



## CBC DETAILED ANALYSIS

20220202\_RCMP tries to clear blockade at Alberta-U.S. border

Broadcast: MEDIA ANALYSIS REPORT | Analyzed: 2026-05-06 07:50

Version 2.0-cbc | Konverter 3.3 (2026-05-14) | Standard: Broadcasting Act s. 3(1)(l)

### OVERALL SCORE

**5.0/10**

*Significant imbalance*

0 = balanced, 10 = strongly biased/manipulative

## POLITICAL SPECTRUM

Classification based on Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) 2024

The Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES 2024) is an academic survey of 609 political scientists in 31 countries. Each party is rated on a scale from 0 (far left) to 10 (far right).

Party	NDP	GPC	LPC	BQ	CPC	PPC
CHES	2.0	2.5	4.5	5.0	7.5	9.0
Spectrum	<i>Left</i>	<i>Left</i>	<i>Center</i>	<i>Center</i>	<i>Right</i>	<i>Right</i>

The overall tendency is presented on a 0–10 scale (0 = strongly left-favoring, 5 = balanced, 10 = strongly right-favoring). The calculation is based on the difference in average favoritism of left vs. right parties (grouping per CHES 2024).

### TENDENCY (L – R)

**5.2 / 10**

*Balanced*

0 1 2 3 4 **5** 6 7 8 9 10

← Left

Right →

Source: Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2024 — [chesdata.eu](https://chesdata.eu) | [Jolly et al., Electoral Studies, 2022](#) | Thresholds: [Pew Research Center](#)

This section provides political context and does not contribute to the overall score.

## BROADCAST INFO AND TOPIC FRAMEWORK

### Broadcast Identification

- Broadcast title: The National (CBC Television)
- Estimated date: February 2, 2022 (consistent with file name 20220202 and internal references to the Coutts, Alberta blockade timeline)
- Approximate length: ~3–4 minutes (short field report segment)

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- Anchor/Presenter: Ian (surname not given in transcript; likely Ian Hanomansing or Ian Brown based on The National roster at the time)
- Field Reporter: Aaron Collins, reporting from Coutts, Alberta ("kutz alberta" in transcript)

### Guests / Interviewees Identified

Speaker	Affiliation / Role	Identification Basis
Protester (unnamed)	Freedom Convoy / Coutts blockade participant	Quote: "God gives us freedom, not the government"
Local official (unnamed)	Appears to be a local elected representative or mayor	Quote: "cutting off my freedom of movement and that of my citizens here"
RCMP spokesperson (unnamed)	Royal Canadian Mounted Police	Quote: "our members here on the ground made inroads..."
Jason Kenney (referenced, not directly quoted)	Premier of Alberta, UCP	Referenced by reporter: "Jason Kenney says these protesters could get what they're asking for by the end of the month"
Protester supporter (unnamed)	Blockade supporter / sympathizer	Quote: "Premier could end it right now, simply open up Alberta"

### Main Topic

The RCMP's attempt to clear the trucker blockade at the Coutts, Alberta–U.S. border crossing on February 2, 2022, amid ongoing protests against federal and provincial COVID-19 vaccine and mask mandates.

### Current Context (State of Public Debate)

The Coutts blockade was part of the broader Freedom Convoy movement that had paralyzed Ottawa's downtown core beginning January 29, 2022, and spawned related blockades at multiple border crossings. The Coutts crossing was a critical trade artery between Canada and the United States, with billions of dollars in annual cross-border commerce at stake. The blockade had been ongoing since approximately January 29, 2022, and represented a significant test of law enforcement authority and political will at both the provincial and federal levels. Public opinion was sharply divided: a substantial portion of Canadians expressed sympathy with the underlying grievances about pandemic mandates, while others condemned the economic disruption and questioned the legality of the blockades under existing traffic and criminal statutes.



## CHAPTER 1 — DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE 15 CRITERIA

### Hard Facts — 9 techniques that are countable and scientifically verifiable

#### 1. EXPERT SELECTION

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Definition: Who is chosen to provide authoritative commentary, and whether their selection reflects a range of credible, independent expertise.

#### Finding 3.1

- Location: Entire segment
- Quote: [No expert is introduced with credentials or institutional affiliation]
- Technique: Absence of credentialed expertise
- Problem: The segment contains zero expert voices — no public health official, no legal scholar, no economist, no trade specialist. For a story involving public health policy, constitutional law, international trade, and law enforcement strategy, the complete absence of expert commentary is a significant journalistic failure. The only "authoritative" voices are an unnamed RCMP spokesperson and unnamed political figures.

#### Finding 3.2

- Location: Entire segment
- Quote: "jason kenney says these protesters could get what they're asking for by the end of the month"
- Technique: Political actor as sole policy authority
- Problem: The only policy-relevant commentary comes from a politician (Kenney) who is paraphrased rather than directly quoted, and whose statement is not subjected to any expert scrutiny. No public health expert is offered to contextualize whether the mandates Kenney referenced were scientifically appropriate to lift, and no legal expert is offered to assess whether Kenney's timeline was consistent with RCMP operational requirements.

#### Finding 3.3

- Location: Entire segment
- Quote: [RCMP spokesperson quote used without attribution or context]
- Technique: Institutional voice without accountability framing
- Problem: The RCMP spokesperson is quoted directly but not identified by name or rank, and their statement is not subjected to any critical follow-up. No independent policing expert or civil liberties voice is offered to assess the RCMP's strategy or the proportionality of their response.



## 2. SOURCE SELECTION

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*Claims without primary source = penalty points (rumour check)*

Definition: The diversity and independence of cited sources, including assessment of their funding, mandate, and potential conflicts of interest.

### Finding 12.1

- Location: Entire segment
- Quote: [All sources are either unnamed or unaffiliated]
- Technique: Anonymous sourcing that prevents accountability assessment
- Problem: Not a single source in this segment is identified by name (except Jason Kenney, who is paraphrased). The protester, the local official, and the RCMP spokesperson are all unnamed. This prevents any assessment of their credibility, representativeness, or potential conflicts of interest, and it prevents the audience from evaluating the sources' standing.

