities, services, and resources. According to Arsenal, the acquisition would also make it possible to add sports programming that would complement its current music programming, while strengthening its presence in the Gatineau, Montréal, and Québec markets.
19. Arsenal stated that the transaction would serve the public interest by ensuring the continued operation of three stations that might otherwise close. According to Arsenal, this transaction would help preserve the diversity of voices and local content in the markets served. It proposed its model focused on community radio, which relies on the pooling of resources and the expertise of its local staff (e.g., programming, local news, sales, and promotion), to provide programming that meets the needs of communities and to ensure the operational sustainability of the stations within its group.
20. Arsenal stated that employees at the stations involved in the transaction would be integrated into its organization and would benefit from an environment conducive to their development and growth.
21. Finally, Arsenal clarified that each station would continue to offer service tailored to the needs of its community. CKLX-FM would continue to feature primarily spoken word programming under the BPM Sports brand (talk shows, analysis, and sports news). As for CFTX-FM and CHXX-FM, they would offer a combination of sports programming, which would air during the week, and music programming, which would air in the evenings and on weekends, along with weekly blocks of local programming.

22. The Commission is of the view that the transaction is in the public interest, as it would ensure the survival of the stations that RNC wishes to divest itself of. The transaction involves two independent broadcasters, which also contributes to the diversity of voices in the market. Furthermore, given the Commission's decision, explained below, to deny the request for an exception from the requirement to pay tangible benefits, the transaction would generate tangible benefits, which would aid Canadian artists, the radio industry, and the broadcasting system as a whole.
23. In light of the above, the Commission finds that approval of this transaction is in the public interest.

Value of the transaction and tangible benefits

24. The Commission's approach is that the public interest is served by requiring that the person or the qualified corporation acquiring the assets and effective control make financial contributions to Canadian content development (CCD) that are proportionate to the size and nature of the transaction. These contributions are known as "tangible benefits." The Commission's policy on tangible benefits is set out in the Tangible Benefits Policy.² Tangible benefits serve the public interest because they increase the quantity and quality of Canadian programming and support the creation, distribution and promotion of such programming. Since the Commission does not solicit competing applications for changes to the ownership or effective control of broadcasting undertakings, the Commission requires that applicants propose tangible benefits when they seek the Commission's approval to change the effective control of radio and television programming services.
25. The amount of tangible benefits payable depends on the value of the transaction. In the case of radio stations, tangible benefits represent at a minimum 6% of the value of the transaction. The Commission looks at the value of the transaction as a whole, including the value of gross debt, working capital to be transferred at the close of the transaction, ancillary agreements, and any leases assumed by the purchaser for real property (buildings, studios and offices) and transmission facilities. The value of leases is calculated over a period of five years. These elements, if applicable, are added to the purchase price.
26. Arsenal proposed a value of the transaction of \$1,803,495. This amount includes the purchase price (\$1,450,000) and the total value of the leases payable over five years (\$353,495). No working capital would be transferred at closing, and Arsenal confirmed that it would not assume any debt or liabilities.
27. The Commission notes that the value of the transaction as proposed by the applicant is consistent with the Commission's general approach. In light of the above, the Commission finds that the value of the transaction is \$1,803,495, itemized as follows:

² Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2014-459.

Purchase price	\$1,450,000
Debt	\$0
Value for the assumed leases over five years	\$353,495
Working capital	\$0
Value of the transaction	\$1,803,495

Allocation of tangible benefits

28. As per the Revised Commercial Radio Policy³, tangible benefits amounts are to be paid over seven consecutive broadcasting years and be allocated as follows:

- 3% to the Canadian Starmaker Fund and Fonds RadioStar:
 - 60% to Canadian Starmaker Fund and 40% to Fonds RadioStar;
- 1.5% to FACTOR and Musicaction:
 - 60% to FACTOR and 40% to Musicaction;
- 1% to any eligible CCD initiative at the discretion of the purchaser; and
- 0.5% to the Community Radio Fund of Canada.

29. As per the Tangible Benefits Policy, the applicant can request an exception to the payment of tangible benefits. If an exception is requested, the exception must be made at the time of filing the application and should meet all of the following criteria:

- the undertaking to be acquired is not in its first licence term;
- the undertaking has suffered significant financial losses over an extended period of time (that is, for at least five consecutive years following the first licence term); and
- the purchaser demonstrates that there is a public interest either for the broadcasting system as a whole or the community served in maintaining a failing undertaking.

³ Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2022-332.

30. The Tangible Benefits Policy also states that the Commission may use its discretion at all times and that an exception will not necessarily be granted even if the criteria are met.

