

Community Development Initiative (CDI)
Reply on the Bills Committee on Communications Authority Bill

Our organization has attended the Bill Committee on Communications Authority Bill on yesterday, this is the follow – up action arising from the discussion at the meeting on 22 July 2010.

1. Stop the monopoly

We think the Broadcasting Authority should not turned a blind eye on the monopoly of television sector (ie, the dominance of Hong Kong Television Broadcasts Limited (TVB), and we are looking forward that the situation will change after the merger of Broadcasting Authority and Telecommunication Authority.

2. Liberalize the public wavelength

We also think that the new authority needs to ensure a fair and competitive environment and protect the consumer, but more importantly, is to serve the citizen and guarantee to protect the civil right, public broadcasting channels is an important

3. Competitions, Diversity and Localization

We think that new communication authority will use a more value to look at internet and broadcasting business. Apart from the Competition, Federal Communication Commission (FCC) has other two goals: Diversity and Localism. Diversity can become the new innovative source for the market, it also protect the sounds of different minority. Localism means that the media will emphasize on local culture and sustaining the identity and value.

4. Concept of Community media, example of Australia and United Kingdom's community radio

The most typical way to foster diversity and localization is developing the community radio sector, they a non-profit sector that broadcast local interest and issue. Australia is a successful example on the development of community radio sector. In 2007, Australia has 361 community radio licenses, 79 regional community TVs and 4 permanent community TVs. Within the Australian's radio sector, the annual turnover national commercial radio station is AUS \$945 Million and the income of the community radio is AUS \$51 Million, for the audiences, the commercial radios have around 17 millions (per week), but the community radio have around 4 million (per week). So we can see that although the radio generate 20 times more than the community radio, it only have 4 times more audiences. They show that there is a big

demand on community radio, as they represent different minority social groups, which include ethnic minority, Lesbian and Gay group , prisoners group, blind group, elderly and youth. It shows that the telecommunication technology has not only commercial but social purpose too. Community broadcasting is also directly linked to the development of local economy. A research report from UK has shown that, when localized broadcasting company can generate cluster effect, and it can help pushing different types of creative industry like programme production and art performance industry.

Although Hong Kong has only 7 million is lesser than Australian's 20 million populations, but it is unacceptable we do not have even one community radio that transmit wave length legally. We cannot imagine how many voices from other minorities' group have been silenced and how much chances we missed in creative industry. Therefore, we should not just focus on technology development but the culture entailed as well, in order to develop our local creative industries for a better future.

Our organization have issue a report called *The predicament of Hong Kong Broadcasting Industry and its Future Direction* in August 2010, which has a few suggestions on how to improve out broadcasting industry. The report can download from the link below: