

March 17, 2023

Dear ICA Members

On February 20, 2023, the Globe and Mail published an article titled “Actors’ union accuses Ottawa of prolonging labour dispute with agencies after millions in ad spending revealed”. This article omits and misrepresents important facts about how advertising budgets actually work by ignoring how much of a budget goes to media buying and media companies who distribute the content.

On March 14, ACTRA escalated this issue by launching a campaign called “Tell Ottawa to Fire Cossette”, which completely misrepresents Cossette’s relationship with the federal government and its use of ACTRA talent.

The ICA – on behalf of leading agencies, including Cossette - is currently in negotiations with ACTRA to develop a new National Commercial Agreement. We will continue to negotiate in good faith with the objective of finding a solution agreeable to all parties. Out of respect for the integrity of the negotiation process, the ICA has refrained from speaking publicly until the negotiations have concluded, but this situation is one that demands a fact check of the misinformation.

1. All Cossette work for the federal government is done in Quebec and complies with agreements with **ACTRA** and the Quebec acting union, **UDA** and uses only ACTRA and UDA members. This is in accordance with the 2022 agreement between the ACTRA, the **Association of Canadian Advertisers** (ACA) and the **Association of Creative Communications Agencies** (A2C). Cossette is a member of A2C in Quebec. In short, Cossette is working with ACTRA members in accordance with a valid and binding ACTRA agreement.
2. Advertising budgets do not all go to advertising agencies – not even close. Budgets include production, media placement and the buying of ad space, which is ultimately paid to media companies, not advertising agencies. In fact, most of a typical advertising budget is paid to media companies, not advertising agencies. Taking a whole budget amount and suggesting it is paid to the advertising agency while omitting all the other companies engaged in the work is a deliberate misrepresentation of the facts.



At a time when talented performers are losing work because they are forbidden by ACTRA from working with ICA agencies, it is unfortunate (and hard to understand) that ACTRA now feels it somehow makes sense to take the additional step of threatening work being performed by its own union members and those of UDA working in accordance with a valid union contract.

ICA agencies value and respect ACTRA performers. Union talent are not locked out of work by agencies, they are being locked down by ACTRA.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

For more information on this issue please visit: <https://theica.ca/actra.ubcp.uda>

Yours sincerely

**Scott Knox**  
President & CEO