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23 November 2005

Miss Polly Yeung
Clerk to Panel on
Information Technology and Broadcasting
3/F, Citibank Tower
3 Garden Road
Hong Kong

Dear Miss Yeung,

I refer to your letter of 3 November 2005, requesting information on the recently reported review of publicly-funded broadcasting service.

As explained by the Permanent Secretary at the Panel meeting on 14 November, there is at present no clear policy on public service broadcasting in Hong Kong. In practice, Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK), a government department, is responsible for providing public broadcasting service. In addition, as a condition for the right to use spectrum, commercial free-to-air broadcasters are also required to provide public service programmes, such as educational, arts and culture programmes, and programmes for children and the elderly, according to licence conditions.

Rapid developments in information and communications technologies, media convergence and proliferation of new media enable the delivery and broadcast of information in different formats via a variety of means. This has enhanced both the diversity and abundance of contents, meeting the needs of both the mass and the minority. In the light of the changing environment, the Government may need to examine how to provide public broadcasting service

effectively and efficiently, with regard to the respective roles of publicly-funded and commercial broadcasting services.

We need to evaluate the above issues at a broad policy level.

Best regards,

Yours sincerely,

(Eddie Cheung)
for Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology

c.c. Director of Broadcasting
(Fax no. 2337 2403)