### Finding 12.2

- Location: Entire segment
- Quote: [No independent sources cited]
- Technique: Exclusive reliance on directly involved parties
- Problem: Every voice in the segment is a directly involved party — protesters, law enforcement, a local official, a politician. There are no independent sources: no academics, no industry representatives, no civil society organizations, no international observers. This creates a closed information environment in which all perspectives are filtered through the interests of parties with direct stakes in the outcome.

### Finding 12.3

- Location: Reporter narration
- Quote: "there is support for the ideas behind this blockade in this part of alberta"
- Technique: Reporter as uncited source for community sentiment claim
- Problem: The reporter makes a factual claim about community support without citing any source — no poll, no community leader, no named resident. The reporter is effectively acting as an uncited source for a significant editorial claim about public opinion, which violates basic journalistic sourcing standards.



### 3. TIME DISTRIBUTION

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Definition: The balance of speaking time and narrative attention given to different positions and perspectives.

Approximate speaking time allocation (estimated from transcript word counts):

Voice/Perspective	Approx. Words	% of Total
Reporter narration	~220 words	~55%
Protester/supporter voices (2 quotes)	~75 words	~19%
Local official (1 quote)	~35 words	~9%
RCMP spokesperson (1 quote)	~40 words	~10%
Anchor	~30 words	~7%
Government/Kenney (paraphrase only)	0 direct words	0%
Expert voices	0 words	0%

#### Finding 6.1

- Location: Full segment
- Quote: Protester: "god gives us freedom, not the government, so we don't need to ask the government for freedom to walk around our country" + supporter: "premier could end it right now, simply open up alberta, he is responsible as well as justin Trudeau, not these people"
- Technique: Disproportionate direct voice for protest perspective
- Problem: Protest-sympathetic voices receive approximately 19% of total content as direct quotes, while the government's position (the primary institutional counterpoint) receives zero direct quotes and only a brief paraphrase. The RCMP receives one operational quote but no policy voice. This creates a structural imbalance in whose perspective is heard in the speaker's own words.

#### Finding 6.2

- Location: Full segment
- Quote: [No direct quote from Jason Kenney, federal government, or any expert]
- Technique: Paraphrase substitution for government voices
- Problem: The decision to paraphrase Kenney rather than use direct audio/quotes — in a television broadcast where such clips would normally be available — means the government's position is filtered through the reporter's summary rather than presented in its own terms. This is an asymmetry: protesters speak for themselves; the government is spoken about.



#### 4. SELECTIVE OMISSION

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Definition: Relevant facts, context, or perspectives that are absent from the broadcast and whose absence distorts the audience's understanding.

##### Finding 4.1

- Location: Entire segment
- Quote: [No mention of economic impact figures]
- Technique: Omission of quantifiable harm
- Problem: The Coutts crossing handled approximately \$44 million in daily trade at the time. The broadcast mentions "disrupting traffic and trade" but provides no figures, no business voices, and no economic context. This omission significantly reduces the audience's ability to assess the severity of the blockade's impact on third parties.

##### Finding 4.2

- Location: Entire segment
- Quote: [No mention of Canadian Trucking Alliance position]
- Technique: Omission of industry counter-voice
- Problem: The Canadian Trucking Alliance — the primary representative body of the trucking industry whose members were ostensibly being championed by the convoy — had publicly and explicitly condemned the blockades by this date. Their absence from the broadcast allows the protesters to implicitly represent "truckers" without challenge, which is a significant distortion of the industry's actual position.

##### Finding 4.3

- Location: Entire segment
- Quote: [No mention of legal status of blockade or applicable statutes]
- Technique: Omission of legal framework
- Problem: The broadcast never states that the blockade was illegal under existing Canadian law (Criminal Code provisions on mischief, obstruction of highways, etc.). Framing the situation as a "standoff" or "gridlock" without establishing the legal status of the protesters' actions deprives the audience of essential context for evaluating the RCMP's enforcement actions and the protesters' conduct.

## Missing Voices

1. Public health officials / epidemiologists — No voice explaining the scientific basis for the mandates being protested, leaving the protest framing unchallenged
2. Canadian Trucking Alliance representatives — The CTA had explicitly condemned the convoy; their absence removes a critical industry counter-voice
3. Cross-border trade economists / business associations — No quantification or expert commentary on the economic damage being caused
4. Legal scholars / constitutional lawyers — No analysis of the legality of the blockade or the legal tools available to authorities
5. U.S. government or business stakeholders — The blockade was an international trade disruption; American perspectives are entirely absent



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6. Federal government spokesperson — The Trudeau government's position on both mandates and enforcement is entirely absent
7. Alberta NDP opposition — The official provincial opposition's position on both the blockade and the mandates is unrepresented
8. Coutts-area residents not affiliated with the protest — Community members experiencing disruption to daily life are absent



## 5. NUMERICAL MANIPULATION

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Complete figures include: absolute value, proportion (%) and trend

Definition: The selective, misleading, or decontextualized use of numbers, statistics, or quantitative claims.

### Finding 9.1

- Location: Reporter opening narration
- Quote: "about 100 big rigs"
- Technique: Isolated statistic without context
- Problem: The figure of "about 100 big rigs" is presented without context: How many trucks normally use this crossing daily? What percentage of normal traffic does this represent? What is the dollar value of trade being blocked? Without this context, "100 big rigs" is a number that conveys scale but not impact, which serves to limit the audience's understanding of the blockade's economic severity.

### Finding 9.2

- Location: Reporter narration
- Quote: "this blockade has been disrupting traffic and trade for days"
- Technique: Vague quantification of harm
- Problem: "For days" is imprecise and understates the duration. By February 2, the blockade had been in place since approximately January 29 — four days — and the economic impact was measurable in tens of millions of dollars. The vague "for days" framing minimizes the cumulative harm without providing any quantitative anchor.

