

**OVERVIEW OF THE  
CARIBBEAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION (CBC)  
FURTHER TO PARAGRAPH 11 OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

The Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) is a long established media house, having been created by an Act of Parliament on 11 November 1963. It began its operations then with radio-broadcasting. In 1964, TV broadcasting was added to its functions.

2. CBC articulates its vision as follows: “To be a viable organisation of broadcasting excellence, innovation and integrity that is financially sound and sustainable.”

3. Its mission is “To provide consistently superior quality educational, informative and entertaining programmes and services that inspire and enrich our Caribbean peoples’ lives while creating a stimulating environment that enhances the quality of life of our employees.”

4. The CBC is a multi-faceted company with the potential to branch into new areas to effect revenue growth at a time when the previous distinctions between broadcast and telecommunications have been blurred by technology. Notwithstanding existing weaknesses in its product offering, CBC remains an institution that impacts and influences the psyche of the Barbadian public who applaud when the organisation does well and condemn when it does not which is the manifestation of an emotional attachment to one of the few companies owned by Barbadians.

5. Over the years, the Corporation has played an important role in entertaining and educating Barbadians but also in nurturing Barbadian identity and in developing the Barbados brand. CBC is well recognized for its fundamental role in keeping Barbadians informed as the *Nightly News* continues to be one of most watched programmes of CBC, to the extent that it is constantly streamed by other players in the market.

6. CBC is also known for its development of local programming such as *Mornin’ Barbados*, various documentaries and the establishment of Multi-choice TV. Public outreach initiatives such as *Q in the Community*, and other achievements in its record form part of the heritage of this entity. It should not be forgotten that CBC also has

a legacy in the Eastern Caribbean where its broadcasting services have historically extended.

7. At this juncture, CBC finds itself at the crossroads in the era of digitalization.

### **Products and Services**

8. Currently, CBC offers the following services:

- Free-To-Air TV service distributed via an analogue signal to covering the entire island of Barbados, parts of St. Vincent, St. Lucia and Dominica.
- Multi-Point Multi-Channel Distribution System (MMDS) digital paid TV service with 17K subscribers covering approximately 70% of the island.
- Three Radio stations using the FM band, these being 94.7 FM, 98.1 THE ONE and 100.7 Quality FM. 94.7 is replicated in the AM band 900. The AM service forms part of the regional disaster emergency system for use in the event of emergencies within the region.

A brief description is provided below:

#### **900 AM & 94.7 FM**

900 AM was launched as Radio Barbados in 1963 with studio and transmitter facilities at Black Rock, St. Michael. In 1966, 900 AM's studios and other operations were integrated into the building at the Pine which had been designed for the television broadcast division. New continuity and production studios were built in 1988. Today 900 AM continues to operate via 94.7 FM and has evolved to a digital platform allowing the mirroring of programming on both stations.

Building its profile as the "Home of Sports", 94.7 has been the station of cricket wherever it is played. As with its sister stations, 94.7FM also has a website which takes its programming to all parts of the world and 900AM continues to be received in some of the islands of the OECS. Interactivity is high via its Facebook page as it provides a vehicle for instant feedback and listener 'ownership' of what they hear. The target audience is 25- 44 years old persons who are upwardly mobile and have discerning taste. Together they have brought about a quantum leap in the quality of the listener experience.

## **98.1 THE ONE**

98.1 THE ONE was launched on 2nd, July 1984 as Liberty FM and rebranded in 2005. Initially Liberty operated from a van due to overcrowding at the Pine facilities. Liberty moved into its own studios in 1988 as part of the Pine redevelopment. As the station for the youth in the 15 to 35 years age group, the focus has been on making the station accessible on every mobile device. It has been credited for being one of the pioneers in this effort amongst its competitors. 98.1 The One offers news and sports in short bursts in tandem with the attention span of a youthful demographic and the fast pace of their world.

