Q. Will membership be more or less expensive?

A. Our intention is to make sure that new members pay the same total permit and initiation fees under the new system as they did under the old one -- in other words, the total cost of joining ACTRA will stay the same. Members who joined under the old system won’t regret it. New members will neither face higher fees, nor will they get a discount.

Q. Will ACTRA get more or less money from this new system?

A. We think that ACTRA will receive the same total contribution from new members as in the past. Financially it will be "revenue neutral" per member.

Q. Will this cause a flood of new members?

A. Given the current distribution of permits in the ACTRA Toronto membership, the immediate result will be around 300 new full members – hardly a flood in a 13,000 member branch! Going forward, it should take less time for new apprentices to become full members -- 18 to 24 months on average, instead of four to five years. We hope this will encourage all professional performers, especially younger members, to join -- building our bargaining power to the benefit of all members.

Q. Will student films count towards three credits?

A. No.

Q. Will people still be able to join through reciprocal agreements?

A. Yes.

Q. Will people still have to take a membership course in addition to the three credits?

A. Yes.
Q: Won’t there always be performers working outside of the union, no matter what our rules are?

A: Perhaps, but this modernization will give us a new tool to get things moving in the right direction. Today the non-union talent pool contains experienced and talented performers who belong on the union side. Streamlined membership rules will help equip our organizers to recruit the best of them.

Q: Won’t the amended rules simply diminish the quality of ACTRA performers?

A: ACTRA is a union of people who believe that performers deserve fair pay, decent working conditions and health and retirement benefits. We are not a club, a closed shop, or an acting school. ACTRA membership is a sign of professionalism, commitment and identity. It is NOT a guarantee of talent or fitness for any particular role. New members who support our fight for a better deal and who agree not to undercut our negotiated contracts will build our strength, and will weaken the non-union industry.

Q: Isn’t membership a privilege? Doesn’t it have to be earned? Shouldn’t it be hard to join?

A: With three credits required for full membership, ACTRA will (still) have the toughest entrance standards of any English language performers’ union in the world. Applicants can join the Screen Actors’ Guild as full members with one credit, for example.

Q: What about our visible minority performers? How many performing credits will they require in a 3 credit system?

A: Visible minority members will require 3 credits, as they do now.

Q: I pride myself on being an ACTRA member because of my work and the quality that is expected of me. I simply believe everyone should work as hard too.

A: You should be proud of being an ACTRA member. It represents professionalism and a commitment to improving the lot of the working performer. There are more people out there who share our commitment and want to pay their dues and to promise us that they will not undermine our negotiated agreements. We should welcome them. We should welcome all true professional performers. **Vote Yes!**