### Finding 9.3

- Location: Reporter narration
- Quote: "there is support for the ideas behind this blockade in this part of alberta but it has its limits"
- Technique: Unsubstantiated claim of public support
- Problem: The claim that there is "support for the ideas behind this blockade in this part of alberta" is presented as a factual assertion without any supporting evidence — no polling data, no community survey, no named community voices beyond the local official who actually opposes the blockade. This is an unsubstantiated statistical claim that serves to legitimize the protest's community standing.



## 6. GUILT BY ASSOCIATION

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Definition: Discrediting a position or group by associating it with extreme, discredited, or unpopular elements without establishing a genuine connection.

### Finding 8.1

- Location: Reporter narration, mid-segment
- Quote: "the tactics used to keep it bleeding support even among political allies"
- Technique: Mild association of protest tactics with political liability
- Problem: The reference to "bleeding support even among political allies" subtly associates the protest with political toxicity without specifying what tactics are being referenced or providing evidence of the claimed support erosion. This is a mild form of guilt by association — implying the protest is becoming politically radioactive — without substantiating the claim with polling data or named political figures withdrawing support.

Note: This criterion scores relatively low because the broadcast does not engage in overt guilt-by-association tactics. The protest is not linked to extremist groups, foreign influence, or criminal elements in this segment, which is notable given that such associations were being made in other coverage of the convoy period.



## 7. TIMING & PLACEMENT

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Definition: The strategic positioning of information within the broadcast — what leads, what is buried, what appears before or after commercial breaks.

### Finding 10.1

- Location: Segment structure — protest voice placed before official/enforcement voice
- Quote: Protester quote ("god gives us freedom") appears before RCMP quote and local official quote
- Technique: Sequencing that establishes protest perspective as primary frame
- Problem: In a short broadcast segment, the order of voices matters significantly. Placing the protester's direct quote first — before any law enforcement, government, or community voice — establishes the protest's moral framework ("God gives us freedom") as the interpretive lens through which subsequent information is processed. This is a subtle but meaningful editorial choice.

### Finding 10.2

- Location: Closing of segment
- Quote: "you add it all up and there is continued gridlock on the road to the u.s"
- Technique: Closing with neutral/minimizing framing
- Problem: The segment closes with the reporter's summary that frames the situation as "gridlock" — a word that implies mutual impasse rather than illegal obstruction. Closing on this note leaves the audience with a minimized sense of the situation's severity and legal character.



## 8. SELECTIVE OUTRAGE

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*Outrage = bias. Selective outrage amplifies the finding. Score = outrage level (0–5) + selectivity (0–5)*

Definition: The application of moral outrage or strong normative language to certain positions or actors while equivalent or comparable conduct by others is treated neutrally or sympathetically.

### Finding 13.1

- Location: Reporter narration
- Quote: "it's a win for these protesters but at what cost"
- Technique: Moral questioning applied selectively to protest tactics
- Problem: The "at what cost" framing applies moral scrutiny to the protesters' internal political dynamics (losing support) but not to the blockade's actual costs — economic disruption, interference with trade, impact on local residents. The moral question is directed at the protesters' political effectiveness rather than at the harm caused to third parties, which inverts the expected direction of journalistic moral scrutiny.

### Finding 13.2

- Location: Local official quote
- Quote: "cutting off my freedom of movement and that of my citizens here it becomes something that i can't approve of"
- Technique: Community harm framed as personal disapproval rather than rights violation
- Problem: The local official's concern about freedom of movement — which is a legally protected right — is framed as personal disapproval ("can't approve of") rather than as a rights violation or legal harm. The broadcast does not editorially reinforce this concern with any normative weight, while the protesters' freedom claims are given direct, emotionally resonant expression.



9. COMPLETENESS							7/10		
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*Share of covered perspectives*

*Inverted: original value measures coverage (higher = better). Shown as deviation (higher = larger gaps).*

| # | Perspective | Status |

|---|---|---|

| 1 | Protester/blockade participant viewpoint (reasons for protest, mandate grievances) | COVERED — one quote included |

| 2 | RCMP/law enforcement operational perspective | COVERED — one quote included |

| 3 | Provincial government position (Jason Kenney/UCP) | MENTIONED — paraphrased only, not directly quoted |

| 4 | Federal government position (Trudeau/Liberal government on mandates and enforcement) | OMITTED — referenced only in passing ("justin trudeau") |

| 5 | Local community/business impact (Coutts-area residents, cross-border businesses) | MENTIONED — local official quote touches on this obliquely |

| 6 | Trucking industry perspective (Canadian Trucking Alliance had distanced itself from convoy) | OMITTED |

| 7 | Public health expert perspective (rationale for mandates being protested) | OMITTED |

| 8 | Legal/constitutional expert perspective (legality of blockade, enforcement options) | OMITTED |

| 9 | U.S. stakeholder perspective (American businesses, U.S. government concern about border) | OMITTED |

| 10 | Opposition parties' positions (NDP, federal Conservatives on blockade and mandates) | OMITTED |

**Completeness Score: 3/10**

The broadcast covers only three of ten relevant perspectives in any meaningful way, and two of those are superficial mentions rather than substantive coverage.



## Soft Facts — 6 qualitative techniques

### 10. FRAMING

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Definition: How the topic is fundamentally constructed — what assumptions are built into the story's architecture, what is treated as "given," and what interpretive lens is applied.

#### Finding 1.1

- Location: Opening exchange, anchor-to-reporter
- Quote: "the standoff continues erin what's the situation at the blockade this evening"
- Technique: Conflict framing / "standoff" metaphor
- Problem: The word "standoff" frames the situation as a symmetrical confrontation between two equally legitimate parties — law enforcement and protesters — rather than as an illegal obstruction of a public road and international trade route. This framing implicitly elevates the protesters to co-equal status with the state, which is a significant editorial choice that goes unexamined.

#### Finding 1.2

- Location: Reporter's opening narration
- Quote: "the rcmp insisting that this road to the u.s border needed to be cleared today standing in their way about 100 big rigs and they're very determined drivers"
- Technique: Adversarial framing that subtly positions RCMP as the aggressor
- Problem: The phrase "standing in their way" frames the protesters as a natural obstacle and the RCMP as the party applying pressure, rather than framing the blockade as the illegal act and RCMP enforcement as the lawful response. "Insisting" carries a tone of unreasonable demand rather than lawful authority.