## **100.7 QUALITY FM+**

QFM began its operation in 2004 and targets an audience that ranges from 45 years and over. The station attracts responsive and significant audiences which are usually that of the older generation and offer a wide range of programmes such as news, call-in-programmes, parliamentary broadcasts, religious, sports and the obituaries.

Perhaps the most notable achievement of QFM has been its very popular Q-In the Community programme. This took the broadcast into the community to be among the people and to let them tell their story. It grew significantly over the years and has been an attractive product for listeners and advertisers. The mix of programming brought greater focus to the values of life and family, and re-enforced that message through respected and responsible broadcasters.

## **CBC TV**

CBC Television Channel 8 was introduced in 1964 in studios and transmitter facilities at Sturges, St. Thomas. Its studios and executive offices were relocated to the Pine St. Michael in 1966. A second studio for its Nightly News was constructed in 1987/88 as part of the redevelopment of the Pine complex. Channel 8 has changed frequency twice: from Channel 13 to Channel 9 in 1987 and to Channel 8 in 1991 because its transmissions were interfering with a television station in neighbouring St. Vincent. Channel 8's programming is received off-air by viewers in St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines and Grenada.

The completion of the digitalization of Channel 8 is one of the priorities for the development of CBC.

It is to be noted that CBC radio is fully digital and its television is also digital. However, only MCTV subscribers access that digital signal as it relates to television. Those who access TV through free to air still see the analogue version, that is, Standard definition. The second phase of the digitalisation programme, yet to be done, is the placement of transmitters on the antenna at Sturges, so that everyone with a smart TV set could see CBC TV in high definition, free to air.

## **MULTI-CHOICE TELEVISION**

Subscription Television (STV) a paid television service, was introduced on December 14 1987 offering twenty-four (24) hours of programming with a mere three channels, CNN, ESPN and Lifetime, a movie channel. STV transmitted using four main transmitters in UHF band with four repeater transmitters planned for each of the two sites on the south and west coast. By 1990, TNT South was added to the list of channels followed by Cartoon Network in 1995, increasing the total channels to five (5).

In December of 1996, with a base of some 22,773 active subscribers, STV received a total makeover through the modernization of its platform to a Multichannel Multipoint Distribution service. The channels offered were increased to thirty-four (34) and its name changed to Multi-Choice Television subsequently referred to as MCTV. With a passion for excellence, and the desire to provide the highest quality of service to its customers, MCTV underwent another up-grade from an analogue to digital service in April 2003 resulting in significantly improved picture quality and increasing the channels offered to seventy (70).

By June 2012, MCTV had grown by leaps and bounds catering to over 28,000 subscribers, providing seventy (70) channels which offered a choice of sports, children's programming, and movies, news, educational and inspirational programming. By October of that year, MCTV abandoned its slogan of More Channels More Choice to "MCTV ....The Right Choice" and added another twenty (20) channels to its selection, increasing the array of channels to ninety, four of which are broadcast in High Definition (HD). There are currently one hundred and three (103) channels, twenty-one of which are in HD.

MCTV has experienced a clear decline in its customer base. This is being addressed by new marketing strategies currently being devised by the Corporation. Equally necessary is an upgrade in technology for MCTV.

### **Staffing**

9. In November 2018 CBC retrenched 103 of its 231 employees. An outline of current job positions can be provided on request.

### **Properties of CBC**

10. The CBC's principal offices and studios are at the Pine St. Michael. The Corporation's main transmitter site is at Sturges in St. Thomas. Both properties are owned by the Corporation.

11. CBC also rents property at the following locations for fifteen repeaters:

1. South Point
2. Barbados Beach Club
3. Hastings Towers
4. Haylie Brae
5. Kent
6. Central Bank
7. Black Rock
8. Gun Hill
9. St. Judes
10. Seaview
11. Edgecliff
12. Mount Stepney
13. Bishops
14. St. Marks
15. Sanford

### **MARCH 2020**