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By Email

5 June 2020

Mr Daniel Sin
Clerk, Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Mr Sin,

**Legislative Council
Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting**

**The Establishment of a Dedicated Team
to Review the Governance and Management
of Radio Television Hong Kong by the Government**

I refer to the email from the Secretariat dated 2 June 2020. With regard to the request from the Hon Alvin YEUNG for discussing the captioned matter at the Panel, our reply is as follows –

Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) is both a public service broadcaster and a government department. As the management and the programme contents of RTHK has aroused wide public concern recently, this Bureau considers it necessary to address the concern and follow up in

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a proactive and positive manner. Hence, this Bureau announced on 28 May the establishment of a dedicated team, led by a senior civil servant, to review the governance and management of RTHK and provide recommendations on its overall management systems, processes and practices, with a view to ensuring full compliance with the Charter of RTHK, the codes of practice on programming standards issued by the Communications Authority, and all applicable Government rules and regulations. The review team will not take part in any programme production or editorial decisions of RTHK. The details of the review are set out in the press release (Annex).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Giang', with a stylized, wavy flourish at the end.

(Keith Giang)

for Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Encl.

Government establishes dedicated team to review RTHK's governance and management

The Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (CEDB) announced today (May 28) that the Government will establish a dedicated team to review the governance and management of Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) so as to ensure that its public broadcasting services fully abide by the Charter of RTHK (the Charter).

"The management and the programme contents of RTHK has aroused wide public concern recently. The Audit Commission made a number of key recommendations on RTHK in October 2018 regarding its low TV ratings and public awareness, programme performance evaluation, procurement of survey services, and engagement of contract staff/service providers. These Audit recommendations are not yet fully implemented," a spokesman for the CEDB said.

"The Communications Authority (CA) also gave a serious warning to RTHK for its TV programme 'Pentaprism' broadcast on November 20, 2019, and a warning for the 'Headliner' broadcast on February 14, 2020, urging RTHK to strictly observe the Generic Code of Practice on Television Programme Standards.

"The CEDB took the view that RTHK must address the public concern over its programmes as well as the department's governance and management. RTHK must follow up on the matters in a proactive and positive manner, and conduct a review to ensure that it fully abides by the Charter, duly meets its responsibility as a public service broadcaster and strictly complies with the relevant codes of practice issued by the CA. The establishment of the review team will help RTHK carry out these tasks," the spokesman said.

RTHK is a government department under the policy purview and housekeeping oversight of the CEDB as stipulated in paragraphs 10 to 12 of the Charter. The review team will be led by a senior directorate officer and comprise officers from various grades of the Government. It will report to the Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Creative Industries).

The scope of the review is as follows:

- (1) to review RTHK's administration, including financial control, human resources management and procurement matters to ensure that its manpower and resource deployment complies with all applicable Government rules and regulations, and that such deployment is made for the effective delivery of services under programme areas as set out in paragraphs 17 to 20 of the Charter, and where necessary, to identify scope for improvement;
- (2) to review RTHK's progress of implementing the recommendations of the Report No. 71 of the Director of Audit, including the need for a transparent and objective system for setting performance targets and benchmarks for measuring results; and
- (3) to review RTHK's overall management systems, processes and practices, making reference to best practices of other public service broadcasters, to ensure full compliance with the Charter and the codes of practice on programming standards issued by the CA.

"The review will commence in mid-2020 and is expected to be completed by the end of this year. The review team will submit a report to the CEDB upon completion of its work. The Director of Broadcasting will provide full support to the exercise. Members of the review team will not take part in any programme production or editorial decisions of RTHK," the spokesman said.

Ends/Thursday, May 28, 2020
Issued at HKT 13:00