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## APPENDIX

### CBSC Decision 07/08-1011 Teletoon re *Team America: World Police*

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#### The Complaint

The following complaint dated December 10, 2007 was sent to the CRTC and forwarded to the CBSC in due course:

This past Saturday night, our son (9) was watching the Teletoon channel 554. Around 10:00 pm he came upstairs and told us there were puppets doing gross things on the TV. We told him to turn off the TV as it was past his bedtime anyway. The next morning we turned on the TV to find the following images frozen on our TV screen. This is completely unacceptable to have this content airing on a children's channel. Please ensure justice is done to correct this. Thank you.

The complainant attached JPG files to his email which showed the images to which he referred.

#### Broadcaster Response

Teletoon responded to the complainant on January 15, 2008:

The CBSC forwarded us your letter dated December 10, 2007 in which you express your concerns regarding the airing of the movie *Team America: World Police* (18+), which was broadcast Saturday, December 8, 2007 at 9:30 pm (et/pt) during The Detour on Teletoon. We sincerely regret that you were offended by this broadcast, and we appreciate you [*sic*] taking the time to write to us as it provides us with the opportunity to give you some further information on how Teletoon makes concerted efforts to prevent children from viewing programming intended for adult audiences and how you may use parental controls to block programming.

As you may already know, Teletoon is a 24-hour animation station that is proud to offer cartoons and animation to a wide audience. As specified in our license with the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), we are a specialty station dedicated to providing a variety of animation for viewers of all ages. Although we present programming for a wide mix of ages, we are conscious of the fact that for many viewers, animation is often associated solely with children's programming. In order to avoid confusion between children's and adult programming we are very careful about the way in which we develop our schedule, ensuring that all shows are programmed responsibly at appropriate times of the day.

In order to reflect the diverse ages of our viewers, almost 40% of whom are adults 18+, we have divided our schedule into specific time blocks; from 6am to 6pm (et/pt), we air programs for children of all ages; from 6pm to 9pm (et/pt), our programming is intended for a wide audience including tweens, teens, young adults and adults; after 9pm (et/pt) our shows are

geared towards a mature audience and are encompassed in a branded programming block called The Detour on Teletoon.

The Detour on Teletoon has become the point of reference for the 18-34 crowd looking for off-beat entertainment, and an edgier line-up with tongue-in-cheek humour or satirical points of view. We make ongoing efforts to clearly distinguish between the daytime look of Teletoon and our late-night programming: branding elements of The Detour on Teletoon are completely different from those of our daytime programming, and shows and promotional events that belong exclusively to The Detour on Teletoon are only promoted and aired during this programming block.

Additionally, as a responsible broadcaster, Teletoon uses the Canadian Television Ratings system (E, C, C8+, G, PG, 14+, 18+), as developed by the Action Group for Violence on Television (AGVOT) to inform viewers about the content and suitability of a program. An icon bearing the rating of the show is depicted in the upper left-hand corner of the screen at the beginning of each show. During our programs rated 18+ or higher, this icon reappears after each commercial break. *Team America: World Police* was rated 18+ (intended for viewers 18 years and older) and the 18+ icon appeared at the beginning of the broadcast and after each commercial break. This rating also allows the use of parental control features that allow parents to block specific programs according to their rating; these programs can only be unblocked by keying in a personal identification number, or PIN. For more information on how to use this feature for Bell ExpressVu, please visit [bell.ca](http://bell.ca).

Teletoon also uses audio and visual viewer advisories that serve to caution viewers about the suitability of the program on all programs broadcast after 9pm (et/pt). Specifically, the advisory broadcast for *Team America: World Police* stated: "The following program is intended for adult audiences. It may contain mature subject matter and coarse language. Viewer discretion is advised." This advisory was broadcast prior to the beginning of the program and after every commercial break.

While we recognize that the content of *Team America: World Police* is not to everyone's taste, this series does comply with all applicable broadcasting codes and is scheduled to air at a time when an older audience is present. Recognizing that our viewers and their selection in programming are diverse, we believe *Team America: World Police* is appropriate programming to be presented on The Detour on Teletoon.

Finally, regarding the issue you raise about the admittedly shocking image found frozen on your TV screen: I assure you that this issue did not originate with Teletoon's broadcast centre. Should you encounter this issue consistently, I recommend you contact your satellite provider.

Once again, we thank you for sharing your concerns with us. We hope to have clarified the Teletoon mandate as a broadcaster, as well as our approach to scheduling programming for all ages. If you have any other comments or questions, please do not hesitate to contact us again.

## **Additional Correspondence**

The complainant wrote back to the broadcaster on January 15:

I am disappointed in your response to my complaint. Programming of this type has no place on a children's channel at any time.

Bell ExpressVu categorizes Teletoon channel as a family channel. My trust in Bell ExpressVu and Teletoon has been violated.

I believe Canadian broadcasters must be held accountable and broadcasters of children's programming must be held accountable to a higher degree. As a parent, I and many others considered that Teletoon was a safe viewing channel as it is being portrayed as a cartoon channel for kids. With this mind-set came a trust that hardcore pornographic material would not be broadcast following the Bugs Bunny show. I did not expect this type of programming so I did not feel it was necessary check the ratings of every cartoon. You have overstepped your bounds and violated my trust of being a responsible children's broadcaster.

As a parent, I am sickened by the fact my 9-year-old son's mind has been filled with these images at this age by you! Damages, in my opinion, are insurmountable.

The *Team America: World Police* program rating warning of "The following program is intended for adult audiences. It may contain mature subject matter and coarse language. Viewer discretion is advised." inadequately describes the depicted content and falls short of stating the program contains explicit portrayals of sex and/or nudity.

The CRTC should restrict your broadcasting licence for content of this type.

The complainant filed his Ruling Request on January 17:

As a parent, I and many others considered that Teletoon was a safe viewing channel as it is being portrayed as a cartoon channel for kids. With this mind-set came a trust that hardcore pornographic material would not be broadcast following the Bugs Bunny show. I did not expect this type of programming so I did not feel it was necessary check the ratings of every cartoon. I feel Teletoon made no effort to advise the paying subscriber of the full scope of offensive content that may be displayed on their channel. Their process of filtering out younger viewers from their pornographic broadcast failed. Teletoon has overstepped their bounds and violated my trust of being a responsible children's broadcaster.

I am sickened by the fact my 9-year-old son's mind has been filled with these images at this age by Teletoon. Teletoon has called their promotion of this material "The Detour on Teletoon" labelled as "risky or edgy adult/teen ideas." I find the response from them to be unsatisfactory. They admit no wrong-doing and continue to pursue this type of programming.

The *Team America: World Police* program rating warning of "The following program is intended for adult audiences. It may contain mature subject matter and coarse language. Viewer discretion is advised." inadequately describes the depicted content and falls short of stating the program contains explicit portrayals of sex and/or nudity.

Bell ExpressVu categorizes Teletoon channel as a family channel. Our children's programming channels must be restricted from displaying this material. Their programming time-slot still falls within a time period that children under the age of 18 are susceptible to be viewing. The CRTC should restrict their broadcasting licence for content of this type.