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By Fax

6 November 2015

Clerk to Panel on Information
Technology and Broadcasting
Legislative Council Complex,
1 Legislative Council Road,
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn.: Miss Mandy LAM)
(Fax No.: 2840 0269)

Dear Miss Lam,

Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting

Thank you for your letter of 16 October 2015, inviting us to provide written response to the letter from Hon WONG Yuk-man to the Panel.

The Government has all along spared no efforts in taking forward a series of measures to support the development of Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) service. However, the DAB service is a new broadcasting service, and as in the case of other new mass media services, it takes time to develop its popularity and commercial potential.

Hon WONG Yuk-man mentioned in his letter that “the

Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region had not actively assisted in the installation of in-car DAB radios, and there were no improvements in tunnel re-broadcasting systems”. In fact, we have all along promoted the installation of DAB radios in vehicles imported to Hong Kong. We have twice in late 2010 and mid-2013 met with the major car importers to provide them with information on the development of DAB service in Hong Kong to urge them to install DAB radios in vehicles imported to Hong Kong. There is no statutory prohibition against the installation of DAB radios in vehicles. However, the installation of visual display units so that the screen is visible to the driver or at any point forward of the driver’s seat is prohibited under the law, and some of the DAB radios installed in imported vehicles are equipped with visual display units and therefore prohibited. In this connection, we have all along worked closely with the Transport Department (TD) and have arranged demonstrations and provided necessary information, with the aim of seeking on behalf of the DAB licensees an exemption from the relevant regulations on the installation of in-car DAB radios equipped with visual display units. The TD announced on 16 September 2015 that all private cars, taxis and light goods vehicles are exempted from the relevant regulations in respect of the installation of in-car DAB radios equipped with visual display units.

Separately, the Government invested \$46 million to install DAB re-broadcasting systems in 11 Government tunnels (i.e. Aberdeen Tunnel, Cross Harbour Tunnel, Kai Tak Tunnel, Lion Rock Tunnel, Tseung Kwan O Tunnel, Shing Mun Tunnels, Cheung Tsing Tunnel, Nam Wan Tunnel, Eagle’s Nest Tunnel, Sha Tin Heights Tunnel and Tai Wai Tunnel). The construction works were completed in early 2014. The Government will install DAB re-broadcasting systems in new Government tunnels. As for private tunnels, we have approached the relevant operators to provide them with an update on the development of the DAB service in Hong Kong and to convey to them the request of the DAB operators for the installation of DAB re-broadcasting systems in private tunnels.

The Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) formally rolled out its DAB service by providing five DAB programme channels in September 2012. RTHK has continued to promote its DAB service to

enhance the public's understanding of its DAB service by various means, including carrying out roadshows in housing estates and malls, organising special projects, and promoting RTHK's DAB service through its analogue radio channels. Regarding the listenership information of RTHK's DAB channels, we have briefed the Legislative Council (LegCo) on the results of the DAB listenership survey conducted by RTHK in the context of answering questions raised by the members of the LegCo Finance Committee in the examination of the Estimates of Expenditure in the last two years. The relevant answers are enclosed for Panel Members' easy reference.

Grateful if you could kindly assist to pass the relevant information to Panel Members for their reference. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward TO". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

(Edward TO)

for Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2015-16

Reply Serial No.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

CEDB(CT)041

(Question Serial No. 4345)

Head: (55) Government Secretariat : Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (Communications and Technology Branch)

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Broadcasting and Creative Industries

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Technology) (Miss Susie HO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

The Administration will “continue to monitor the implementation of digital audio broadcasting (DAB) services” in 2015-16. Regarding this work, please advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) In the past year, what is the number of DAB listeners? What is the signal coverage of the operators? What is the sale of DAB receivers?
- (b) What specific measures has the Administration taken in 2015-16 to promote the use of DAB services by the public and enhance public awareness of the advantages of DAB? What is the budget for these measures?
- (c) How many meetings has the DAB Steering Committee held in 2014-15? What specific plans it has for promoting DAB services?
- (d) Since the launch of DAB services in 2011, how does the Administration assess the DAB penetration and performance? Does the present position meet the anticipated objectives?

Asked by: Hon MA Fung-kwok (Member Question No. 54)

Reply:

- (a) We do not have the statistics on the number of digital audio broadcasting (DAB) listeners over the past year. According to a listenership survey on digital broadcasting conducted by Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) from August to September 2014, among the pool of listeners who have listened to DAB services in the past seven days

and we are certain of which DAB channel they have listened to, the listening rate of RTHK's DAB channels is 28.1%.

DAB broadcasters have established transmission facilities on seven key hilltop sites. The construction of the gap-filler station in Temple Hill was just completed in end 2014, bringing the network coverage of the Hong Kong population from the original 80% to about 84%.

Currently, DAB radios are being sold at shops selling audio-visual and electrical products. We have been maintaining contact with the industry to understand the supply of DAB radios on the market and encouraging the industry to make products available to the market in a timely manner.

(b) & (c)

Since the grant of sound broadcasting licences in March 2011 for the provision of DAB services, the Government has taken a series of measures through the Digital Audio Broadcasting Steering Committee (DABSC) to support the development of DAB services and, in particular, the promotion of the brand new service to the public. Members of the DABSC exchanged views through various channels, such as circulation of papers and holding meetings as necessary. In 2014-15, the DABSC held one meeting, and Members mainly exchanged views through circulation of papers by email. Through the DABSC, the Government has taken the following specific measures to promote DAB services –

- (i) co-operation with the broadcasters to promote DAB services to the public. The promotional measures implemented include the creation of a dedicated website for DAB, participation in relevant exhibitions, meeting with the industry, production of promotional posters/leaflets for public distribution, production of announcement of public interest for release on television and radio, holding a transmission network launch ceremony, and advertising in newspapers, on the Internet and on public transport;
- (ii) close monitoring of the progress of construction of the transmission network by broadcasters and the coverage of the network. To improve signal coverage and reception, the DABSC has urged the operators to optimise the transmission network by, among other things, the construction of new gap-filler stations;
- (iii) co-operation with broadcasters to keep in view the sale of DAB receivers and maintain contact with the industry;
- (iv) liaison with vehicle manufacturers/importers to encourage the industry to install DAB radios in vehicles imported to Hong Kong for sale, and in particular to explore with relevant departments the feasibility of installing DAB radios with display panels inside vehicles without adversely affecting road safety; and

(v) provision of technical advice and support by the Office of the Communications Authority and RTHK for the licensed broadcasters.

In the 2015-16 financial year, we will employ existing resources to continue to take the above-mentioned measures to support the development of DAB.

- (d) We have been monitoring the implementation of DAB broadcasting services, and have adopted the following three general directions in evaluating the implementation of the services –
- (i) monitoring the progress of service roll-out by the broadcasters;
 - (ii) monitoring the progress of the construction of the transmission network by the broadcasters and the enhancement of signal coverage; and
 - (iii) keeping in view the sale of DAB receivers.

DAB is a new broadcasting service. We should give time for this new service to continue to develop. We will continue to support the development of DAB and to strive to enhance the service standard of DAB.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**CEDB(CT)004****(Question Serial No. 4973)**

Head: (55) Government Secretariat : Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (Communications and Technology Branch)

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Broadcasting and Creative Industries

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Technology) (Miss Susie HO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question (Member Question No. 534):

The Administration has been monitoring the development of digital audio broadcasting (DAB). What is the outcome of the work concerned? What are the audience ratings of the three DAB licensees? Does the Administration earmark any additional expenditure for promoting DAB this year?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Ka-lok, Kenneth

Reply:

The Administration has been monitoring the development of digital audio broadcasting (DAB), and certain progress has been made on the development of the service. Firstly, the three licensees have launched new channels gradually and Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) has also rolled out new services. The DAB operators have also stepped up publicity measures to promote the service to listeners. Secondly, the DAB operators have agreed to implement projects to enhance the DAB transmitter network, including plans to construct new gap filler stations which will help to expand the network coverage. Thirdly, under the coordination of the Administration, the DAB operators have maintained close contact with the related industries, enabling the industry to make products available to the market in a timely manner.

According to the listening survey on digital broadcasting conducted by RTHK from August to September 2013, the percentage of listeners who have listened to DAB service in the past seven days and who are certain of which DAB channel they have listened to is as follows:

	Channel	Audience Rating[#]
31	RTHK Putonghua	15.4%
32	China National Radio (Hong Kong Edition)	10.5%
33	RTHK3	4.9%
34	BBC World Service	4.7%
35	RTHK5	22.2%

Note : # Respondents can make more than one choices.

The Administration is unable to disclose the audience ratings of the three DAB licensees as they involve sensitive commercial information.

In 2014-15, the Administration will continue to promote the development of DAB and the workload involved will be absorbed by existing resources.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**(Question Serial No. 3082)**

Head: (55) Government Secretariat : Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (Communications and Technology Branch)

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Broadcasting and Creative Industries

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Technology) (Miss Susie HO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question (Member Question No. 11):

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2014-15 that (the Bureau will) "continue to monitor the implementation of digital audio broadcasting (DAB) services". Will the Administration advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) What is the number of DAB listeners in the past year? What criteria the Administration has adopted for assessing the implementation of DAB services other than the number of listeners?
- (b) What specific measures the Administration has taken in 2014-15 to promote the use of DAB services by the public and enhance public awareness of the advantages of DAB? What is the budget for these measures?
- (c) How many meetings the DAB Steering Committee has held in 2013-14? What specific plans it has for promoting DAB services?

Asked by: Hon. MA Fung-kwok

Reply:

- (a) We do not have the statistics on the number of digital audio broadcasting (DAB) listeners over the past year. According to a listenership survey on digital broadcasting conducted by Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) from August to September 2013, among the pool of listeners who have listened to DAB services in the past seven days and we are certain of which DAB channel they have listened, the listening rate of RTHK's DAB channels is 41.7%. The Administration has been closely monitoring the implementation of DAB along three directions –
 - (i) monitoring the progress in rolling out DAB services by DAB broadcasters;
 - (ii) monitoring the progress of the construction of the transmission network by the operators and the enhancement of signal coverage; and
 - (iii) keeping in view the sale of DAB receivers and maintaining contact with the industry.

(b) and (c)

Since granting sound broadcasting licences in March 2011 for the provision of DAB services, the Government has taken a series of measures through the Digital Audio Broadcasting Steering Committee (DABSC) to support the development of DAB services and, in particular, the promotion of the brand new service to the public. Members of the DABSC exchanged views through various channels, such as circulation of papers and holding meetings as necessary. In 2013-14, the DABSC held one working group meeting to discuss the relevant measures on publicity and promotion, and Members mainly exchanged views through circulation of papers by email. Through the DABSC, the Government has taken the following specific measures to promote DAB services –

- (i) co-operation with the broadcasters to promote DAB services to the public. The promotional measures already implemented include the creation of a dedicated website for DAB, participation in relevant exhibitions, meeting with the industry, production of promotional posters / leaflets for public distribution, production of announcement of public interest for release on TV and radio, holding a transmission network launch ceremony, and advertising in newspapers, on the Internet and on public transport;
- (ii) close monitoring of the progress of construction of the transmission network by operators and the coverage of the network. To improve signal coverage and reception, the DABSC has urged the operators to optimise the transmission network by, among other things, the construction of new gap-filler stations;
- (iii) co-operation with the DAB operators to keep in view the sale of DAB receivers and maintain contact with the industry;
- (iv) liaison with the vehicle manufacturers / importers to encourage the industry to install DAB radios in vehicles imported to Hong Kong for sale, and in particular to explore with relevant department the feasibility of installing DAB radios with display panels inside vehicles without adversely affecting road safety; and
- (v) provision of technical advice and support by the Office of the Communications Authority and RTHK to the licensed broadcasters.

In the 2014-15 financial year, the Administration will employ existing resources to continue to take the above-mentioned measures to support the development of DAB.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

CEDB(CT)221

(Question Serial No. 3664)

Head: (160) Radio Television Hong Kong

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (1) Radio

Controlling Officer: Director of Broadcasting (Roy TANG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question (Member Question No. 551):

Would the Administration list the actual no. of listeners and the audience reach in percentage of respective AM / FM and Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) Channels of RTHK in the past three years?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Ka-lok, Kenneth

Reply:

The actual number of listeners and audience reach in percentage (in the past seven days) of respective AM / FM Channels of RTHK in the past three years are shown in the below table:

	2011-12		2012-13		2013-14 (Revised Estimate)	
	In percentage	Listeners/ \$million	In percentage	Listeners/ \$million	In percentage	Listeners/ \$million
Radio 1 (FM)	26%	1.760	27%	1.832	27%	1.785
Radio 2 (FM)	26%	1.723	25%	1.648	25%	1.665
Radio 3 (AM)	4%	0.235	4%	0.285	4%	0.252
Radio 4 (FM)	4%	0.276	5%	0.305	5%	0.344
Radio 5 (AM)	7%	0.460	6%	0.413	7%	0.468
Radio 6 (AM)	2%	0.112	3%	0.165	3%	0.181
Radio 7 (AM)	4%	0.266	4%	0.239	3%	0.232

Based on the audience survey on Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) conducted between August and September 2013, among the total listeners who were certain of which DAB channels they listened, the listenership (in the past seven days) of the five RTHK DAB Channels was as follows:

DAB 31	RTHK Community Channel/Putonghua Channel	15.4%
DAB 32	China National Radio "Hong Kong Edition"	10.5%
DAB 33	RTHK Radio 3	4.9%
DAB 34	BBC World Service	4.7%
DAB 35	RTHK Live Relay Channel/Radio 5	22.2%

Since the Digital Audio Broadcasting service is still in the initial set-up stage, RTHK will discuss with the sectors concerned regarding the means to conduct an accurate survey on DAB listenership.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**CEDB(CT)250****(Question Serial No. 6653)**

Head: (160) Radio Television Hong Kong

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Radio, (4) New Media

Controlling Officer: Director of Broadcasting (Roy TANG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question (Member Question No. 543):

- (a) How to count the daily page-view as stated under Programme (4) in the Government Budget for 2014-15 financial year? Is it counted by every new login or new view-page after logging in, or counted by every mouse-click rate?
- (b) What is the average time spent on daily page-view of rthk.hk, TeenPower and eTVonline under Programme (4) in the Government Budget for 2014-15 financial year?
- (c) In 2013-14, what are the respective counts of media access "on issues of local concerns" regarding topics of democracy, human rights, freedom of speech and freedom of press presented on rthk.hk, TeenPower, eTVonline and the Liberal Studies website? In connection with the above, what are the respective numbers of daily media access?
- (d) Regarding the "7 AM/FM channels and 5 DAB channels" (apart from Radio 4, Radio 6, DAB 32 and DAB 34) operated by RTHK Radio Division in 2013-14, what are the respective numbers of programmes "on issues of local concerns" in relation to topics of democracy, human rights, freedom of speech and freedom of press? What are the respective "numbers of listeners in the past seven days (in million)"?
- (e) What are the item(s) covered by "700 General non-recurrent" in the Government Budget for 2014-15 financial year?

Asked by: Hon. LEUNG Kwok-hungReply:

- (a) For the website of Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK), the daily page-view is counted by the number of new page after logging in the website.
- (b) In 2013-14, the average time spent on daily page-view of rthk.hk: 33 minutes, TeenPower: 15 minutes and eTVonline: 5 minutes.
- (c) RTHK's number of media access is counted on per episode instead of on classification of media content. In 2013-14, the daily media access of rthk.hk: 520 000 times, TeenPower: 1 500 times and eTVonline: 1 800 times.
- (d) Regarding RTHK's 7 AM/FM and 5 DAB channels, the BBC World Service will be relayed on Radio 6/DAB 34 whereas Hong Kong Edition of China National Radio (CNR) on DAB 32. Apart from the aforesaid, RTHK will provide timely and impartial coverage on issues of local concerns, deliver programmes that contribute to the openness and cultural diversity of Hong Kong and provide a platform for free and unfettered expression of views. RTHK do not have the breakdown of the number of programmes "on issues of local concerns".

Based on the latest audience survey conducted in 2013, the listenership in the past seven days of respective RTHK radio channels was as follows:

(i)	RTHK Radio 1	1 785 000
(ii)	RTHK Radio 2	1 665 000
(iii)	RTHK Radio 3	252 000
(iv)	RTHK Radio 4	344 000
(v)	RTHK Radio 5	468 000
(vi)	RTHK Radio 6 (BBC)	181 000
(vii)	RTHK Radio 7 (Putonghua Channel)	232 000

For the listenership of Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB), RTHK conducted a survey between August and September 2013. Among the total listeners who were certain of which DAB channels they listened, the listenership (in the past seven days) of the five RTHK DAB Channels was as follows:

DAB 31	RTHK Community Channel/Putonghua Channel	15.4%
DAB 32	China National Radio "Hong Kong Edition"	10.5%
DAB 33	RTHK Radio 3	4.9%
DAB 34	BBC World Service	4.7%
DAB 35	RTHK Live Relay Channel/Radio 5	22.2%

Since the Digital Audio Broadcasting service is still in the initial set-up stage, RTHK will discuss with the sectors concerned regarding the means to conduct an accurate survey on DAB listenership.

- (e) "837 - Community Involvement Broadcasting Fund" has been covered by "700 General non-recurrent" in the Government Budget for 2014-15 financial year.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

CEDB(CT)255

(Question Serial No. 1660)

Head: (160) Radio Television Hong Kong

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Radio

Controlling Officer: Director of Broadcasting (Roy TANG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question (Member Question No. 34):

The Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) service with 5 channels was launched starting in November 2011. One of the channels relays programmes especially produced for the Hong Kong audience by the China National Radio (CNR). What are the expenditures involved for the relay? Please provide a breakdown on the expenditures. Since the soft launch of the DAB Service, what are the weekly numbers of listeners of CNR as compared with those of the other programmes? So far, what are the feedbacks of the said channel?

Asked by: Hon. SIN Chung-kai

Reply:

Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) incurred an annual expenditure of about \$350,000 for relaying "Hong Kong Edition" from China National Radio (CNR). It mainly covered service fees of technical staff and maintenance costs for broadcasting equipment.

Based on a survey conducted between August and September 2013, among the total listeners who were certain of which DAB channels they listened to in the past seven days, an approximately 10.5% out of the total were listening to CNR's "Hong Kong Edition". RTHK's Live Relay Channel/Radio 5 had recorded a larger listenership of approximately 22.2%.

RTHK has no relevant information regarding listeners' feedbacks on the "Hong Kong Edition" of CNR.