
It's Your Government aims to engage 'lively minds'

BY THULASI SRIKANTHAN

One of the best moments in today's premiere of *It's Your Government* comes when Ottawa residents are asked to decipher government-speak.

Know what it means when the VCDS had asked CAS to prepare the SSPPA for SAAR? Or what about a DGCOM putting out a RFP? Confused? So were the respondents.

Hyped as "Government 101," the show aims to demystify government and will tackle how a budget is made, decode government-speak and untangle infra-

structure spending.

John Robson, a host and a *Citizen* columnist, said the show is about re-engaging citizens in the political system.

"If citizens want to influence public affairs, the first thing they need to do is have a handle on the reasons why things happen," Mr. Robson said.

This is particularly important as people can feel disenfranchised from their government and the electoral process, said David Vowell, director of marketing for ichannel (Rogers Channel 197; ExpressVu 514).

"Maybe they don't understand

it or think their vote doesn't count," Mr. Vowell said.

Debuting tonight on ichannel, the show will air Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. and on Sundays at 9:30 p.m.

In tonight's inaugural episode, hosts examine everything from evolving government communications to the composition of a throne speech.

An initial run of 10 programs is expected this spring with another 10 anticipated for the fall.

And for those who might yawn at the idea of a serious Canadian political show, Mr. Robson said the show is meant

to be "a lively show for lively minds."

"We don't think serious and dull are synonyms," Mr. Robson said. "So the show is entertaining, but it's not silly and frivolous."

And those acronyms? VCDS stands for vice-chief of defence staff, CAS for chief of the air staff, SS for synopsis sheet, PPA for preliminary project approval and SAAR for strategic air-to-air refuelling.

And DGCOM is the director-general of communications while RFP is a request for proposals.

online: [Video](#)

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Online Extras has previews of *It's Your Government*. Find it at ottawacitizen.com/onlineextras.

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