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28 March 2013

Ms Yue Tin-po
Clerk to Panel on
Information Technology and Broadcasting
Legislative Council
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Ms Yue,

**Applications for
Domestic Free Television Programme Service Licences**

I refer to your letter of 7 February 2013 concerning the Panel's request for an updated report in connection with the above applications submitted by Hong Kong Television Network Limited, Fantastic Television Limited and HK Television Entertainment Company Limited on 31 December 2009, 15 January 2010 and 31 March 2010 respectively (collectively as "free TV licence applications").

At the Panel special meeting on 25 January 2013, the Administration provided the Panel with an information paper (the "Information Paper") and responded to the relevant questions raised by Panel Members. The Information Paper sets out the prevailing broadcasting policy and the statutory licensing regime in relation to domestic free television programme service licence. The Information Paper also explains the assessment criteria of the Communications Authority in considering the free TV licence applications and reports the latest processing status.

Following the last discussion of the subject at the Panel, the Administration has continued to process the free TV licence applications expeditiously and prudently in accordance with established procedures and the requirements under the Broadcasting Ordinance (Cap. 562). As explained on different occasions earlier, the processing of the free TV licence applications involves complicated issues including those relating to the statutory requirements and procedural fairness, the handling of which is time-intensive. Moreover, we also need to address new developments emerged during the process which concern statutory requirements and procedures. We hope Panel Members will understand that as bound by the confidentiality rule of the Executive Council, we are unable to provide them with further details at a time when the Chief Executive ("CE") in Council is considering the matter. Nevertheless, the CE in Council will continue to process the free TV licence applications in strict compliance with the relevant procedures. The outcome will also be announced as soon as possible after a decision is made by the CE in Council.

We would be grateful if you could convey the above information to the Panel Members for their reference. Thank you.



(M H Chiu)
for Secretary for

Commerce and Economic Development