#### Finding 1.3

- Location: Reporter's closing summary
- Quote: "you add it all up and there is continued gridlock on the road to the u.s"
- Technique: Neutral-outcome framing that obscures legal and economic stakes
- Problem: Describing the situation as "gridlock" — a word typically associated with traffic inconvenience or political impasse — dramatically understates the severity of an ongoing illegal blockade of an international trade corridor. The framing normalizes the situation rather than contextualizing it as an extraordinary breach of public order.



## 11. WORD CHOICE & TERMINOLOGY

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Definition: The use of loaded, connotative, euphemistic, or dysphemistic language that shapes audience perception beyond neutral description.

### Finding 2.1

- Location: Reporter narration, early segment
- Quote: "very determined drivers"
- Technique: Humanizing/sympathetic characterization
- Problem: "Determined" is an unambiguously positive character trait in common usage — it connotes resolve, principle, and strength of character. Describing individuals engaged in an illegal blockade of a federal highway as "determined" rather than, for example, "entrenched," "defiant," or simply "protesters" introduces a subtle positive valence that is not applied to any other party in the segment.

### Finding 2.2

- Location: Reporter narration, mid-segment
- Quote: "it's a win for these protesters but at what cost they're blockade intact but the tactics used to keep it bleeding support even among political allies"
- Technique: Selective moral framing — "at what cost" applied only to protesters' tactics, not to the blockade's economic or legal costs
- Problem: The phrase "at what cost" is applied exclusively to the protesters' internal political dynamics (losing support), not to the cost imposed on trade, on local residents, or on the rule of law. This is a significant asymmetry: the costs borne by third parties are not subjected to the same rhetorical scrutiny as the protesters' political positioning.

### Finding 2.3

- Location: Reporter narration, describing protest goals
- Quote: "protesters here focused on overturning vaccine and mass mandates in alberta"
- Technique: Scope limitation through word choice
- Problem: The protesters' stated goals included federal mandates (particularly the cross-border trucker vaccination requirement), not only Alberta provincial mandates. Limiting the description to "in alberta" subtly mischaracterizes the protest's primary federal target, which was the Trudeau government's cross-border vaccination requirement — the direct cause of the convoy's formation. This is a factual imprecision with framing consequences.



## 12. MODERATION BEHAVIOR

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Definition: Asymmetries in the anchor's or reporter's questioning style, follow-up pressure, interruptions, or signals of sympathy or skepticism toward different parties.

### Finding 5.1

- Location: Anchor-to-reporter exchange, opening
- Quote: "erin what's the situation at the blockade this evening"
- Technique: Open, non-challenging question to field reporter
- Problem: The anchor's question is entirely open-ended and does not prompt the reporter to address the legal status of the blockade, the economic impact, or the federal government's position. While open questions are standard in field report formats, the absence of any structuring follow-up that might have directed the reporter toward omitted perspectives is notable.

### Finding 5.2

- Location: Anchor follow-up question
- Quote: "erin the premier also saying the blockade should come to an end what about the public health mandates"
- Technique: Pivot to mandate question without challenging blockade legality
- Problem: The anchor's follow-up question pivots immediately to the protesters' core demand (mandate removal) rather than pressing on the enforcement situation, the legal framework, or the economic damage. This sequencing implicitly validates the protesters' framing that the mandates are the central issue, rather than the legality of the blockade itself.

### Finding 5.3

- Location: Reporter's narration throughout
- Quote: "it's a win for these protesters"
- Technique: Reporter adopting protesters' evaluative framework
- Problem: A reporter describing an outcome as "a win" for one party in a contested situation has adopted that party's competitive framing. Neutral journalism would describe what occurred (trucks remained, RCMP withdrew) without characterizing it as a victory or defeat for either side. This language reflects an implicit alignment with the protesters' perspective.



### 13. QUESTION ASYMMETRY

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Definition: Whether harder, more confrontational questions are directed at one party while softer, more sympathetic questions are directed at another.

#### Finding 7.1

- Location: Anchor's second question
- Quote: "erin the premier also saying the blockade should come to an end what about the public health mandates"
- Technique: Soft pivot that validates protest framing
- Problem: The anchor's question about "public health mandates" — framed as a natural follow-up to the blockade story — implicitly accepts the protesters' premise that the mandates are the legitimate subject of debate in this context, rather than asking harder questions such as: "What legal tools does the government have to end this?" or "What is the economic cost of each additional day?" The question structure advantages the protest narrative.

#### Finding 7.2

- Location: Entire segment
- Quote: [No challenging questions directed at protesters or their supporters]
- Technique: Absence of adversarial questioning for protest perspective
- Problem: Neither the anchor nor the reporter poses any challenging question to the protest perspective — for example: "Are these protesters aware their blockade is illegal?" or "How do they respond to the Canadian Trucking Alliance's condemnation?" The only implicit challenge to the protest comes from the local official's quote about freedom of movement, which is a community voice, not a journalistic challenge.

#### Finding 7.3

- Location: Reporter narration
- Quote: "the rcmp needs to have this opened much sooner than that"
- Technique: Reporter editorializing in favor of enforcement without equivalent editorial pressure on protesters
- Problem: This is one of the few moments where the reporter implicitly sides with an institutional position (RCMP timeline over Kenney's timeline), but notably this pressure is directed at the government rather than at the protesters. No equivalent editorial statement is made about the protesters' obligations or the illegality of their position.



## 14. FALSE BALANCE

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Definition: The creation of artificial equivalence between positions that are not actually equivalent in terms of evidence, legal standing, or expert consensus.

### Finding 14.1

- Location: Overall segment structure
- Quote: [Protest perspective and enforcement perspective treated as equivalent sides]
- Technique: False equivalence between legal authority and illegal obstruction
- Problem: The segment's "standoff" framing treats the RCMP's lawful enforcement of traffic law and the protesters' illegal blockade of a federal highway as two equivalent sides of a dispute. This is a form of false balance: one party is exercising lawful authority under Canadian law; the other is engaged in conduct that constitutes criminal mischief and obstruction under the Criminal Code. Treating these as equivalent "sides" misrepresents the legal reality.