Position of the applicant

31. Arsenal requested an exception for the payment of tangible benefits, stating that the transaction satisfies all the criteria. Specifically, Arsenal indicated that:

- the stations are not in their first licence terms;
- the stations accumulated significant financial losses for five years;
- several initiatives have been taken to improve the stations' financial situation (such as experimenting with different station formats and investing substantial amounts in programming and marketing), yet despite this, the stations' profitability has not improved.

32. Arsenal stated that it considers the transaction is the last resort to prevent the stations from closing. Although Arsenal stated that it meets the criteria established by the Commission for an exception, it confirmed that it would accept a condition of service requiring the payment of tangible benefits amounting to up to 6% of the value of the transaction.

Commission's decision

33. When making a request for an exception to paying tangible benefits, the applicant must demonstrate that its application meets all three criteria set out at paragraph 61 of the Tangible Benefits Policy. Even if the criteria are met, the policy does not restrict the Commission's discretion to impose tangible benefits if other circumstances justify it.

34. The Commission notes that the stations CFTX-FM, CKLX-FM, and CHXX-FM were licensed in 2005, 2003, and 1995, respectively. The first criterion is therefore met.

35. With regard to the second criterion, the Commission notes that each of the stations has incurred significant financial losses over the past five consecutive years, well after the first licence term. Consequently, the Commission concludes that the second criterion is also met.

36. With regard to the third criterion, the Commission is of the view that Arsenal has demonstrated that this transaction would serve the public interest and that it could improve the economic viability of the stations. The Commission recognizes the unique format and the interest in the sports programming offered by the stations in their respective markets. The Commission also recognizes that, by entering into this transaction, Arsenal would be taking on a certain level of risk by acquiring these financially distressed companies, and that any firm commitments beyond existing commitments could be costly.

37. However, the Commission considers that Arsenal has not demonstrated that there is a public interest in continuing to operate the stations without providing tangible benefits.

38. The Commission notes that Arsenal has neither proposed to increase the level of local programming or news on the stations, nor proposed other benefits or commitments to offset the loss of financial contributions that would otherwise be invested in the Canadian broadcasting system. Furthermore, no firm commitments have been made to emerging artists or to additional local programming and local news beyond the current terms and conditions. Arsenal instead indicated that if the Commission denied its request for an exception to the payment of tangible benefits, the equivalent of the contribution amount could not be allocated to the development of sports news content or to ensuring the stations' long-term viability, which would delay the stations' return to a balanced budget.
39. Finally, the Commission notes that the tangible benefits amount to \$108,210, to be paid over seven consecutive broadcast years. Arsenal did not demonstrate that such payment would jeopardize its ability to bring the station into profitability. Further, the Commission notes that Arsenal confirmed its willingness to pay tangible benefits, should the Commission determine that such payment is warranted.
40. When reviewing requests for an exception to the allocation of tangible benefits, the Commission must balance the needs of communities served and other players in the broadcasting system. Tangible benefits represent a critical and significant source of funding for the Canadian broadcasting system. The Commission is of the view that approving the requested exception to the payment of tangible benefits could be detrimental to the beneficiaries of the independent funds as it would deprive the Canadian broadcasting system of important contributions that would not only benefit other players in the broadcasting system, but also the communities that the three stations serve. As a result of these circumstances and the fact that exceptions to the payment of tangible benefits should only be granted in exceptional cases, the Commission has determined to exercise its discretion and impose tangible benefits in accordance with the Tangible Benefits Policy.
41. In light of the above, the Commission finds that Arsenal should be required to allocate \$108,210 in tangible benefits, which is consistent with the Tangible Benefits Policy and Revised Commercial Radio Policy.
42. The modernized Act now includes express provisions relating to the imposition of expenditure requirements. As a result, tangible benefits are imposed by order made pursuant to subsection 11.1(2) of the Act. Accordingly, the Commission considers it appropriate to **order** Arsenal Media Inc. to allocate \$108,210 in tangible benefits, to be paid in equal instalments over seven consecutive broadcast years, consistent with the Tangible Benefits Policy and Revised Commercial Radio Policy.
43. Further, the Commission considers it appropriate to **order** Arsenal Media Inc. to report, as part of its Annual Return required under subsection 9(2) of the Regulations, on its progress in making these payments.

Regulatory requirements

Stations' compliance with regulatory obligations

44. In the case of an asset acquisition, the Commission examines the licensee's compliance with its regulatory obligations, particularly those relating to the filing of annual returns and contributions to CCD.
45. Having completed its review, the Commission concludes that the stations are in compliance with its regulatory obligations.

