立法會
Legislative Council

Ref : CB1/PL/ITB

Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting

**Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 13 September 2021, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Members present   **:**   Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP (Chairman)
Hon CHAN Kin-por, GBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, GBS, JP
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon MA Fung-kwok, GBS, JP
Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP
Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP
Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, GBS, JP
Hon SHIU Ka-fai, JP
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, GBS, MH, JP
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan
Hon YUNG Hoi-yan, JP

Public   **officers :**   <u>Agenda item III</u>
  attending
                         <u>Innovation and Technology Bureau</u>

                         Dr David CHUNG Wai-keung, JP
                         Under Secretary for Innovation and Technology

                         Ms Daisy LO Chi-yun
                         Principal Assistant Secretary for Innovation and
                         Technology (3) (Acting)/ Principal Assistant
                         Secretary for Innovation and Technology (4)

<u>Office of the Government Chief Information Officer</u>

Mr Tony WONG Chi-kwong, JP
Deputy Government Chief Information Officer

<u>Agenda item IV</u>

<u>Commerce and Economic Development Bureau</u>

Mr Clement LEUNG, JP
Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic
  Development (Communications and Creative
  Industries)

<u>Office of the Communications Authority</u>

Mr Chaucer LEUNG, JP
Director-General of Communications

Mr Tony LI, JP
Deputy Director-General of Communications
  (Broadcasting)

Clerk in attendance	**:**	Mr Daniel SIN Chief Council Secretary (1)6
Staff in attendance	**:**	Ms Mandy LI Senior Council Secretary (1)6
		Miss Judy YEE Council Secretary (1)6
		Miss Yolanda CHEUK Legislative Assistant (1)6

<u>Action</u>

I.   Confirmation of minutes of meeting and matters arising

    (LC Paper No. CB(1)1257/20-21   --   Minutes of the meeting held on
                                  10 May 2021

    LC Paper No. CB(1)1258/20-21   --   Minutes of the meeting held on
                                  15 June 2021

       LC Paper No. CB(1)1294/20-21(01)   --   List of follow-up actions)

       The minutes of the meetings held on 10 May and 15 June 2021 were confirmed.

II.   Information papers issued since last meeting

2.   Members noted that no information paper had been issued since the last meeting.

Policy briefing on 11 October 2021

3.   Members noted that a meeting of the Panel would be held on Monday, 11 October 2021, from 2:30 pm to 4:00 pm in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex, to receive briefings by the Secretary for Innovation and Technology and the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development on the Chief Executive's 2021 Policy Address in respect of the relevant policy initiatives.

III.   Progress update on various initiatives to promote students' interest in information technology

       (LC Paper No. CB(1)1294/20-21(02) -- Administration's paper on progress update on various initiatives to promote students' interest in information technology

       LC Paper No. CB(1)1294/20-21(03)   Paper on the Government's work to promote students' interest in information technology prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief))

Briefing by the Administration

4.   At the invitation of the Chairman, Under Secretary for Innovation and Technology ("US for IT") briefed members on the latest progress of various initiatives to promote students' interest in information technology ("IT"). Details of the briefing were given in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)1294/20-21(02)).

Discussion

5.   The Deputy Chairman welcomed the Administration's policy to cultivate students' interest in IT through diversified strategies in a gradual manner, particularly the current policy of the Education Bureau ("EDB") to improve the learning and teaching of IT in secondary and primary schools.

6.   Mr MA Fung-kwok, Mr Michael TIEN and the Chairman expressed support for the implementation of various initiatives to promote students' interest in IT. Ms Elizabeth QUAT commented that the Administration should not only promote students' interest in IT but should cover a wider area of innovation and technology ("I&T"), including the major fields of technology development in Hong Kong in the coming years.

Information technology in education

7.   Ms YUNG Hoi-yan said that, from the information provided by the Administration, she did not see how the educational activities had helped stimulate students' interest in I&T or enabled them to appreciate how technologies could improve people's quality of life. Ms YUNG further commented that the Administration did not seem to have set specific targets that the initiatives should achieve. She suggested that the Administration should, through the educational activities, identify students who had demonstrated the aptitude for IT and encourage them to pursue the subject.

8.   US for IT explained that application for the "Knowing More About IT" Programme was just opened in September 2021, while the "IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools" Programme was rolled out in the 2020/2021 school year, and had received very positive response despite the interruption due to the epidemic outbreak. It was the Administration's objective to cultivate an interest in IT among students and to inspire creativity in young people through extra-curricular activities, competitions and awards, encourage them to develop and apply innovative technologies to tackle issues closely related to people's daily lives, to support aspiring students to pursue a career in I&T, and widened the pool of local talent.

9.   Ms Elizabeth QUAT commended the Administration for launching the "IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools" Programme and "Knowing More About IT" Programme. She said that EDB should play a more significant role in IT education. At present, IT subjects were not included in the core curriculum of primary and secondary schools, but were only offered through optional extra-curricular activities. Different schools might give different emphasis or devote different level of resources on IT education, resulting in digital divide among

students. Ms QUAT said that EDB should work closely with the Innovation and Technology Bureau ("ITB") in promoting IT education.

10. Principal Assistant Secretary for Innovation and Technology (3) (Acting)/ Principal Assistant Secretary for Innovation and Technology (4) ("PAS(IT)(3)(Ag)/PAS(IT)(4)") said that EDB had introduced various measures to enhance students' exposure to IT progressively. At the primary level, in 2020, EDB had updated the "Computational Thinking - Coding Education: Supplement to the Primary Curriculum" to support teachers in implementing coding education. In addition to classroom learning, the Administration had been encouraging schools to enhance primary students' interest and ability in IT through learning activities under "Knowing More About IT" Programme. EDB had also updated the Senior Secondary Information and Communication Technology Curriculum with a view to increasing lesson time and further enhancing learning contents related to programming. The STEM Internship Scheme would be regularized to subsidize local universities to arrange short-term internships for "Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics" ("STEM") undergraduates and postgraduates, so as to encourage them to pursue a career in the I&T field.

Ethical issues and information literacy in IT education

11. Mr MA Fung-kwok and the Chairman enquired about the measures to raise students' awareness of ethical issues in using IT, such as the protection of personal privacy and intellectual property rights. Deputy Government Chief Information Officer ("DGCIO") said that EDB would provide ethical training through the school curriculum, so as to foster students' positive values and attitudes in the cyber world. EDB had also organized a series of seminars and workshops to enable teachers to teach students to use information and communication technology ethically and responsibly.

12. Ms Elizabeth QUAT noted that EDB was currently updating the "Information Literacy for Hong Kong Students", which was a framework document setting out the learning elements related to information literacy in the curricula of primary and secondary schools. To tackle online disinformation and fake news, Ms QUAT said that the "Information Literacy for Hong Kong Students" should include guidance to students so that they could discern the authenticity of online information, handle cyber bullying and protect personal privacy. Citing the education strategy of Finland in promoting media and information literacy for primary students as an example, Ms QUAT considered that the Administration should make concerted efforts to enhance students' media and information literacy at an early age, thereby developing students' capability and attitude in using information and communications technology ethically and effectively. She suggested that the Administration's IT initiatives should include elements that promoted media and information literacy. US for IT took note of

Ms QUAT's suggestions and responded that ITB would continue to work in collaboration with EDB and other government departments to raise awareness and promote media and information literacy.

Including Mainland's technological advancement in the curriculum

13.   Ms Elizabeth QUAT commented that students should be made aware the technological development in the Mainland, such as those in the areas of aerospace engineering and deep-sea manned submersible technology, and that students who were adept at IT and other technologies would have ample opportunities contributing towards the advancement of the nation.

14.   PAS(IT)(3)(Ag)/PAS(IT)(4) responded that the Administration had been maintaining close communication with the relevant Mainland authorities concerning the organization of exchange activities in different modes (such as video conferencing). For example, the Administration had recently conducted an online seminar for Mainland aerospace experts and astronauts to share their experience with Hong Kong tertiary and secondary students. Given the rising importance of aerospace development in the Mainland, local universities had offered more courses related to aerospace to equip students with professional knowledge and skills, thereby enabling them to contribute towards national aerospace development.

15.   Ms Elizabeth QUAT suggested that the Administration should incorporate different learning elements into various initiatives so as to promote national education and facilitate students' understanding of technological development in the Mainland. US for IT responded that members' views and suggestions would be conveyed to EDB for consideration.

Promoting awareness in cyber security

16.   The Deputy Chairman expressed concern about cyber security. He said that many online activities such as Internet social media and online chat were popular among primary and secondary students. They were often target of criminal elements and many unwary students had fallen victims to their traps. The Deputy Chairman asked how the Administration would protect children and young people from cyber-crimes. Sharing similar views, Ms YUNG Hoi-yan commented that the Administration should arouse public awareness on the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region through the "Build a Secure Cyberspace" promotion campaign.

17.   DGCIO advised that since 2005, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer ("OGCIO") had been collaborating with the Hong Kong

Police Force ("HKPF") and the Hong Kong Computer Emergency Response Team Coordination Centre ("HKCERT") to organize the annual "Build a Secure Cyberspace" promotion campaign. Through various activities and competitions such as poster design, short video making, mascot design and comic design, etc., the campaign aimed at raising students' awareness of cyber security. Since 2007, OGCIO had also been cooperating with information security professional bodies to conduct regular school visits. Up to now, more than 84 000 teachers, students and parents had participated in the activities. Despite the epidemic, more than 30 physical or "virtual" school visits had been conducted in the two school years of 2019/2020 and 2020/2021. More than 6 300 teachers and students had been reached out through these activities.

18. DGCIO added that the Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Limited ("HKIRC") and the Association of I.T. Leaders in Education had jointly organized the "Cyber Youth Programme 2021" to strengthen secondary students' networking and cyber security knowledge on system fundamental and kill chain concept, basic reconnaissance, server vulnerabilities and web attacks. More than 100 participants from 56 secondary schools had joined the four-day training programme and participated in the cyber security competition. OGCIO would continue to strengthen collaboration with different stakeholders, including HKPF, HKCERT and HKIRC, to organize promotional activities so as to enhance cyber security awareness among young people.

19. In response to the Deputy Chairman's further enquiry, DGCIO advised that the Administration had been actively organizing various activities to raise students' awareness of information security and guide them to make proper use of IT. The Chairman asked how the Administration would evaluate whether the publicity activities had aroused public awareness of cyber security. DGCIO responded that OGCIO, HKPF and HKCERT had jointly conducted annual surveys on the overall situation of information and cyber security. OGCIO would carry out the necessary follow-up actions based on the findings of the surveys.

20. Mr MA Fung-kwok considered it important for the Administration to regulate online privacy and related issues, and asked how the Administration would protect online intellectual property rights and personal privacy.

21. DGCIO assured members that the Administration would continue to launch various publicity and educational activities to enhance public awareness of cyber security. Furthermore, the Administration would maintain cooperation with various government departments, such as the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data, to promote cyber security awareness.

Development of e-sports and drone technologies

22.   Mr MA Fung-kwok enquired, apart from promoting STEM education and enhancing coding education, whether the Administration would strengthen the support measures to facilitate schools to promote IT-related subjects, such as e-sports and the operation of drone.

23.   DGCIO replied that the Administration had implemented the "IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools" Programme and "Knowing More About IT" Programme to subsidize local secondary and primary schools to organize extra-curricular activities related to IT, thereby cultivating students' interest in IT at a younger age.   OGCIO had received funding applications for organizing activities such as development of digital games and related coding, innovative technologies relating to e-sports, e.g. streaming, big data analytics, and workshops on virtual reality/augmented reality/mixed reality (VR/AR/MR).   To facilitate schools' application for funding, OGCIO had formulated the application guidelines and a reference list of IT activities and equipment for schools' reference. Moreover, a one-stop support office had been set up to assist secondary and primary schools on matters related to the application for funding.   OGCIO had also organized sharing sessions to encourage more schools to participate in the programmes.

24.   Mr Michael TIEN said that e-sport was likely to become a multi-billion business in Hong Kong, there should be many e-sports-related projects that students could develop.   However, out of some 160 applications under the "IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools" Programme and "Knowing More About IT" Programme, only two were related to e-sports and none on drone technologies. On the other hand, there were concerns that students might be addicted to online activities if they became too involved in e-sports.   Mr TIEN asked how the Administration would strike a balance between promoting students' interest in e-sports and preventing students from indulging in playing video games. Mr TIEN also observed that drone technologies had wide civilian applications, but the Administration seemed to have done little to promote the development of drone technologies and skill training in operating drones.