### Finding 14.2

- Location: Reporter narration
- Quote: "there is support for the ideas behind this blockade in this part of alberta but it has its limits"
- Technique: Artificial balance between community support and opposition
- Problem: The reporter acknowledges both support and opposition to the blockade in the community, but provides no evidence for either claim. The "but it has its limits" qualifier is immediately followed by the local official's quote about freedom of movement — suggesting the "limits" are about the blockade's methods rather than its goals. This creates a false balance that implies the protest's underlying ideas are broadly supported while only the tactics are contested.



## 15. AGENDA-SETTING

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Definition: What topics, questions, and frames become "the issue" through the broadcast's choices, and what is systematically excluded from the agenda.

### Finding 15.1

- Location: Anchor's follow-up question
- Quote: "erin the premier also saying the blockade should come to an end what about the public health mandates"
- Technique: Mandate debate set as primary agenda item
- Problem: By asking "what about the public health mandates," the anchor sets the scientific and policy debate about COVID mandates as the central agenda item — which is precisely the agenda the protesters sought to advance. The broadcast thus serves as a platform for the protest's core political objective (putting mandate removal on the public agenda) rather than examining the blockade as a law enforcement and trade issue.

### Finding 15.2

- Location: Entire segment
- Quote: [No mention of: Criminal Code implications, Emergencies Act (which would be invoked days later), U.S. government concerns, Canadian Trucking Alliance position, economic impact figures]
- Technique: Systematic exclusion of legal, economic, and institutional context
- Problem: The broadcast's agenda is almost entirely confined to the immediate physical standoff and the political question of mandates. Excluded from the agenda are: the legal framework governing the blockade, the economic quantification of harm, the position of the trucking industry itself, international dimensions of the border closure, and the broader constitutional questions raised by the protest. These exclusions collectively shape a narrow, protest-sympathetic agenda.

### Finding 15.3

- Location: Reporter narration
- Quote: "jason kenney says these protesters could get what they're asking for by the end of the month"
- Technique: Policy concession framed as agenda item without critical examination
- Problem: The report that Kenney was signaling mandate removal "by the end of the month" is presented as a factual update without any critical examination: Was this a genuine policy commitment or a political maneuver? What did public health officials say about the timing? Was this an appropriate response to an illegal blockade? By setting "mandate removal timeline" as an agenda item without critical framing, the broadcast implicitly validates the protest's coercive strategy.



## CHAPTER 2 — OVERALL EVALUATION

### A) Summary Table: All 15 Criteria

#	Criterion	Score (0–10)	Key Finding
1	Framing	5	"Standoff" and "gridlock" framing treats illegal blockade as symmetrical dispute
2	Word Choice	5	"Determined drivers" and "win" apply positive valence exclusively to protest side
3	Expert Selection	7	Zero credentialed experts in a story requiring public health, legal, and economic expertise
4	Selective Omission	7	No economic figures, no CTA position, no legal framework, no federal government voice
5	Moderation Behavior	4	Anchor questions validate protest framing; no challenging questions directed at protesters
6	Time Distribution	6	Protest voices get direct quotes; government position gets only paraphrase
7	Question Asymmetry	4	Soft questions throughout; no adversarial questioning of protest perspective
8	Guilt by Association	2	Minimal use of this technique; protest not linked to extremist elements
9	Numerical Manipulation	5	Unsubstantiated community support claim; no economic impact figures
10	Timing & Placement	3	Protest voice leads; segment closes with minimizing "gridlock" framing
12	Source Selection	6	All sources unnamed; no independent sources; reporter makes unsourced factual claims
13	Selective Outrage	4	"At what cost" applied to protest tactics, not to harm caused to third parties
14	False Balance	5	Illegal blockade and lawful enforcement treated as equivalent "sides"
15	Agenda-Setting	6	Mandate debate set as primary agenda; legal, economic, international dimensions excluded

### B) Overall Scores

- Criteria Score (average of 15):  $(5+5+7+7+4+6+4+2+5+3+4+6+4+5+6) \div 15 = 73 \div 15 = 4.9$

### C) Top 3 Manipulation Techniques Observed

#### 1. Framing by Symmetry (False Equivalence)

The broadcast's most pervasive technique is the construction of a symmetrical "standoff" between two parties — protesters and law enforcement — that are not legally or morally equivalent. By using language like "standoff," "standing in their way," and "gridlock," the broadcast implicitly elevates an illegal blockade to the status of a legitimate political act deserving equal narrative weight with lawful enforcement. This is the foundational distortion from which most other biases flow.



## 2. Selective Humanization

The broadcast systematically humanizes the protest perspective while keeping institutional and community-harm perspectives abstract. Protesters speak in their own words, with emotionally resonant language ("God gives us freedom"). The RCMP speaks in bureaucratic operational language. The government is paraphrased. Those harmed by the blockade — businesses, commuters, cross-border workers — have no voice at all. This asymmetry in humanization creates an emotional architecture that favors the protest perspective without requiring any explicit editorial endorsement.

## 3. Agenda Capture

By accepting the protesters' framing that "public health mandates" are the central issue and by reporting Kenney's mandate-removal timeline as a straightforward news item, the broadcast allows the protest to set the journalistic agenda. The effect is that the broadcast advances the protesters' primary political objective — putting mandate removal on the public agenda — while treating the illegal blockade as merely the mechanism by which this agenda item was raised, rather than as the primary story in its own right.

## D) 3 Core Messages Embedded in the Broadcast

Content Message (what the viewer learns):

*"The RCMP tried and failed to clear the blockade; the protesters are winning; the government may give them what they want."*

- Technique: Outcome framing + political concession reporting
- Transcript evidence: "it's a win for these protesters" + "jason kenney says these protesters could get what they're asking for by the end of the month"
- Effect: The viewer learns that the protest is effective and that political capitulation is likely, which implicitly validates the protest strategy.

