
APPENDIX

CBSC File 03/04-0324 Global Television re *Global National* (Kidnapping Report)

The Complaint

The following complaint dated November 19, 2003 was sent to the CRTC and forwarded to the CBSC in due course:

I am livid that *Global National* released information to the effect that Ms. Stamp contacted a drug store clerk giving her name and asked them to call 911.

I have contacted an investigator on this file with the York regional police, and he has expressed dismay at the release of this information as well.

I request you do not include this information in any further broadcasts.

What the hell are you trying to do!??

Do you even think about the consequences of releasing such information? Did you contact the investigators before you released such information? Are you trying to get the poor woman killed to further the story for your own interests.

You have shown reckless endangering behaviour by reporting this information, possibly jeopardizing this woman's future chances of escape, and possibly her life at the hands of this maniac kidnapper.

I will be reporting this and making a formal complaint of this disgusting abuse of media intervention in the life of a person at serious risk of losing her life to the CRTC.

The complainant sent a second e-mail to the CRTC on November 19, which was also forwarded to the CBSC:

Further to my complaint regarding *Global National* TV and the reporting of kidnapping victim Ms. Amanda Stamp.

It has come to my attention that an employee of Global TV Vancouver named [D] (no last name given) who works the assignment desk this Tuesday evening, stated to me, after I had contacted them, that the Toronto area Global TV crew heard about the drug store incident specifics (she [Amanda Smart *sic*] told her name and asked the clerk to call 911) on a police scanner.

I am a scanner enthusiast, and there are laws protecting the dissemination of information gained from intercepting radio waves.

The *Radio Act of Canada*, specifically Section 3, *Canada Gazette* Part III, Ch. 11 (12 Mar 1991) for Bill C-40, and Part III, Ch. 17 (02 Jan 1990).

The conditions for scanner state ...

You are not allowed to tell anyone what you heard without the permission of the originator.

With this revelation in mind, I encourage you to pursue both the content of the offending broadcast and the origin of the details which were disseminated via television to the public.

It appears this is a breach of the law in regards to protected radio communications.

Thank you.

The CRTC informed the complainant that interception of radiowaves fell outside the jurisdiction of the CRTC and CBSC, but that the CBSC would be examining his complaint with respect to the actual broadcast.

Following a request from the CBSC for information regarding the date and time of broadcast, the complainant sent the following e-mail on November 25:

I believe my complaint outlined my concerns.

The station is Global TV Vancouver, channel 11, my guide does not refer to the call letters. Surely in your duties and associations you can find the exact call letters.

The name of the show was called *Global National*, it airs at 5:30 pm Pacific Daylight Time. It is a news magazine show.

The date of the broadcast was Tuesday, November 18th.

This information should fulfill the requirements for a formal complaint and allow you the ability to pursue said complaint.

Should you require further info, please don't wait a WEEK to email/correspond with me!

Broadcaster Response

The broadcaster responded to the complainant on December 9 with the following:

Your complaint to the Canadian Broadcast Standards Council (CBSC File Number: C03/04 - 0324) has been forwarded to me for reply.

Our entire news team strives to uphold the highest level of journalistic integrity and ethics at all times. Our staff members are educated to make decisions thoughtfully and with sensitivity and to produce material in accordance with community standards and with the Canadian Association of Broadcasters' (CAB) *Code of Ethics*, *Sex-Role Portrayal Code for Television and Radio Programming*, and the *Voluntary Code Regarding Violence in Television Programming*. Global News also adheres to the Radio Television News Directors Association of Canada (RTNDA) *Code of Ethics*.

We share your concerns regarding the reporting of certain details related to Amanda Stamp on *Global National* on November 18th. We included the information in our report in part because we thought other media outlets had already reported it. Following the broadcast

York Police contacted us and asked that we not broadcast the information again. We agreed and subsequently withheld additional information regarding another attempt by Ms. Stamp to be rescued. It was a regrettable error on our part and was not repeated. Fortunately Ms. Stamp was rescued, unharmed, the following day.

In reference to your point regarding the use of information gleaned from a police scanner -- I believe the statute is the *Radiocommunications Act* s.9(2) -- the information in question was confirmed by phone and it was that confirmation which allowed us to use it. But, as noted above, even though we did not violate the Act, the information should not have been broadcast.

We take great pains to ensure that our news coverage is fair, balanced, and accurate. Your letter, together with the concerns expressed by York Police, has been shared with our staff and is a valuable reminder that we must use the appropriate discretion necessary in coverage of hostage situations so as not to endanger those involved.

Additional Correspondence

The complainant sent a reply email to the broadcaster on December 10, which the CBSC considered the equivalent of a Ruling Request. The complainant wrote:

Hello

Ok, right off the bat ... I'm not impressed with your response, so excuse me while I bite a chunk out of your collective butts.

So your [*sic*] saying that because you thought other media broadcast the details, you would too. Brilliant, let's really make sure Ms Stamp's life is marginalized by all the Canadian broadcasters, and all jump off the cliff together.

It just goes to show for all the high powered dollars that are paid out in your organization, dues paid in your affiliations, and guidelines your [*sic*] constrained by, that your [*sic*] as insensitive to the human condition and common sense as politicians. Don't get me wrong, I don't hate media.

Essentially your [*sic*] saying, drat, the other media may have broadcast a detrimental fact to the safety of Ms. Stamp, and we have to do the same, so as not to lag behind the eight ball. Never once stopping to think about morals, ethics, personal safety. But seriously, I doubt that anyone in your organization even realized how detrimental those details could actually be.

I challenge you brain dead idiots to consider when reporting each and every word "what if it was my child, could anything we say possibly harm or be a detriment to my child".

If you really "share my concerns" your letter would have included steps that you plan to take to ensure nothing like this ever happens again.

You further make comment about information gleaned from a scanner, and make reference that you "confirmed by phone and it was that confirmation that allowed us to use it". What the hell is that supposed to mean? Who confirmed what with who [*sic*], and who gave who [*sic*] permission to use facts from that radio wave scanning to be broadcast. Because in a previous paragraph you state just the exact opposite. Do you think I am a fool?

Please don't assume you didn't violate the Act, you have shown me no proof that indeed [you] had "permission" to broadcast those facts. What makes you think you didn't violate the Act?

I don't know who you are [Managing Director], but your investigation into this whole fiasco that you are relating to me is as shoddy as the quality of your journalism of that night. Your letter ends in single minded fashion, talking about fair, balanced and accurate, hardly the expected summation of the newly enlightened referring to the reporting of hostage situations.

I would have thought words like sensitive, compassionate, humane, might guide you. I would encourage you to consider the revelations we are discussing in most all your reporting, but alas your [sic] probably too desensitized to human suffering by the looks of things. I might also suggest Global pay some penance for its/your unapologetic state, maybe a sizable donation to a battered womans [sic] shelter. To enhance this suggestion, I would remind you it's tax deductible [sic].

I just love the preamble in letters like yours. We are members of this, affiliated with that, and have the highest regard for whatever, dusting off your suit and fixing your corsage. When you should be thanking the Lord himself for the grace in the safe return of Ms. Stamp, no thanks to your bungling effort to dramatize my supper hour. Don't blow roses up my %^#\$#^&.

An apology makes no excuses, and all I'm seeing here is excuses, with no plans to fix a problem. Heck, you didn't even use the word apologize. If my letter was indeed shared to your employees, why haven't I heard a plan to protect the citizens of Canada from a future scenario like this? Do your employees actually get encouraged to present ideas to upper management? I don't think so, why? Because if my letter was shared with your employees, I'm pretty sure they would have formulated conversations and ideas to prevent this type of scenario from reoccurring [sic]. And in turn those ideas might have touched the pages of your letter.

So you either have a bunch of eunuchs working in the news dept., or you have ineffective lines of communication to deal with disasters you have created internally.

With that in mind, I reject this letter as a response of any value from you, and send it back to you to formulate a plan that you can relate back to me, to ensure this kind of idiocy never happens again.

Please find it in your hearts to forgive me for using certain adjectives and nouns and pronouns, as I find emphasis was necessary to convey to you the depth of your callous stupidity.

Awaiting your thoughtful reply.