Programming

46. Local programming is important to the broadcasting system, and the Commission expects radio stations to reflect the communities they serve through the programming they broadcast. As an incentive to broadcast local programming, commercial FM radio stations that do not serve a single-station market can only solicit or accept local advertising if they devote at least one-third of their programming (equivalent to 42 hours weekly) to local programming, which can include both spoken word, such as news, weather, sports, and information, and musical content. A standard condition of service to that effect is set out in the appendix to Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2022-334.

Position of the applicant

47. Arsenal stated that it plans to broadcast 126 hours of programming per broadcast week and that it intends to air at least 42 hours of local programming. It confirmed its intention to maintain the current direction of the stations operated under the BPM Sports brand.
48. Arsenal added that CFTX-FM and CHXX-FM would operate under a hybrid model featuring both music and sports programming. On weekends and weeknights, CFTX-FM would broadcast country music, and CHXX-FM would broadcast adult pop music. It submitted that these music programs would be interspersed with sports news.
49. As for CKLX-FM, Arsenal indicated that it would be primarily spoken word and that music programming would air on Saturday and Sunday evenings.
50. Arsenal proposed dedicating the three stations' spoken-word programming to sports content, including interviews, discussions, analysis, and sports news aimed at a French-speaking audience. It added that during the week, CFTX-FM and CHXX-FM would broadcast sports programming produced live from CKLX-FM.
51. Arsenal stated that the sports content developed by CKLX-FM, which would be broadcast on the Gatineau and Donnacona stations (approximately 57 hours of programming per broadcast week), is relevant to listeners in these regions, as they are interested in the activities of professional teams based in Montréal and in the expertise of BPM Sports' hosts and contributors.

52. The stations' local programming would include sporting events taking place in the various regions, as well as interviews with amateur athletes from those regions. Arsenal emphasized that it plans to devote 2 hours to sports news broadcasts, of which 1 hour and 30 minutes would be devoted to local and regional sports news, 15 minutes to national sports news, and 15 minutes to international sports news.
53. In addition, Arsenal confirmed that, during each broadcast week, the stations would devote at least 5% of their music programming to songs by emerging Canadian artists and that, if this were to become a condition of service, it would comply with it.
54. Finally, Arsenal emphasized that it works closely with radio tracking companies to help emerging artists expand their audiences. It added that it would continue its work with these artists through on-air interviews and reports on its news platforms, as well as through partnerships with local performance venues.

Commission's decision

55. In recent decisions and processes, the Commission has reminded radio licensees that a station must incorporate into its local programming spoken word material of direct and particular interest to the communities served, and that this programming must include local news, weather, sports coverage, and the promotion of local activities and events. In addition, the Commission encourages licensees to ensure that a reasonable amount of daily local news and information is made available to these communities.
56. The Commission is of the view that the number of hours and minutes that Arsenal has proposed to devote to local programming and news, respectively, are appropriate.
57. In light of the above, the Commission finds that Arsenal's proposal meets the local programming and news requirements.

Licence terms

58. The last renewal processes for CKLX-FM as well as CHXX-FM and its transmitter CHXX-FM-1 took place in 2017, following which their licences were renewed until 31 August 2024, in Broadcasting Decisions 2017-222 and 2017-390, respectively.
59. The last renewal process for CFTX-FM and its transmitter CFTX-FM-1 took place in 2016, following which its licence was renewed until 31 August 2023, in Broadcasting Decision 2016-250.
60. The licences for these stations and their transmitters were all renewed administratively until 31 August 2027, in Broadcasting Decision 2025-136.
61. Under paragraph 9(1)(b) of the Act, the Commission has the authority to issue a licence for an indefinite term. In Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2025-265, the Commission introduced

indefinite broadcasting licences for radio stations so that licensees would no longer need to submit renewal applications.

62. Arsenal indicated that being issued licences with indefinite terms for CFTX-FM, CKLX-FM, and CHXX-FM would reduce its administrative burden, simplify management, and allow it to devote time, energy, and money to radio operations. The Commission has not received any interventions in regard to this matter.
63. In light of the above and consistent with the Commission's determination in Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2025-265, the Commission considers it appropriate to issue new indefinite broadcasting licences terms for the above-mentioned stations.

Licence amendment for CHXX-FM Donnacona

64. Arsenal requested an amendment to the licence for CHXX-FM. More specifically, it proposed removing the following conditions of service, relating to the maintenance of a studio in Donnacona and the production of local programming for the Portneuf region, which are set out in the appendix to Broadcasting Decision 2006-349:

3. The licensee shall maintain a studio in Donnacona to ensure local coverage and a local presence.

4. During each broadcast week, the licensee shall broadcast no less than 14 hours of local programming produced at its Donnacona studio and targeting residents of the Portneuf area.

Position of parties

65. Arsenal noted that the launch of CHOC-FM has changed the radio landscape in this region. It argued that the Portneuf Regional County Municipality (RCM) does not have the capacity to accommodate two radio stations within the same territory and that removing these conditions of service would enable the economic revival of CHXX-FM.
66. Arsenal highlighted that in 2017, the Commission had denied RNC's application to amend the licence of CHXX-FM by removing conditions of service related to maintaining a studio in Donnacona and producing local programming for the Portneuf region. It added that market conditions in Portneuf have changed because, since 2020, the region has been served by CHOC-FM, which broadcasts 126 hours of local programming per broadcast week.
67. Arsenal also filed an application (2025-0586-8) on behalf of Média ClassiQ to obtain authorization to acquire the assets of the French-language commercial FM radio station CJSQ-FM Québec (Quebec). It indicated that it hopes to relaunch CHXX-FM by operating it under a hybrid model combining music and sports programming, while aiming for rapid profitability, thanks in particular to the cost savings that would result from potential synergies with CJSQ-FM. It submitted that these savings would result from operating the two stations at the

same location, sharing CJSQ-FM's facilities, and combining certain services, such as sales and technical support.

68. Arsenal stated that CHXX-FM serves the greater Québec area, noting that the Commission acknowledged this in Broadcasting Decision 2006-349. It added that the station's rebroadcasting transmitter would ensure good coverage of the Portneuf region. According to Arsenal, current technology means that a radio station's service coverage is no longer limited by the geographic location of studios. In addition, Arsenal confirmed that the studio relocation would not result in any job losses.
69. In its intervention in comment, 11733630 Canada, the licensee of CHOC-FM, which serves the Portneuf RCM, stated that it agreed with the amendment to CHXX-FM's licence. It noted that it shares Arsenal's view: namely, that the Portneuf market cannot support two local radio stations producing more than 42 hours of local programming and owned by different owners who are competing in the current environment.
70. 11733630 Canada emphasized that, since its station began broadcasting in the Portneuf RCM, the conditions of service currently imposed on CHXX-FM places the station in an ambiguous situation. In its view, CHXX-FM must provide both local programming geared toward the listeners in the Portneuf region and local programming geared toward those in the City of Québec. 11733630 Canada believes that the Commission should address this issue by issuing a licence that better reflects the actual nature of CHXX-FM's service, namely, serving the Québec market.
71. In addition, 11733630 Canada emphasized that approving Arsenal's application to remove the conditions of service would strengthen the presence of its own station, which offers entirely local programming in the Portneuf region. It added that CHXX-FM's new licence should be amended to read CHXX-FM Québec instead of CHXX-FM Donnacona.

Issues

72. In light of the above, the Commission considers that it should address the following issues:
 - whether Arsenal has demonstrated a compelling economic need for the requested amendment;
 - whether approval of the application would have an undue economic impact on other incumbent stations; and
 - whether approval of the application would have an impact on local programming.

Economic need

73. Arsenal stated that CHXX-FM has been experiencing significant financial difficulties for the past five years. It added that the various measures RNC had taken to improve the financial situation of the stations involved in the transaction have not worked.
74. The Commission states that, although Arsenal noted CHXX-FM's financial difficulties, it did not demonstrate the impact that the requested licence amendment might have on the station's situation. Nevertheless, since the Commission approved the other application filed by Arsenal to acquire CJSQ-FM (Broadcasting Decision 2026-164), it is of the view that removing condition of service 3 would allow Arsenal to relocate the station's studio to the facilities of CJSQ-FM in Québec and, consequently, to benefit from synergies between the two stations through the sharing of resources. The Commission considers that these synergies could help Arsenal achieve cost savings, particularly in the areas of facilities, administration, sales, and technical operations. As a result, these savings could improve the financial sustainability of CHXX-FM.
75. In light of the above, the Commission finds that Arsenal has demonstrated a compelling economic need for the requested change.

Economic impact on other incumbent stations

76. Given that CHXX-FM is already serving the Québec market with similar programming, the Commission concludes that approval of the licence amendment application would not have an undue economic impact on incumbent stations in that market.