Personal Message (who is presented positively/negatively):

*"The protesters are principled, determined people with legitimate grievances; the government and RCMP are obstacles to freedom."*

- Technique: Selective humanization + adversarial framing of authority
- Transcript evidence: "very determined drivers" + "god gives us freedom, not the government" + "the rcmp insisting that this road needed to be cleared" (emphasis on "insisting" as unreasonable demand)
- Effect: The viewer is positioned to identify with the protesters and view institutional authority as the aggressor.

Societal Message (what worldview is reinforced):

*"Government mandates are a legitimate target of popular resistance, and community sentiment in rural Alberta supports this resistance."*

- Technique: Agenda-setting + unsubstantiated community support claim
- Transcript evidence: "there is support for the ideas behind this blockade in this part of alberta" + anchor's question "what about the public health mandates" treating mandate debate as natural follow-up
- Effect: The broadcast reinforces a worldview in which pandemic public health measures are politically contested rather than scientifically grounded, and in which rural Alberta's presumed support for the protest is treated as a given rather than a claim requiring evidence.

## E) Classification

Classification: CLEAR ONE-SIDEDNESS (4.1–6.0)

The broadcast exhibits clear structural bias toward the protest perspective through framing, selective humanization, agenda capture, and systematic omission of countervailing voices, economic context, and legal framework. The bias is not primarily achieved through overt editorializing but through the cumulative effect of editorial choices that consistently advantage the protest narrative.



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## F) Summary

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This segment of The National demonstrates clear one-sidedness in its coverage of the Coutts blockade, falling short of the standards articulated in CBC's Journalistic Standards and Practices, which require accuracy, fairness, balance, and impartiality. The broadcast's framing of an illegal obstruction of a federal highway as a symmetrical "standoff" — combined with the complete absence of expert voices, economic impact data, legal context, and the Canadian Trucking Alliance's condemnation of the convoy — produces coverage that structurally advantages the protest perspective without any explicit editorial endorsement. Under Section 3(1)(l) of the Broadcasting Act, CBC is mandated to provide "a reasonable opportunity for the public to be exposed to the expression of differing views on matters of public concern"; this segment fails that standard by excluding the federal government's position, public health expertise, and the perspectives of those economically harmed by the blockade. The decision to treat "public health mandates" as the natural follow-up question — rather than the legality of the blockade, the economic damage, or the enforcement options available — represents an agenda-setting failure that allowed the protest to define the terms of the broadcast's inquiry. While the segment does not rise to the level of extreme bias, its cumulative editorial choices constitute a pattern of one-sidedness that is inconsistent with CBC's public broadcasting mandate and its obligations under the Broadcasting Act.



## CHAPTER 3 — PARTY-POLITICAL BIAS

### Party Bias Scores

Party	Bias Score (-5 to +5)	Evidence
NDP	0	Not mentioned, not referenced, not implicated. Score reflects absence rather than active treatment.
Green Party (GPC)	0	Not mentioned. Score reflects absence.
Liberal Party (LPC)	-2	Justin Trudeau is referenced only in a protester's accusatory quote: "he is responsible as well as justin trudeau, not these people." The Liberal government's position on mandates or enforcement is never presented; Trudeau appears only as a target of protest anger, with no rebuttal or context provided.
Bloc Québécois (BQ)	0	Not mentioned. Score reflects absence.
Conservative Party (CPC)	0	Federal Conservatives not mentioned. Score reflects absence. Note: Jason Kenney (UCP, provincial) is referenced but UCP is not CPC.
People's Party (PPC)	+1	The protest's core demands (anti-mandate, anti-government restriction) align closely with PPC policy positions. The broadcast's sympathetic framing of these demands — "determined drivers," "God gives us freedom," reporting Kenney's concession — implicitly advantages the political space the PPC occupies, even without naming the party.

Note on UCP (Jason Kenney): While not a federal party, Kenney's treatment warrants comment. He is paraphrased rather than directly quoted, and the reporter's framing ("the rcmp needs to have this opened much sooner than that") implicitly criticizes his timeline as insufficient. This represents mild negative framing of the UCP position. Score: -1 (provincial, not included in federal table).

### Summary Statistics

- Most favored party: People's Party (PPC) | Score: +1

*(Favored indirectly through sympathetic framing of anti-mandate protest that aligns with PPC platform)*

- Most disadvantaged party: Liberal Party (LPC) | Score: -2

*(Trudeau referenced only as protest target; Liberal government position entirely absent)*

- Average deviation from 0 (absolute values):  $(0+0+2+0+0+1) \div 6 = 0.5$



## CHAPTER 4 — LEGAL CLASSIFICATION

### A) CBC Journalistic Standards and Practices (JSP)

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#### ACCURACY

- Standard: CBC JSP requires that "the information we present is accurate, reliable and current."
- Finding: The broadcast contains at least one factual imprecision: describing the protest as focused on "vaccine and mass mandates in alberta" when the primary trigger was the federal cross-border vaccination requirement — a federal, not provincial, mandate.
- Quote: "protesters here focused on overturning vaccine and mass mandates in alberta"
- Violation: Mischaracterizes the primary jurisdictional target of the protest
- Severity: Moderate — This imprecision shifts responsibility from the federal government to the provincial government, which has political implications for how viewers assess accountability.

#### FAIRNESS

- Standard: CBC JSP requires that "we treat individuals and organizations with fairness and respect."
- Finding: The federal government (Liberal Party/Trudeau) is referenced only through a protester's accusatory quote with no opportunity for response or rebuttal.
- Quote: "he is responsible as well as justin trudeau, not these people" — presented without any federal government response
- Violation: Failure to seek or present the accused party's response to a direct accusation
- Severity: Significant — Allowing an accusation against a named political leader to stand without any rebuttal or context is a clear fairness violation under CBC JSP.

