



## ***Stingray Radio Best Practices for Cultural Diversity***

### Introduction

Stingray Radio (Stingray) is committed to reflecting the diverse communities we serve. Our strategy is to advance the reflection and promotion of talent from diverse backgrounds including ethnocultural groups, Indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities. Our approach is based on the development and implementation of a wide range of best practices with an emphasis on music and spoken-word programming, human resources initiatives, community outreach, and accountability and measurement.

Stingray is committed to achieving high standards for our broadcasts. As a member of the Canadian Broadcast Standards Council (CBSC), Stingray adheres to a number of industry content codes relating to programming and advertising material including the *CAB Code of Ethics*, *RTNDA (Journalistic) Code of Ethics* and the *CAB Equitable Portrayal Code* and regularly reviews these codes to ensure they meet evolving community standards and expectations for programming, including the fair and accurate portrayal of ethnocultural minorities, Indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities. Participation by our senior executive personnel on CBSC panels serve to further advance the standards established for the broadcast industry.

In addition, the music content provided by Stingray is very racially and culturally diverse with most radio stations providing a rich menu of racially and culturally diverse music programming in a multitude of formats.

Notwithstanding, Stingray recognizes that the continued selection and promotion of music and spoken-word talent/programming from ethnocultural minorities, Indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities contribute to the better reflection of diversity in commercial radio. Stingray also recognizes that Canadian Content Development contributions can have a positive impact on the advancement of diversity in private radio. For these reasons, Stingray also encourages other industry stakeholders including regional and national music associations and music funding agencies to develop strategies for talent development in ethnocultural, Indigenous and disability communities.

In order to situation Stingray's best practices within the operational and market realities of the sector, they are organized in the following nine areas:

- 1) Industry Commitment
- 2) Application and Implementation
- 3) Corporate Accountability
- 4) Recruitment, Hiring, Retention

- 5) Internship, Mentoring and Scholarships
- 6) Programming
- 7) News and Information Programming
- 8) Community & Industry Outreach
- 9) Internal Communications

## 1) Industry Commitment

### **Best Practices**

- 1.1 Stingray recognizes the importance of the provision of programming at the local and regional level that responds to listeners' needs and interests and includes the reflection of Canada's diversity on air.
- 1.2 Stingray is committed to achieving diversity both on-air and within the industry's workforce by:
  - a) Creating and applying best practices and practical initiatives to improve the representation and ensure the fair, accurate and non-stereotypical portrayal and reflection of Canada's diversity on radio;
  - b) Ensuring an accepting, respectful and inclusive work environment, a representative workforce and a workplace where all employees experience fair treatment and equal opportunity for career advancement;
  - c) Identifying and removing barriers to access and employment within the broadcasting system; and
  - d) By identifying the business opportunities associated with fostering an inclusive and diverse workforce and airing programming that attracts diverse audiences.

## 2) Application and Measurement

Given the diversity of the private radio broadcasting industry itself, it is incumbent upon Stingray to develop the tools that will be most relevant for the company, and to determine the most appropriate and effective ways to use these tools. Our Best Practices apply both at the corporate level and at the individual station level for all stations operated by Stingray. All General Managers will be accountable for the application of our Best Practices for stations within their responsibility.

## **Best Practices**

- 2.1 In the form of its annual report to the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), Stingray annually assesses its cultural diversity initiatives, sets objectives for the current reporting period, regularly and frequently measures progress in achieving our diversity objectives throughout the reporting period and annually reviews and reports on the initiatives to the objectives initially established.

### **3) Corporate Accountability**

In order to ensure corporate commitment to diversity, this commitment must become and integral part of corporate governance that is clearly evident to all employees.

## **Best Practices**

- 3.1 Stingray formally articulates and demonstrates a corporate commitment to developing and maintaining an inclusive corporate culture that fosters and promotes diversity both on-air and within the broader workforce.
- 3.2 Stingray develops and implements internal communication practices to ensure that all diversity policies and plans are communicated to management and staff.
- 3.3 Stingray ensures that all employees, both management and staff, agree to adhere to diversity policies and practices.
- 3.4 Stingray has appointed the President, Radio as the senior executive responsible for the development, implementation and evaluation of diversity practices and initiatives for stations and/or services within our corporate group.
- 3.5 Stingray, where possible, incorporates diversity objectives within its business plans, at the departmental, divisional and/or corporate level.
- 3.6 Stingray's Annual Report on Diversity details our diversity practices as well as our progress towards our diversity goals. This report is filed annually with the CRTC and may be viewed on the CRTC's website.
- 3.7 The *Stingray Radio Best Practices for Cultural Diversity* is included in the Human Resources Manual that is available both in hard copy and on our Human Resources website.

#### **4) Recruitment, Hiring and Retention**

In matters relating the Human resources, including policies and programs relating to recruitment, hiring and retention, HR staff are trained and educated on techniques that address cultural diversity.

