

**Reaction to the Gomery report:**

**The Association of Quebec Advertising Agencies is satisfied  
that harm to its reputation was recognized**

**MONTREAL, November 1, 2005** – The Association of Quebec Advertising Agencies (AAPQ) is satisfied with the first conclusions of Judge Gomery who clearly identifies those who are responsible for the outrageous waste of money by the Sponsorship Program. The Association is also pleased that the Commissioner recognizes that these individuals' reprehensible actions caused harm not only to taxpayers but also to the whole Canadian communication and advertising industry, whose reputation has been unfairly tarnished.

On page 437 of his report, under the responsibility of the communication agencies, Judge Gomery wrote:

*The negligent administration of the Sponsorship Program by PWGSC opened the door wide to profiteering by those five agencies and their owners, and they took full advantage of the opportunity. They exploited the Sponsorship Program by unethical and highly improper business practices that have resulted in great harm not only to the public purse but also to the reputation of the communication and advertising industry.*

The conclusions of the Commission's Phase I Report confirm that the Government's contracting model used by the Sponsorship Program was the result of the collusion of some individuals, and that it was characterized by abuse and political interference.

“This established fact being recognized, we now wish that Judge Gomery will take into consideration, in his final report, our recommendations to the effect that creativity and innovation, rather than political partisanship, should be promoted in the awarding of advertising contracts by the Government”, says AAPQ's President and general manager, Yves St-Amand.

In fact, the Association of Quebec Advertising Agencies, jointly with the *Institute of Communications and Advertising* (ICA), has recently submitted to Judge Gomery a series of recommendations on how to prevent bad management in future sponsorship programs and advertising activities within the Federal Government.

The Association has now 36 member agencies which generate almost 75% of the industry's total revenues in Quebec. Defending the industry's interests and understanding its challenges, AAPQ is committed to represent its member agencies and to provide actual and future decision makers with tools and work conditions that will allow the industry to successfully face new challenges.

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