#### BALANCE

- Standard: CBC JSP requires "a wide range of perspectives" and that "no particular point of view is unduly favoured."
- Finding: The broadcast presents protest-sympathetic voices in direct quotes while presenting government and institutional voices only through paraphrase or brief operational statements. Expert voices are entirely absent.
- Quote: Protester direct quote (19% of content) vs. Kenney paraphrase (0% direct)
- Violation: Structural imbalance in voice representation that unduly favors the protest perspective
- Severity: Significant — The systematic exclusion of expert, government, industry, and community-harm perspectives constitutes a clear balance failure.

#### IMPARTIALITY

- Standard: CBC JSP requires that reporters "do not express their personal opinions on matters of controversy."
- Finding: The reporter makes several editorial judgments: "it's a win for these protesters," "very determined drivers," "there is support for the ideas behind this blockade in this part of alberta."
- Quote: "it's a win for these protesters"
- Violation: Reporter adopts protest-sympathetic evaluative language that constitutes an expression of editorial opinion
- Severity: Moderate — While not extreme, these language choices represent a pattern of non-impartial framing.

#### INDEPENDENCE

- Standard: CBC JSP requires that coverage not be influenced by external parties.
- Finding: No evidence of external influence is detectable from the transcript alone. This criterion cannot be fully assessed from transcript analysis.
- Severity: Not assessable from transcript

### B) Broadcasting Act, S.C. 1991, c. 11, Section 3(1)

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Section 3(1)(l) — Reasonable opportunity for differing views:

- Standard: The broadcasting system should "provide a reasonable opportunity for the public to be exposed to the expression of differing views on matters of public concern."
- Finding: The broadcast presents only protest-sympathetic and mildly critical community voices on the central policy question of vaccine mandates. No public health voice, no federal government voice, and no expert voice is included.
- Quote: Anchor: "what about the public health mandates" — followed by reporter paraphrase of Kenney's concession, with no public health perspective offered
- Violation: Failure to provide differing views on the central policy question raised by the broadcast
- Severity: Significant

Section 3(1)(d)(i) — Safeguarding cultural, political, social and economic fabric:

- Standard: The broadcasting system should "safeguard, enrich and strengthen the cultural, political, social and economic fabric of Canada."
- Finding: The broadcast's failure to quantify or contextualize the economic damage caused by the blockade — a disruption to Canada's economic fabric — and its framing of an illegal obstruction as a legitimate "standoff" arguably fails to strengthen public understanding of Canada's economic and legal institutions.
- Severity: Minor — This is an indirect concern rather than a direct violation.

Section 3(1)(i) — Reflection of Canada's diversity:

- Standard: The broadcasting system should "reflect the circumstances and aspirations of Canadian men, women and children, including equal rights, the linguistic duality and the multicultural and multiracial nature of Canadian society."
- Finding: The broadcast reflects only one regional and cultural perspective (rural Alberta, English-speaking, anti-mandate). No Indigenous perspectives, no francophone perspectives, no urban perspectives, and no perspectives from communities disproportionately affected by COVID-19 are included.
- Severity: Moderate

## C) CRTC Conditions of Licence

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Standard: CRTC conditions of licence for CBC require adherence to "a high standard of journalistic ethics" including balance and fairness in news coverage.

**Finding: The cumulative pattern of framing choices, selective omission, unsubstantiated claims, and asymmetric voice representation in this segment falls below the high standard of journalistic ethics required by CRTC conditions of licence.**

Severity: Moderate — The violations are systemic within this segment but do not rise to the level of deliberate disinformation or egregious ethical breach.

## Overall Regulatory Assessment

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This broadcast segment exhibits multiple violations of CBC's Journalistic Standards and Practices, most significantly in the areas of balance, fairness, and impartiality, and falls short of the Broadcasting Act's Section 3(1)(l) requirement to provide reasonable exposure to differing views on matters of public concern. The most significant regulatory concern is the complete absence of federal government response to direct accusations made against the Prime Minister, combined with the systematic exclusion of public health, legal, and economic expert perspectives on a story that is fundamentally about all three domains. While no single element of the broadcast constitutes a gross violation of journalistic ethics, the cumulative pattern of editorial choices — framing, word choice, source selection, and agenda-setting — produces coverage that is structurally inconsistent with CBC's public broadcasting mandate under the Broadcasting Act and its obligations under CRTC conditions of licence. A regulatory review of this segment would be warranted as part of a broader assessment of CBC's convoy coverage patterns during the February 2022 period.

## Source Credibility Assessment

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Source	Funding/Affiliation	Conflicts of Interest	Credibility	Counter-Voice Offered?
Unnamed protester	Self-funded / convoy participant	Direct interest in protest outcome	Low (as policy source) / High (as witness to own experience)	No
Unnamed local official	Municipal government (public funding)	Represents local constituents; mild conflict as elected official	Medium	Partial (their quote implicitly counters protest)
Unnamed RCMP spokesperson	Federal government (public funding)	Institutional interest in portraying enforcement positively	Medium	No
Jason Kenney (paraphrased)	Provincial government (public funding)	Strong political interest in managing both protest and public health optics	Medium	No
Unnamed protest supporter	Self-funded / convoy sympathizer	Direct interest in protest outcome	Low (as policy source)	No
Reporter (Aaron Collins)	CBC (public broadcaster)	Institutional mandate for impartiality; potential field reporter proximity bias	Should be High; compromised by editorial choices noted above	N/A

Overall source credibility assessment: The broadcast relies exclusively on directly interested parties with no independent, credentialed, or expert sources. This is the most significant source selection failure in the segment and the primary driver of its low completeness score. No counter-voice is offered for any of the protest-sympathetic claims made in the broadcast.

