

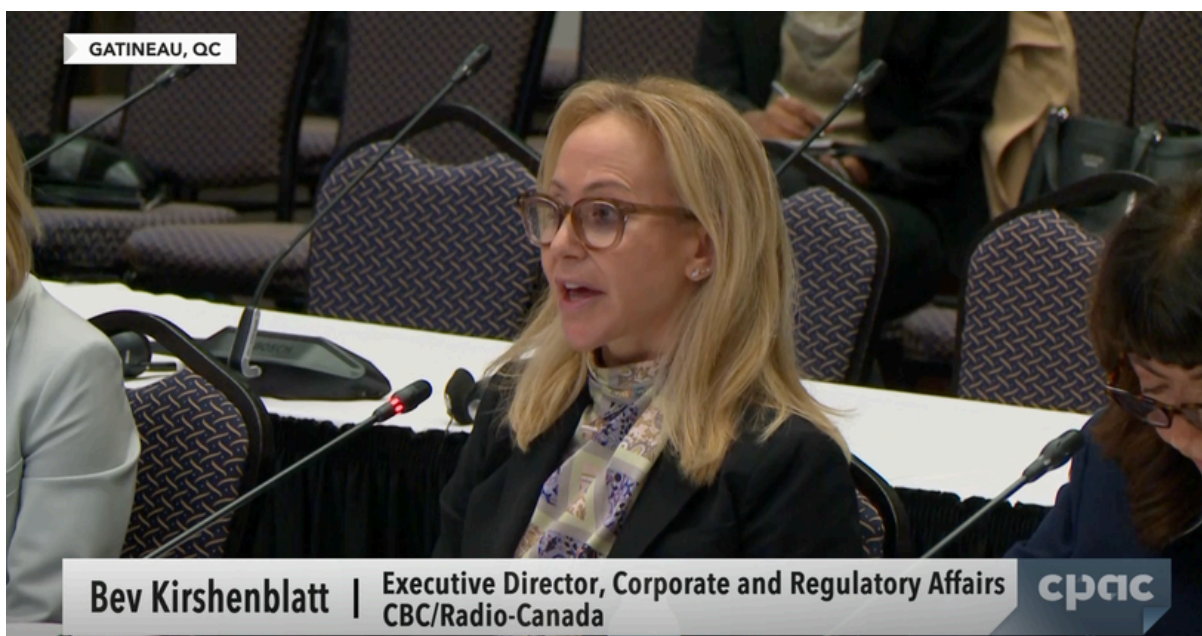
BSO Report:



Stands Firm on IP and Canadian Control at CRTC CanCon Hearing

"The streamers have benefited enormously from the Canadian system, now it's time for them to contribute back."

- Bev Kirshenblatt, ED of Corporate and Regulatory Affairs



As the CRTC continues its high-stakes consultation on defining Canadian content, **CBC/Radio-Canada** has taken a clear stand: **Canadian programs must remain in Canadian hands**. Appearing before the Commission on **May 26**, the national public broadcaster reiterated its support for a point system tied to key creative positions, strong Canadian ownership of intellectual property (IP), and a firm rejection of proposals that would loosen those standards to attract foreign financing.

"We can't rely on foreign undertakings to tell our stories, to sustain our cultural identity, or to deliver our news," said Barb Williams, EVP of CBC, during opening remarks. "We're very capable of doing this on our own and making great, great projects."

Throughout their presentation and the extensive Q&A, CBC/Radio-Canada emphasized that maintaining full Canadian ownership and creative control is not a barrier to international success. Instead, it's a strength.



Referencing high-profile co-productions like *North of North*, a collaboration with APTN and Netflix, Williams and Lisa Clarkson, CBC's ED of Business, Rights and Production Sustainability, stressed that the broadcaster has managed to bring in foreign partners on over 38 drama projects in the last five years, without giving up Canadian IP.

"These were all 100% Canadian-owned productions," said Clarkson. "The foreign partners already get substantial benefits—international rights, wide windows, and significant financial returns—while contributing only 20-50% of the budget. Removing Canadian ownership as a requirement only weakens our leverage unnecessarily."

CBC/Radio-Canada voiced support for the Commission's proposed update to the points system—from 6 out of 10 to 9 out of 15—but with key caveats. The broadcaster argued that certain roles, including the director and writer, must be filled by Canadians to maintain creative integrity. They also backed the requirement that a minimum of 60% of key creative roles be Canadian.



On the contentious question of the showrunner role, they agreed with other stakeholders who argued against making it mandatory across the board, citing its specificity to English-language episodic series, but said that if included, it must be a Canadian-held position.

When asked about their unique role within the ecosystem, CBC/Radio-Canada made it clear that they are not simply *“gap-fillers”* for market failures. While they accept their mandate to deliver underserved content, such as local news and children’s programming, they warned against regulatory frameworks that offload responsibility onto public broadcasters alone.

“Everyone has to participate,” said Williams. *“We straddle both worlds—serving the public interest while competing for audience—and the system needs to reflect that balance.”*

CBC/Radio-Canada stopped short of offering a dollar figure but firmly endorsed mandatory contributions from streamers, with a preference for those contributions to be directed to third-party funds. They argued that this is the most impactful way to support sustainable production, especially in a globalized market.

Screenshots from CPAC broadcast

Photos from cbc.ca

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About the Black Screen Office (BSO)

The Black Screen Office helps build a screen industry free of anti-Black racism by working with industry decision-makers to change practices and build systems for accountability. It directly catalyzes the production of Black-led content and supports the career advancement of Black professionals.

About the Black Screen Office Fund

The Black Screen Office Fund aims to provide sustainable financial support for Black-led content creation and to foster the development of skilled Black talent in the Canadian screen industry. Launching on September 1, 2024, the BSOF is committed to transforming the landscape of Canadian media.

For more information: Black Screen Office, info@bso-ben.ca

BSO in residence at CBC – Toronto Broadcast Centre, 25 John St., Suite 6C300
Toronto, Ontario M5V 3G6, Canada