25.   DGCIO said that participating schools normally worked with the industry to organize IT-related activities for their students.   In this connection, the Administration would continue to strengthen the collaboration with the e-sports sector and the gaming industry to organize more e-sports activities for students. As to the "IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools" Programme, more than 230 secondary schools had submitted about 260 funding applications for organizing activities.   Among which, nearly 150 of the applications had been approved, involving a funding of over $56 million. About 10% of the funded applications were related to drone programming.   With the funding support of the "IT

Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools" Programme, many students achieved excellent results in different drone-related competitions. DGCIO added that, under "Knowing More About IT" Programme, about 12 primary schools had submitted funding applications, some of which were related to robotics and drone programming too.

26. The Chairman asked if the Administration had drawn reference from the Mainland and overseas countries in adopting drone technologies, and how the Administration would ensure that students could attain a certain level of drone operation and obtain a remote pilot certificate through the training provided.

27. US for IT and DGCIO advised that the Administration had collaborated with the industry and stakeholders, including I&T enterprises, etc., to organize different types of learning activities to enrich students' experience in learning IT and innovative technologies. DGCIO added that the Administration would draw on the experience of the Mainland and overseas countries, and drive the adoption of I&T in the learning activities under the "IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools" Programme and "Knowing More About IT" Programme, thus inspiring students to develop innovative solutions to address everyday problems. As for students with specific talents in STEM-related areas, opportunities would be provided for them to be nominated for participation in international competitions and a wide range of enrichment programmes offered by local tertiary institutions.

Nurturing of local technology talent

28. The Chairman enquired about the Administration's vision of nurturing of local talent, such as programmer, drone operator and big data analyst, and whether the Administration would launch more academic programmes to train up big data analyst, with a view to building a local talent base for Hong Kong. The Chairman also queried about the effectiveness of "City I&T Grand Challenge" in creating a favourable atmosphere for I&T education through the competition and awards.

29. On nurturing technology talent, US for IT explained that the skills that were considered desirable for tomorrow's talent, particularly I&T talent, to possess were always changing due to rapid development of technologies. The "IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools" Programme and "Knowing More About IT" Programme aimed to facilitate students grasping of latest digital knowledge and skills. The Administration would continue to adopt a multi-pronged approach of nurturing and attracting talent, with a view to expanding the local I&T talent pool through a variety of schemes.

30. US for IT informed members that the first "City I&T Grand Challenge" was launched on 18 December 2020. All sectors of the community were invited to put forward I&T solutions focusing on two topics, namely "Environmental

Sustainability" and "Social Connectivity". The competition was divided into four categories, including the Primary School Group, the Secondary School Group, the University/Tertiary Institute Group and the Open Group. The Innovation and Technology Commission had received more than 740 submissions from more than 1 250 contestants participated on an individual or team basis. The semi-pitch and grand pitch would be staged in mid-September and mid-October 2021 respectively. Winners of the University/Tertiary Institute and Open Groups would be given financial support for research and development as well as training sessions for refining their I&T solutions for trials at designated venues such as government departments or public organizations.

IV.   Domestic free television and sound broadcasting regulatory framework

     (LC Paper No. CB(1)1294/20-21(04) -- Administration's paper on domestic free television and sound broadcasting regulatory framework

     LC Paper No. CB(1)1294/20-21(05) -- Paper on the regulatory frameworks for domestic free television and sound broadcasting prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief))

Briefing by the Administration

31.   At the invitation of the Chairman, Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Creative Industries) ("PS(CCI)") briefed members that the Government's broadcasting policy was to promote competition in the industry and provide an up-to-date regulatory framework to facilitate the industry's development. The Government also strove to ensure that diversified broadcasting services were available to local viewers and listeners. He added that the domestic free television ("TV") and sound broadcasting services were subject to the regulation of the Communications Authority ("CA"), and that legislation governing the broadcasting industry was reviewed from time to time to facilitate the development of the industry. Noting the rising competition from Internet-based multimedia services and platforms in recent years, the Government had relaxed some regulatory measures for domestic free TV and sound broadcasters to boost flexibility in business operations. Some examples were the relaxation of the regulation of indirect advertising in TV programmes, and lifting the requirement on the broadcast of Radio Television Hong Kong's ("RTHK")

programmes by domestic free TV licensees.

32. <u>Deputy Director-General of Communications (Broadcasting)</u> ("DDGC(B)") next briefed members on the regulatory framework of domestic free TV and sound broadcasting licensees with the aid of a powerpoint presentation. There were three domestic free TV licensees and two sound broadcasting licensees in Hong Kong, and their licences were granted by the Chief Executive in Council ("CE in C") in accordance with the Broadcasting Ordinance (Cap. 562) and Part 3A of the Telecommunications Ordinance (Cap. 106). Under Cap. 562 and Cap. 106, all licences were valid for 12 years, and were reviewed every six years in the context of a mid-term review exercise ("mid-term review") or a licence renewal exercise. CA was conducting a consolidated mid-term review to examine the performance of the licensees during the first six years of their respective licences. Moreover, CA had commenced a two-month public consultation for the mid-term review in September 2021 to gauge the views of the public and industry on the services provided by the licensees. After considering the views collected, CA would formulate its recommendations on the licence conditions and service requirements for the licensees to CE in C in mid-2022.

33. <u>DDGC(B)</u> said that the Government had introduced the Broadcasting and Telecommunications Legislation (Amendment) Bill 2019 ("the Bill") into the Legislative Council in March 2019 to relax some operation restrictions on the TV and sound broadcasting industries. The Bill was passed and came into effect in February 2021.

(*Post-meeting note:* A soft copy of the powerpoint presentation materials (Chinese version only) was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1308/20-21(01) on 13 September 2021.)

<u>Discussion</u>

Relaxing restrictions on domestic free television and sound broadcasting licensees

34. <u>Ms Elizabeth QUAT</u> observed that domestic free TV and sound broadcasting licensees were facing rising competitions from digital platforms which were currently not regulated by CA. She asked whether the Administration would further relax the restrictions on indirect advertising to enable the licensees to broaden their sources of income, and to maintain a balanced competitive environment for the broadcasting market. <u>Mr CHAN Han-pan</u> made a similar comment. <u>Mr MA Fung-kwok</u> echoed Ms Elizabeth QUAT's concern and suggested that pop-up advertisements should be allowed in other programmes in addition to live broadcast sports events.

35.   Mr MA Fung-kwok asked the Administration to draw reference from overseas regulatory regimes and overhaul outdated broadcasting requirements in Hong Kong. For example, requiring free TV licensees to broadcast two hours of children programmes everyday seemed unwarranted as children were mostly occupied with school work or extra-curricular activities in early evenings.

36.   PS(CCI) replied that the Administration had already removed a number of restrictions for domestic free TV and sound broadcasting licensees to facilitate their operations in face of the rising competitions from the digital media. Meanwhile, the regulatory framework was updated where necessary to keep up with changing trends and audience tastes. For example, CA had revised the TV codes of practice in 2018 to relax the regulation on indirect advertising in TV programmes, so as to allow free TV licensees to broaden their sources of advertising income. The revision was generally well-received by the licensees and audiences. PS(CCI) added that, following the relaxation of regulations on indirect advertising and product placements, advertising revenue for domestic free TV broadcasters had increased, and the licensees found that indirect advertising and product placements were more acceptable to consumers compared to the conventional mode of advertising. PS(CCI) explained that under the current regulatory framework, pop-up advertising was allowed during live sports events as long as audiences' enjoyment of the game was not compromised. Subject to the feedback collected during the public consultation, the Administration would consider whether there was room for further relaxation of advertising requirements.

37.   PS(CCI) advised that changes to regulatory measures were not necessarily brought about only after mid-term reviews. CA would consult the industry and the public from time to time on the regulatory requirements and had relaxed some of the restrictions in light of the industry's or the public's views.

Regulating the contents on digital platforms

38.   The Chairman said that under the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("NSL"), the Administration had the obligation to ensure that the media, including TV and sound broadcasters, as well as the Internet, upheld national security. He found it unfair to subject domestic free TV and sound broadcasting licensees to licensing regulations while contents on Internet digital platforms remained unregulated. In view of the rising violent and gratuitous contents and instances of doxing in the new media, he asked if the Administration would roll out measures, for example introducing legislative amendments, to censor online contents.

