



Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2006-176

Ottawa, 28 April 2006

**John S. Panikkar, on behalf of a corporation to be incorporated
Across Canada**

*Application 2005-1122-1
Public Hearing at Calgary, Alberta
21 February 2006*

MeridianHD – Category 2 specialty service

*In this decision, the Commission **approves** an application for a broadcasting licence to operate a new Category 2 specialty programming undertaking.*

The application

1. The Commission received an application by John S. Panikkar, on behalf of a corporation to be incorporated, for a broadcasting licence to operate a national, English-language Category 2¹ high definition (HD) specialty programming undertaking to be known as MeridianHD.
2. The applicant proposed to offer an HD programming service that would consist of programs dedicated exclusively to the exploration of geography, people, places and cultures. The programming would focus on the roots of human development as well as teachings from other cultures and traditions in Canada and around the world. It would also focus on what impact human behaviour has on the natural environment and how the natural world affects human ritual and culture. The proposed service would not offer celebrity biographies or staged events. All of the programming would be drawn from the following categories, as set out in Schedule 1 to the *Specialty Services Regulations, 1990*: 2(a) Analysis and interpretation; 2(b) Long-form documentary; 5(b) Informal education/Recreation and leisure; 7(d) Theatrical feature films aired on TV; 7(g) Other drama; 11 General entertainment and human interest; 12 Interstitials; 13 Public service announcements; and 14 Infomercials, promotional and corporate videos.
3. The applicant proposed that no more than 10% of all programming broadcast during the broadcast week would be drawn from category 7(d) Theatrical feature films aired on TV. The applicant also proposed that all HD programming would be produced in the wide screen, 16:9 aspect ratio.
4. The Commission received interventions in support of this application.

¹ The Category 2 services are defined in *Introductory statement – Licensing of new digital pay and specialty services*, Public Notice CRTC 2000-171, 14 December 2000.

Commission's analysis and determination

5. In *Call for comments on a proposed framework for the licensing and distribution of high definition pay and specialty services*, Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2004-58, 6 August 2004 (Public Notice 2004-58), the Commission stated that, “during the transition period, the Commission would continue to consider applications for licences to provide new high definition services. Such applications would, as now, be assessed in accordance with the Commission’s current practices and policies, including those regarding market entry, ownership, licensing and programming, as well as any policies ultimately adopted with regard to minimum amounts of high definition programming.”
6. The Commission notes that no interventions in opposition to this application were submitted by analog pay or specialty or Category 1 services.
7. The Commission is satisfied that the application is in conformity with all applicable terms and conditions announced in *Introductory statement – Licensing of new digital pay and specialty services – Corrected Appendix 2*, Public Notice CRTC 2000-171-1, 6 March 2001 (Public Notice 2000-171-1). Accordingly, the Commission **approves** the application by John S. Panikkar, on behalf of a corporation to be incorporated, for a broadcasting licence to operate the national, English-language Category 2 high definition specialty programming undertaking, MeridianHD.
8. The licence will expire 31 August 2012, and will be subject to the **conditions** set out in Public Notice 2000-171-1, as well as to the **conditions** set out in the appendix to this decision.

Issuance of the licence

9. A licence will be issued once the applicant has satisfied the Commission, with supporting documentation, that the following requirements have been met:
 - an eligible Canadian corporation has been incorporated in accordance with the application in all material respects;
 - the applicant has entered into a distribution agreement with at least one licensed distributor; and
 - the applicant has informed the Commission in writing that it is prepared to commence operations. The undertaking must be operational at the earliest possible date and in any event no later than 36 months from the date of this decision, unless a request for an extension of time is approved by the Commission before 28 April 2009. In order to ensure that such a request is processed in a timely manner, it should be submitted at least 60 days before that date.

Secretary General

This decision is to be appended to the licence. It is available in alternative format upon request, and may also be examined in PDF format or in HTML at the following Internet site: <http://www.crtc.gc.ca>

Appendix to Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2006-176

Conditions of licence

1. The licence will be subject to the conditions set out in *Introductory statement – Licensing of new digital pay and specialty services – Corrected Appendix 2*, Public Notice CRTC 2000-171-1, 6 March 2001.
2. The licensee shall provide a national, English-language Category 2 high definition specialty programming service devoted to programs dedicated exclusively to the exploration of geography, people, places and cultures. The programming shall focus on the roots of human development as well as teachings from other cultures and traditions in Canada and around the world. It shall also focus on what impact human behaviour has on the natural environment and how the natural world affects human ritual and culture.
3. The programming shall be drawn exclusively from the following categories, as set out in Schedule I to the *Specialty Services Regulations, 1990*, as amended from time to time:
 - 2 (a) Analysis and interpretation
 - (b) Long-form documentary
 - 5 (b) Informal education/Recreation and leisure
 - 7 (d) Theatrical feature films aired on TV
 - (g) Other drama
 - 11 General entertainment and human interest
 - 12 Interstitials
 - 13 Public service announcements
 - 14 Infomercials, promotional and corporate videos
4. Not more than 10% of all programming broadcast during each broadcast week shall be drawn from category 7(d) Theatrical feature films aired on TV.
5. The applicant shall ensure that all high-definition programming is produced in the wide screen, 16:9 aspect ratio.

For the purposes of the conditions of this licence, including condition of licence no.1, *broadcast day* refers to the 24-hour period beginning each day at 6 a.m., or any other period approved by the Commission.