

Execs lived good life at cash-strapped CBC

by UPI

OTTAWA -- Evidence is emerging the Canadian Broadcasting Corp.'s current financial shortfall was fueled by some lavish spending by executives three years ago.

Documents obtained under Access to Information Act by Sun Media show the publicly funded broadcaster spent \$61,500 on meetings at luxury resorts and hotels, limousines, expensive meals and sparkling wine in a six-month period.

Some of the high-end hotel meetings between January and June 2006 were held just blocks from the CBC's national headquarters in Toronto, the report said.

CBC spokesman Marco Dube told Sun Media in an e-mail the meetings were held in accordance with the corporation's guidelines, and that "off-site meetings are usually better to avoid disruptions."

Last month, the CBC announced it had a \$171 million shortfall in funding, which it blamed largely on falling advertising revenue. The corporation said on its news site it "plans to cut up to 80 positions from its news division and a further 313 from sports, entertainment, current affairs, sales and support across the country."

CBC President Hubert Lacroix said ultimately 800 fulltime jobs will be cut and the corporation would have to sell off some \$125 million in assets.

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