##### **Best Practices**

- 4.1 Stingray ensures that all human resource policies clearly articulate its commitment to diversity.
- 4.2 Stingray reviews and eliminates on an ongoing basis all human resource policies and practices relating to recruitment, hiring and retention that act as systematic barriers.
- 4.3 Stingray develops and implements mechanisms that foster an inclusive and accepting work environment aimed at increasing workforce retention.
- 4.4 Stingray develops tactics and implements mechanisms aimed and attracting and recruiting a diverse employee base.
- 4.5 Stingray, where possible, places advertisements for employment opportunities beyond mainstream media by placing advertisements in media targeted to diverse communities.
- 4.6 Stingray ensures that employees responsible for hiring and managing staff are provided with training on systematic barriers.
- 4.7 Stingray monitors progress and assesses the effectiveness of policies and initiatives in furthering diversity objectives. This is achieved through its on-going evaluation process and annual reporting practice.

#### **5) Internship, Mentoring and Scholarships**

Educational programs can be both local and national in scope, as a means of attracting maximum participation from the broadest range of Canada's diversity.

##### **Best Practices**

- 5.1 Stingray incorporates diversity plans into its internship programs where available.
- 5.2 Stingray clearly articulates its diversity practices and policies to educational institutions with which it interacts. A copy of the *Stingray Radio Best Practices for Cultural Diversity* is made available to those educational institutions.
- 5.3 Stingray examines internship, mentorship and other recruitment programs both for systematic barriers and effectiveness. Specifically, broadcasters review selection criteria, outreach initiatives and communication tools for accessibility.

- 5.4 Stingray, where possible, works with industry associations and agencies to identify programs for training and recruitment to meet diversity objectives.

## **6) Programming**

Stingray recognizes that the selection and promotion of music and spoken-word talent/programming from ethnocultural minorities, Indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities can contribute to the better reflection of diversity in commercial radio.

### **Best Practices**

- 6.1 Stingray endeavours to fairly and accurately reflect the diversity of the audience and/or communities we serve in the programming offered within our formats.
- 6.2 In the commissioning, acquisition and/or development of programming, Stingray ensures where possible that programs reflect the diversity of the audiences to which our programming is directed.
- 6.3 Stingray, where possible, reflects the unique perspective and cultural background that our on-air talent/producers bring.
- 6.4 Stingray supports music and spoken-word talent from diverse backgrounds using regulated financial contributions to Canadian Content Development initiatives and music funding agencies such as FACTOR, MusicAction, Radio Starmaker Fund/Fonds Radiostar.

## **7) News and Information Programming**

In bringing the realities of community, country and the world to Canadians, news and information programming presents potentially the most sensitive of all Best Practices initiatives focusing on diversity in private radio.

It is pivotal that all newsroom professionals not only commit to diversity in the workplace, but also develop means for ensuring accurate reflection and portrayal of diverse groups. This means that newsroom culture must become well-versed in cultural diversity, in understanding vocabulary, culturally unique behaviours and other methods of communication.

## **Best Practices**

- 7.1 Stingray commits to fair and accurate reflection and portrayal on-air by reviewing, developing and maintaining an editorial perspective and/or policy that advances our diversity objectives.
- 7.2 Stingray varies its use of experts on-air to include individuals from a broad range of diverse backgrounds.
- 7.3 Stingray ensures that experts and other on-air guests from diverse backgrounds are interviewed on-air with respect to a wide range of public issues.
- 7.4 Stingray ensures that on-air news and information programming staff from diverse communities are assigned to a wide range of public issues.
- 7.5 Stingray will endeavour to ensure balanced presentation of different points of view in its news reporting.
- 7.6 Stingray develops and implements outreach initiatives to foster a better understanding among news and information programming staff about diverse communities.
- 7.7 Stingray ensures that news and information programming staff participate in the outreach initiatives of diverse communities.
- 7.8 Stingray consults with community leaders and issues experts, where appropriate, on issues such as ethnic or racial conflict and other diversity-sensitive issues.

## **8) Community and Industry Outreach**

Connecting with a community is an extremely important measure in advancing diversity on private radio.

### **Best Practices**

- 8.1 Stingray reviews, develops and implements community outreach and consultation practices as applicable to inform and be informed regarding issues concerning the representation, reflection and portrayal of the diverse communities we serve.
- 8.2 Stingray reviews its communications with its audiences with a view to eliminating systemic barriers.

## 9) Internal Communications

### Best Practices

- 9.1 Stingray informs and communicates, on an ongoing basis, to management and staff, all diversity policies and practices adopted by its stations.
- 9.2 The *Stingray Radio Best Practices for Cultural Diversity* is posted in a location accessible to all staff at each station location and is included in the New Hires package given to all new employees.
- 9.3 Stingray makes available on its Human Resources website its *Stingray Radio Best Practices for Cultural Diversity* regarding its strategy to advance the reflection of promotion of talent from the diverse backgrounds including ethnocultural groups, Indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities.