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By Email

9 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 Communications Authority's Decision on
Radio Television Hong Kong Television Programme "Headliner"**

Thank you for the email from the Secretariat dated 22 May, relaying the views of a member of the public regarding the decision by the Communications Authority (CA) on the complaint case against "Headliner", a Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) television (TV) programme, broadcast on 14 February. The Secretariat requested this Bureau to provide written response on the matter. Our reply is as follows –

The CA, as an independent statutory body, performs the function to handle complaints related to broadcast contents. According to paragraph 22 of the Charter of RTHK, RTHK should ensure that its TV and radio programmes should comply with the relevant codes of practices issued by the CA for regulating the programme standards of broadcasting

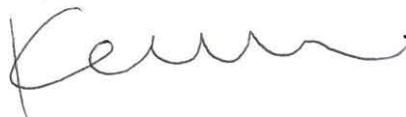
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licensees. The CA handled the concerned complaints in accordance with the established mechanism, and announced on 19 May the decision on the complaints in relation to “Headliner”, with details set out in its press release (https://www.coms-auth.hk/en/media_focus/press_releases/index_id_2122.html). According to the CA’s press release, RTHK had clearly identified “Headliner” (including the edition under complaint) at the opening of the programme as a personal view programme (PVP). Having taken into account the classification of the programme in processing complaints against the programme in the past, and that the nature, content and overall presentation of the edition under complaint was not much different from other editions of “Headliner”, the CA considered that this programme should be subject to the relevant provisions in the TV Programme Code including those applicable to PVPs (viz. facts must be respected when expressing opinions, and the need for a sufficiently broad range of views to be expressed).

This Bureau responded to the case on the same day, with details set out in press release (<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202005/19/P2020051900656.htm>). This Bureau took the view that the situation is very serious given that RTHK, as a public service broadcaster, has been repeatedly ruled to have breached the various provisions in the Code, including failure to ensure the accuracy of the factual contents in the programme; remarks and content regarded as hate speech, denigrating and insulting the Police; and failure to include a sufficiently broad range of views in the PVP. RTHK also responded to the CA’s decision on the same day.

This Bureau has been stressing that RTHK must fully abide by the Charter of RTHK, duly meet its responsibility as a public service broadcaster and strictly comply with the relevant codes of practice issued by the CA.

Yours sincerely,



(Keith Giang)

for Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development