Impact on local programming

77. In Broadcasting Decision 2006-349, the Commission approved two applications from Radio Nord Communications Inc. (Radio Nord). One of them sought to remove the condition of service for CKNU-FM Donnacona (Quebec) [the call sign has since been replaced by CHXX-FM], which limited advertising solicitation to the Portneuf region, and the other sought to modify its authorized coverage area to include the City of Québec. In that decision, the Commission stated that it considered it "important that the station continue serving its primary market in Portneuf appropriately."
78. In response to the Commission's concerns regarding the priority Radio Nord intended to give to its listeners in Portneuf, during the public hearing, Radio Nord committed, as part of its conditions of service, to maintaining a local presence in Portneuf with local studios and to devoting a minimum of 14 hours per broadcast week to local programs produced at its Donnacona studio and aimed at the Portneuf-area audience.
79. Consequently, the conditions of service set out in the appendix to Broadcasting Decision 2006-349 were imposed on CHXX-FM in order to fulfill the commitments made during the public hearing.

80. In Broadcasting Decisions 2013-650 and 2017-390, the Commission denied applications to remove the same conditions of service as those covered in this application. These denials were explained at the time by the fact that CHXX-FM was the only radio station offering truly local programming to listeners in Portneuf, its initial primary market.
81. In Broadcasting Decision 2019-355, the Commission authorized the operation of CHOC-FM in the Portneuf RCM. It noted that the proposed station would contribute to local representation and programming diversity in the Portneuf RCM market.
82. The Commission notes that with the arrival of CHOC-FM, which offers local programming entirely geared toward listeners in the Portneuf RCM, CHXX-FM is no longer the only broadcasting service required to provide local programming specifically tailored to listeners in that region.
83. The Commission also notes that its above-mentioned concerns⁴ regarding the priority that the licensee of CHXX-FM gives to its listeners in Portneuf no longer apply, because if it were to approve the requested amendment, listeners in the Portneuf RCM would continue to benefit from a local presence and local programming specifically tailored to their needs, since they are also served by CHOC-FM.
84. In addition, the Commission notes that CHXX-FM must continue to serve the Portneuf region. In fact, the removal of the conditions of service is not intended to alter CHXX-FM's authorized market and does not allow it to abandon the Portneuf region market in order to serve only the Québec market. The station would operate as a hybrid of music and sports programming, and its lineup must include local content that is of particular interest to the communities served by the station, namely Québec and Portneuf. Consequently, the Commission is of the view that listeners in the Portneuf region will continue to be served by several stations in the Québec market and by CHXX-FM, while also having access to CHOC-FM, a broadcasting service operating in their region that is required to provide them with local programming tailored to their needs.
85. With regard to the comment submitted by 11733630 Canada concerning the need to amend the licence to reflect the fact that CHXX-FM serves the Québec market instead, the Commission is of the view that this request cannot be considered in the context of the present application.
86. In light of the above, the Commission concludes that approval of the application to amend the licence, specifically the request to remove the conditions of service referred to in paragraph 64 of this decision, should not have any impact on the local programming offerings in the Portneuf region market.
87. Nevertheless, to ensure the continuation of local programming for listeners in the Portneuf region, the Commission considers it appropriate to include a requirement that CHXX-FM incorporate

⁴ Broadcasting Decisions 2006-349, 2013-650 and 2017-390.

into its local programming content that is of direct interest to listeners in the Portneuf region, rather than focusing solely on the Québec region.

Conclusion

88. In light of all of the above, the Commission approves, by majority decision, the application from Arsenal, on behalf of RNC, for authority to change the ownership and effective control of the French-language commercial FM radio programming undertakings operating the radio stations CFTX-FM Gatineau and its transmitter CFTX-FM-1 Gatineau (Buckingham); CKLX-FM Montréal; as well as CHXX-FM Donnacona and its transmitter CHXX-FM-1 Sainte-Croix-de-Lotbinière, Quebec.
89. The Commission also approves Arsenal's request to remove conditions of service 3 and 4 imposed on CHXX FM, which require the licensee to maintain a studio in Donnacona and broadcast a minimum of 14-hours of local programming intended for listeners in the Portneuf region.
90. The Commission will issue new broadcasting licences to Arsenal to allow it to continue the operation of these undertakings.
91. Upon surrender of the licences currently held by RNC, the Commission will issue new broadcasting licences for indefinite terms. This licensee will be subject to the terms and **conditions of service** set out in the appendix to this decision.
92. The Commission **directs** Arsenal Media Inc. to notify the Commission of the close of the transaction within 30 days of close.
93. This decision is to be appended to each licence.

Conditions of service

94. Given that the applicant proposed to operate CKLX-FM, CFTX-FM, and CHXX-FM, as well as their transmitters under the same terms and conditions as those in effect under the current licences, with the exception of the removal of the conditions of service mentioned in paragraph 64 of this decision, the Commission makes the following orders consistent with the existing conditions of service as amended by this decision.
95. The Commission notes that it updated the standard conditions of service for commercial FM radio stations in Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2022-334. As a result, the Commission considers it appropriate to require Arsenal to adhere to these updated standard conditions so that those for the various stations are consistent with the conditions of service for other FM stations.
96. 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 that the licensee adhere to these requirements as conditions of service.

97. Accordingly, pursuant to subsection 9.1(1) of the Act, the Commission **orders** Arsenal Media Inc. 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.
98. Further, pursuant to subsection 9.1(1) of the Act, the Commission **orders** Arsenal Media Inc. to comply with the requirements related to the implementation of the National Public Alerting System, as set out in section 16(2) of the Regulations, and in Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2014-444 and Broadcasting Orders 2014-445, 2014-446, 2014-447 and 2014-448.
99. Further, pursuant to subsection 11.1(2) of the Act, the Commission **orders** Arsenal Media Inc. to pay tangible benefits in the amount of \$108,210, to be paid in equal instalments over seven consecutive broadcast years and allocated in a manner consistent with the Tangible Benefits Policy and the Revised Commercial Radio Policy. In addition, pursuant to subsection 9.1(1) of the Act, the Commission **orders** Arsenal Media Inc. to file all proof of payment and eligibility regarding these contributions each year in a form deemed acceptable by the Commission consistent with subsection 9(2) of the Regulations.
100. The specifics of these orders will be reflected in the conditions of service for the undertaking.
101. 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 prohibition on transfer. The licensee shall, therefore, also adhere to any such requirements set out in the broadcasting licences for the undertakings.
102. The terms as well as the conditions of service are set out in the appendix to this decision.
103. 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 the applicant 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

104. Pursuant to section 22 of the Act, the broadcasting licences will cease to have any force or effect if the broadcasting certificates issued by the Department of Industry (also known as Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada) lapses.

Local news

105. 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.
106. 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 stations, in their 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.

National Public Alerting System

107. The Commission has implemented obligations in respect of 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 stations as well as that of any rebroadcasting transmitter that may appear on the licence for those stations.

Employment equity

108. Because this licensee is subject to the *Employment Equity Act* and files reports concerning employment equity with the Department of Employment and Social Development (also known as Employment and Social Development Canada), its employment equity practices are not examined by the Commission.
109. 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

Appendix to Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2026-172

Terms, conditions of service and expectations for the French-language commercial FM radio programming undertakings CFTX-FM Gatineau and its transmitter CFTX-FM-1 Gatineau (Buckingham); CKLX-FM Montréal; and CHXX-FM Donnacona and its transmitter CHXX-FM-1 Sainte-Croix-de-Lotbinière, Quebec

Terms

The licences are granted for indefinite terms.

Conditions of service applicable to all stations

1. The licensee shall adhere to the conditions 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, as well as 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 shall adhere to the conditions of service set out in Appendix 1 of *Modernization of radio processes*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2025-265, 10 October 2025, and in *Modernization of radio processes – Finalization of conditions of service*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2025-265-1, 9 January 2026.
4. In order to fulfill its commitment relating to tangible benefits, the licensee shall expend, in equal payments over seven consecutive broadcast years and by no later than **31 August** of each year, a total amount of \$108,210, allocated as set out at paragraphs 4 and 48 of *Simplified approach to tangible benefits and determining the value of the transaction*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2014-459, 5 September 2014 and at paragraph 160 of *Revised Commercial Radio Policy*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2022-332, 7 December 2022.

The licensee shall file all proof of payment and eligibility regarding these contributions each year in a form deemed acceptable by the Commission consistent with subsection 9(2) of the *Radio Regulations, 1986*.

5. The licensee shall implement the National Public Alerting System (NPAS) 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.

Conditions of service applicable to CKLX-FM Montréal, Quebec

6. The licensee shall adhere to the conditions 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, with the exception of condition 7, as well as to the requirements set out in the broadcasting licence for the undertaking.
7. The station shall be operated within the specialty format as defined in *A Review of Certain Matters Concerning Radio*, Public Notice CRTC 1995-60, 21 April 1995, and in *Revised content categories and sub-categories for radio*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2010-819, 5 November 2010.
8. The licensee shall devote at least 50% of the programming broadcast each broadcast week to programs drawn from content category 1 (Spoken word).

Conditions of service applicable to CHXX-FM Donnacona and its transmitter CHXX-FM-1 Sainte-Croix-de-Lotbinière, Quebec

9. 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:
 - (a) devote, in each broadcast week, at least 45% of its musical selections from content category 2 (Popular Music) to Canadian selections broadcast in their entirety; and
 - (b) devote, between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. from Monday to Friday of the same broadcast week, at least 45% of its musical selections from content category 2 to Canadian selections broadcast in their entirety.

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.

Expectations applicable to all stations

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.

Canadian emerging artists

Consistent with the Commission's determination set out in Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2022-332, the Commission expects the licensee 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. The licensee should report annually on how it has met this expectation, including the percentage of selections from Canadian emerging artists 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 definition of "Canadian emerging artist" is the same as that set out in paragraph 346 of Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2022-332.

Indigenous musical selections

Consistent with the Commission's determination set out in 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 CRTC 2022-332 to determine whether a musical selection can be considered an Indigenous musical selection.

Expectation applicable to CHXX-FM Donnacona and its transmitter CHXX-FM-1 Sainte-Croix-de-Lotbinière, Quebec

Local programming produced for the Portneuf region

The Commission expects the licensee, in its local programming, to incorporate spoken word material of direct and particular relevance to the Portneuf-region listeners located within the authorized market, rather than focusing solely on the Québec region. The Commission also expects that programming to include, namely, local news, sports coverage, and the promotion of activities, events, and athletes of that region.

Dissenting opinion of Commissioner Ellen C. Desmond, K.C.

1. The Commission received an application from Arsenal Media Inc. (Arsenal) on behalf of RNC MEDIA Inc. (RNC) requesting authority to change the ownership and control of three French-language commercial FM radio programming undertakings in the Province of Quebec, namely CFTX-FM Gatineau and its transmitter CFTX-FM-1 Gatineau (Buckingham); CKLX-FM Montréal; and CHXX-FM Donnacona and its transmitter CHXX-FM-1 Sainte-Croix-de-Lotbinière, Quebec.
2. The majority has approved this asset transfer application and has approved the issuance of new licenses to continue the operation of the stations. I agree with this approval and find that the transaction is in the public interest. This transfer of ownership will ensure the continued existence of three stations that might otherwise cease operations. The transaction will preserve the diversity of voices in these markets and Arsenal will be able to continue offering services tailored to the needs of each community.
3. However, with the greatest respect to my colleagues, I disagree that the applicant should be required to pay tangible benefits in connection with this transaction. My reasoning is provided below.

Tangible Benefits Policy

4. When a radio licence is first issued for a given frequency, it is typically awarded by competitive selection. Thereafter, transfers are permitted without returning the licence to a competitive process provided “tangible benefits” are payable. These benefits, in the normal course, are set at 6% of the value of the transaction. They are intended to benefit the broadcasting system, including by supporting the careers of Canadian artists in the creation and promotion of their music.
5. At the same time, there are instances where an undertaking may be granted an exception from the payment of tangible benefits. The Commission’s Tangible Benefits Policy¹ provides for such an exception when the applicant meets the following criteria, also set out in paragraph 29 of the majority decision:
 - the undertaking to be acquired is not in its first licence term;
 - the undertaking has suffered significant financial losses over an extended period of time (that is, for at least five consecutive years following the first licence term); and

¹ Broadcasting Regulatory Policy 2014-459.

- the purchaser demonstrates that there is a public interest either for the broadcasting system as a whole or the community served in maintaining a failing undertaking.
6. The Tangible Benefits Policy also states that the Commission may use its discretion at all times and that an exception will not necessarily be granted even if the criteria are met.
 7. Each of these criteria and the exercise of discretion is addressed below.

Licence term

8. The three stations, namely CFTX-FM, CKLX-FM and CHXX-FM were licensed in 2005, 2003, and 1995, respectively. Each of the stations have been operating now for in excess of 20 years. There is no issue that the first criterion for an exception has been met.

Significant financial losses

9. The Tangible Benefits Policy also provides that a radio station must have suffered “significant losses over an extended period of time (that is, for at least five consecutive years following the first license term).”
10. Again, the applicant has satisfied this criterion. Each of these three stations has incurred significant financial losses, well after their first license term. Despite the fact that RNC is an experienced and well-established Canadian broadcasting company and has made extended efforts to improve the health of these undertakings, these stations have not been profitable for some time.

Serving the public interest

11. Finally, in seeking an exception, the applicant must demonstrate that there is a public interest either for the broadcasting system as a whole or the community served in maintaining the failing undertaking.
12. The majority was not satisfied that the applicant had met this criterion. They specifically state, in part, at paragraphs 38 and 39:
 38. The Commission notes that Arsenal has neither proposed to increase the level of local programming or news on the stations, nor proposed other benefits or commitments to offset the loss of financial contributions that would otherwise be invested in the Canadian broadcasting system. Furthermore, no firm commitments have been made to emerging artists or to additional local programming and local news beyond the current terms and conditions (...)

