

Submission by
Metro Broadcast Corporation Limited
to the
Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting
re Future Operation of the Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK)
and the New RTHK Charter

Metro Broadcast Corporation Limited ('Metro Broadcast') welcomes the opportunity to put forward its views concerning the future operation of RTHK and the new RTHK Charter.

Metro Broadcast continues to hold the view expressed previously in our submission in response to the Government's public consultation on the new RTHK as a public service broadcaster and opines that any market-wide research and survey to be conducted for purpose of assessing the new RTHK which may involve performance of the commercial broadcasters should be conducted in an unbiased manner. In this regard, detailed discussion with all the commercial sound broadcasters concerned prior to commissioning of such research activities is deemed necessary. Moreover, Metro Broadcast is of the view that the performance evaluation of RTHK should be different from that of the commercial broadcasters in such a way where market share or listenership are not appropriate parameters to be used for the assessment of RTHK as a public service broadcaster. The audience base of the subjects to be served by public service broadcasting in many cases is in fact unlikely to contribute to a statistically significant percentage within the overall radio market.

Metro Broadcast advocates the role and functions of RTHK as a public service broadcaster. A general direction is that RTHK's services should complement the programmes provided by the commercial broadcasters. Metro Broadcast proposes that as a public service broadcaster, RTHK should develop programmes not adequately provided by the commercial broadcasters; such as programmes of specific nature with civic education as an example, or for specific target audience including but not limited to the ethnic minority groups. In comparison with its commercial counterparts, RTHK is considered more suitable in providing a platform for the Government to explain, promote and publicise its policies and for the public to have better understanding of Government policies because of the absence of commercial bias. Special segments to promote activities and campaigns organised by the Government or Government related organisations and programmes featuring interactive dialogues between Government officials and the general public are valid samples of the types of programmes RTHK should consider producing. Metro Broadcast also recommends that RTHK should strengthen its involvement in community service in fulfilling its mission as a public service broadcaster. On the programming level, for instance, collaboration with the District Councils to understand the life and wants of Hong Kong people living in different parts of the territory is suggested. RTHK should not regard commercial considerations as its top priority.

Metro Broadcast does not have any particular views other than the abovementioned in respect of the future operation of RTHK.

We appreciate consideration of our views by parties concerned in evaluating how to shape the operation of a new RTHK in the future.

METRO BROADCAST

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