

By Email

15 June 2021

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

Dear Mr SIN,

**Inappropriate Wording Used in News Reports
Broadcast on Local Television and Radio Stations**

I refer to your email dated 1 June 2021 in which you referred a complaint about the subject matter to the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (“CEDB”). CEDB has referred the complaint to the Office of the Communications Authority (“OFCA”).

When the complainant submitted the concerned complaint on 27 April 2021, the complainant did not provide specific information on the complaint. As such, OFCA requested the complainant to provide additional information so as to follow up on the complaint. The complainant replied on 28 May 2021, indicating that the programme “Hong Kong Today” (新聞天地) broadcast on RTHK TV 31 on 18 May 2021 contained the improper term he described. Investigation revealed that the programme included a report on the latest development of the COVID-19 pandemic in Taiwan (the “Report”). When mentioning about Tsai Ing-wen (“Tsai”) visiting the Central Epidemic Command Center, the reporter had added the word “president” (the “Term”) after Tsai’s name.

It was noted that the Term is the title of the position of Tsai. The Term is generally used in Taiwan as the title of Tsai, and media organisations in Hong Kong also often used the Term as the title of Tsai in news reports about Taiwan. Although the Term is usually used to refer to the head of a state and the use of the Term might create an impression



that the programme had breached the One-China Principle, the Report did not expressly state or imply that Taiwan is not part of China. The Report had factually reported the status of the pandemic in Taiwan. There is insufficient evidence that the use of the Term in the Report was inaccurate and in breach of the relevant provisions of the Generic Code of Practice on Television Programme Standards (“TV Programme Code”) concerning accuracy in news. As regards the issue that the Report might have breached the One-China Principle, it was outside the scope of the TV Programme Code and hence the remit of the Communications Authority (“CA”). On the basis of the investigation findings set out above, the Director-General of Communications, acting under the delegated authority of the CA, has classified the complaint as unsubstantiated. OFCA has informed the complainant of the decision.

Yours sincerely,

(Miss Mabel CHENG)
for Director-General of Communications

c.c. Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development
(Attn: Mr Keith GIANG)