39.(...) Arsenal did not demonstrate that such payment would jeopardize its ability to bring the station into profitability. Further, the Commission notes that Arsenal confirmed its willingness to pay tangible benefits, should the Commission determine that such payment is warranted.

13. With the greatest respect to my colleagues, I find this analysis of public interest to be limited in scope. Determining what is in the “public interest” permits consideration of many factors and allows for discretion but also demands a balanced view.
14. It is correct that Arsenal did not offer to increase its programming commitments, beyond the current terms and conditions; a factor it addressed in its submissions. It is also true that, if directed, Arsenal will pay the tangible benefits to finalize this transaction. It will not withdraw from the transaction, if its request for relief is not approved.
15. Yet, the facts are such that Arsenal specifically agreed to purchase these stations to prevent their closure. The applicant is attempting to ensure the survival of these stations in an environment where radio broadcasting is in decline and is dealing with significant financial challenges. Many stations across Canada are operating at a loss as digital streaming captures more and more advertising dollars. Many stations have closed their doors, leaving communities without local radio, local news and without a venue for new and emerging artists.
16. While the extent of the financial losses that RCN has incurred is confidential, suffice it to say that Arsenal will be taking on a financial risk by acquiring these distressed operations. RCN itself undertook several initiatives to improve the stations’ financial situation, including injecting considerable funds into programming and marketing, but it was unable to restore the stations’ profitability. These stations are in a fragile state and Arsenal specifically stated that the payment of tangible benefits would delay the stations’ return to a balanced budget.
17. Arsenal has committed to providing programming that meets the tailored needs of these communities and has committed to integrate the existing employees into its organization. It is an independent broadcaster and will continue to ensure the diversity of voices in the marketplace. These are all benefits that must be considered in the analysis of public interest.
18. Moreover, my colleagues have specifically concluded that the transaction itself is in the public interest. If the majority is able to conclude that the public interest would be served by the stations’ continued operation (with which I agree) there is clearly a public interest in maintaining them both for the broadcasting system as a whole and for the French-language communities they serve.
19. In the context of the application and in the context of the financial environment in which radio broadcasting is operating, the Commission should be encouraging good-faith efforts to sustain local stations that serve their communities.

20. In my view this third criterion has been satisfied, and the Commission should exercise its discretion to provide Arsenal with an exception from the payment of tangible benefits. Doing so will allow Arsenal to invest in these stations, and bring them back to a profitable state, which will, in turn, ensure their long-term viability, and provide benefits to the community as a whole.

Related documents

- *CJSQ-FM Québec – Change in ownership and effective control*, Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2026-164, 8 July 2026
- *Modernization of radio processes*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2025-265, 10 October 2025, as amended by *Modernization of radio processes – Finalization of conditions of service*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2025-265-1, 9 January 2026
- *Various radio programming undertakings – Administrative renewals*, Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2025-136, 11 June 2025
- *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
- *French-language commercial FM radio station in Saint-Raymond-de-Portneuf*, Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2019-355, 25 October 2019
- *CHXX-FM Donnacona and its transmitter CHXX-FM-1 Sainte-Croix-de-Lotbinière – Licence renewal and amendment*, Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2017-390, 30 octobre 2017
- *CKXO-FM Chibougamau and CKLX-FM Montréal – Licence renewals*, Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2017-222, 28 June 2017
- *Various commercial radio stations – Licence renewals*, Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2016-250, 30 June 2016
- *Simplified approach to tangible benefits and determining the value of the transaction*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2014-459, 5 September 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
- *CHXX-FM Donnacona and its transmitter CHXX-FM-1 Sainte-Croix-de-Lotbinière – Licence renewal*, Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2013-650, 4 December 2013
- *New service objectives for the processing of broadcasting and telecommunications applications as of 1 April 2011*, Broadcasting and Telecom Information Bulletin CRTC 2011-222, 1 April 2011

- *Revised content categories and subcategories for radio*, Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC 2010-819, 5 November 2010
- *A guide to the CRTC application process for changes in effective control and certain transfers of shares of broadcasting undertakings as well as for the acquisition of assets of broadcasting undertakings – Change in the manner of issuing related information bulletins*, Broadcasting Information Bulletin CRTC 2008-8-2, 6 December 2013
- *CKNU-FM Donnacona and CKNU-FM-1 Sainte-Croix-de-Lotbinière - Licence renewal and amendment*, Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2006-349, 10 August 2006
- *A Review of Certain Matters Concerning Radio*, Public Notice CRTC 1995-60, 21 April 1995
- *Implementation of an employment equity policy*, Public Notice CRTC 1992-59, 1 September 1992