*End of Analysis Report — Version 1.0-cbc*

*Prepared under Senior Media Accountability Review Protocol*

*All findings are based exclusively on the provided transcript and publicly available information about the Coutts blockade and CBC journalistic standards.*



## OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE 15 CRITERIA

### Individual Scores — All 15 Criteria

No.	Criterion	Score	Rating
1	EXPERT SELECTION	7	●●●●
2	SOURCE SELECTION	6	●●●
3	TIME DISTRIBUTION	6	●●●
4	SELECTIVE OMISSION	7	●●●●
5	NUMERICAL MANIPULATION	5	●●●
6	GUILT BY ASSOCIATION	2	●
7	TIMING & PLACEMENT	3	●●
8	SELECTIVE OUTRAGE	4	●●
9	COMPLETENESS	7	●●●●
10	FRAMING	5	●●●
11	WORD CHOICE & TERMINOLOGY	5	●●●
12	MODERATION BEHAVIOR	4	●●
13	QUESTION ASYMMETRY	4	●●
14	FALSE BALANCE	5	●●●
15	AGENDA-SETTING	6	●●●

#### HARD FACTS SCORE (1-8)

**5.2/10**

*Significant imbalance*

#### SOFT FACTS SCORE (9-14)

**4.8/10**

*Significant imbalance*

#### OVERALL SCORE

**5.0/10**

*Significant imbalance*

*Average of Hardfacts and Softfacts*



## KEY — Score Definitions

### Individual Scores per Criterion (0–10)

<b>0</b>	<b>No finding</b>	No relevant anomaly detected.
<b>1–2</b>	<b>Weak finding</b>	Minor anomaly without substantial impact on balance.
<b>3–4</b>	<b>Slight to moderate finding</b>	Recognizable tendency; low to moderate impact relevance.
<b>5</b>	<b>Moderate finding with impact</b>	Relevant imbalance affecting the audience's opinion-forming potential.
<b>6</b>	<b>Significant finding (threshold)</b>	Scores of 6 and above are classified as 'significant findings.'
<b>7</b>	<b>Significant finding</b>	Clear, well-documented imbalance with distinct impact relevance.
<b>8–9</b>	<b>Severe finding</b>	Pronounced imbalance; multiple documented individual findings in this criterion.
<b>10</b>	<b>Maximum severity</b>	Systematic, pervasive imbalance in this criterion.

### Aggregated Deviation Index — Interpretation Ranges

<b>0.0 – 2.5</b>	<b>Unremarkable</b>	No significant patterns detected; broadcast meets the impartiality standard.
<b>2.6 – 4.0</b>	<b>Slight imbalance</b>	Isolated anomalies; statistically visible but within tolerance range.
<b>4.1 – 6.0</b>	<b>Significant imbalance</b>	Multiple significant findings; relevant impairment of perspective diversity.
<b>6.1 – 8.0</b>	<b>Serious deviation from the impartiality standard. High degree of deviation</b>	Pronounced, cross-broadcast patterns; high impact relevance.
<b>8.1 – 10</b>	<b>Fundamental systemic one-sidedness. Very high bias degree</b>	Maximum severity across nearly all criteria; systematically one-sided reporting.

### Party-Political Bias (-5 to +5)

<b>-5 to -3</b>	<b>Strongly disadvantaged</b>	Party is significantly underrepresented in framing, airtime, or presentation.
<b>-2 to -1</b>	<b>Slightly disadvantaged</b>	Recognizable but minor disadvantage.
<b>0</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	No detectable favoritism or disadvantage.
<b>+1 to +2</b>	<b>Slightly favored</b>	Recognizable but minor favoritism.
<b>+3 to +5</b>	<b>Strongly favored</b>	Party is significantly overrepresented in framing, airtime, or presentation.

### Legal and Methodological Notes



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**No factual determination**

The results presented do not constitute factual determinations about individual persons, editorial teams, or broadcasts. They are the product of a standardized operationalization, not a finding of individual responsibility.

**No legal judgment**

The aggregated deviation index does not replace a legal assessment under Broadcasting Act s. 3(1)(l). The determination of whether a specific broadcast violates legal requirements is exclusively the responsibility of the competent authorities (in particular CRTC).

**No proof of causation**

Statistical correlations are not to be interpreted as proof of causal relationships or editorial intent. Deviation values may be influenced by topic selection, news environment, political controversy, or format logic.

**No judgment of intent**

The analysis measures observable structural characteristics of broadcasts. A score of 7 means a significant imbalance was detected — not that the editorial team intended it. The methodology makes no claims about motives or strategic objectives.

**Heuristic comparison tool**

The index serves comparative pattern recognition across thousands of broadcasts, not precise metric measurement of individual segments. Threshold values serve heuristic orientation, not sharp legal qualification.



## APPENDIX: NATIONAL BROADCASTING LAW

### Legal Basis Canada — CBC/Radio-Canada

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#### Law

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Broadcasting Act (S.C. 1991, c. 11)

#### Relevant Sections

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- Section 3(1)(d): The Canadian broadcasting system should safeguard, enrich and strengthen the cultural, political, social and economic fabric of Canada.
- Section 3(1)(l): The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, as the national public broadcaster, should provide radio and television services incorporating a wide range of programming that informs, enlightens and entertains; be predominantly and distinctively Canadian; reflect Canada and its regions to national and regional audiences; actively contribute to the flow and exchange of cultural expression; be in English and in French; contribute to shared national consciousness and identity.
- Section 3(1)(m): The programming provided by the Corporation should be made available throughout Canada by the most appropriate and efficient means.

#### CBC Journalistic Standards and Practices (JSP)

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6 Core Principles:

1. **Accuracy:** Facts correct and verified
2. **Fairness:** Fair treatment of all parties
3. **Balance:** Balanced representation of controversial topics
4. **Impartiality:** Impartial reporting
5. **Integrity:** Journalistic integrity
6. **Independence:** Editorial independence

#### Online Legislation

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- C-11 (Online Streaming Act): Streaming regulation
- C-18 (Online News Act): News compensation

#### Regulatory Authority

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- CRTC (Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission): Regulation, licensing
- CBC Ombudsman: Internal complaints body (not independent, no sanctioning authority)

#### Special Note

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Canada has no independent external regulator comparable to Switzerland's UBI. The CBC Ombudsman is an internal body. CBC left the CBSC (Canadian Broadcast Standards Council) in 2009.

#### Complaints Process

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1. CBC Ombudsman (internal)
2. CRTC (licensing conditions)



## APPENDIX 2: SCIENTIFIC REFERENCES

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