39.   PS(CCI) advised that while Internet services were not regulated under Cap. 562, the Administration was studying how online contents that contained

misleading news stories or doxing messages could be monitored. Meanwhile, a number of ordinances, such as the Control of Obscene and Indecent Articles Ordinance (Cap. 390), Crimes Ordinance (Cap. 200), Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486), and NSL applied to both the traditional broadcasting sector and the Internet media.

40. PS(CCI) explained that domestic free TV and sound broadcasting licensees were subject to tighter regulation because they were able to reach a far wider audience than online media. According to a survey conducted by the Administration in 2017, more than 70% of the respondents spent a daily average of 2.3 hours watching TV; the time spent on watching TV rose to 2.9 hours during the Tokyo Olympics as other recent studies showed. He assured members that the Administration was committed to maintaining a balanced regulatory framework and robust broadcasting environment through its broadcasting policy.

Monitoring domestic free television and commercial radio licensees

41. Ms Elizabeth QUAT enquired how the Administration monitored and ensured that TV and sound broadcasting licensees met the relevant statutory requirements and the codes of practice promulgated by CA. She added that, unlike the programmes produced by RTHK, free re-runs of programmes of commercially operated radio stations were usually not available online. It was often difficult for anyone to pinpoint a particular section of a programme which one considered to contain biased or hate-inciting comments or misinformation, and lodge a complaint to the authorities. Ms QUAT asked if the Administration would provide different procedure or methods for the public to lodge complaints against sound broadcasting licensees or their programmes, or take active steps to monitor if programmes broadcast by such licensees had breached any guidelines or statutory requirements. Ms YUNG Hoi-yan expressed similar concerns and added that the Administration should take the initiative to monitor licensees' programmes regularly, rather than simply act upon complaints.

42. Ms YUNG Hoi-yan commented that, instead of relying on the information provided by the free TV and sound broadcast licensees or comments received during public consultation, the Administration should take active steps to examine TV and radio programmes to ensure that the public was able to receive accurate information covering varied but balanced topics, including the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong Basic Law, NSL as well as the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area ("Greater Bay Area").

43. The Chairman commented that apart from inviting feedback during the public consultation, the Administration should play a more proactive role in gauging public views of programmes aired by the licensees, for example, by

examining the viewing rates of different types of programmes to gain a better understanding of changing viewers' tastes.

44.   PS(CCI) and Director-General of Communications Office of the Communications Authority replied that licensees provided a diversified mix of programmes to cater to different tastes of audience under the existing regulatory requirements. Apart from the laws that were applicable to all businesses operating in Hong Kong, licensees were also regulated under Cap. 562 and Cap. 106, and had to abide by codes of practice as set out by CA. To ensure that the licensees observed the various statutory and administrative requirements, such as the number and hours per week of specific programmes for children, news reports and public affairs, as well as programmes on arts and culture, CA monitored the programmes aired by the licensees on a weekly basis.

45.   PS(CCI) advised that it was not feasible to monitor all radio and TV programmes constantly, and the Administration would act upon complaints received on any particular programme. He explained that in some cases, an individual commercial broadcaster might receive a number of complaints against its programmes but not many of them were substantiated upon investigation. Members of the public, however, could report programmes suspected to be partial or inaccurate as soon as practicable to CA or the relevant broadcasters.

Promoting government policies through domestic free TV licensees

46.   Mr CHAN Han-pan expressed concerns that, as domestic free TV licensees were no longer required to broadcast RTHK's programmes since March 2020, the public would have fewer avenues to learn about Government's policies and initiatives. He enquired whether the Administration would consider purchasing airtime from licensees or collaborating with them to produce programmes to disseminate messages of the Administration.

47.   PS(CCI) advised that from time to time, domestic free TV licensees produced programmes that explained or reflected Government's policies and initiatives, as well as key development such as the Greater Bay Area. Furthermore, the Administration purchased airtime from these licensees or sponsored them to produce certain programmes with a view to deepening public understanding of the Government's work.

Aligning regulatory frameworks with the National Security Law

48.   Ms Elizabeth QUAT asked, as NSL was effective in Hong Kong and it obliged the Administration to help safeguard national security, whether the Administration would examine licensees' programmes and assess whether they complied with NSL, and whether the Administration would introduce a

requirement to observe NSL as a condition for renewal of free TV or sound broadcasting licences.

50. <u>PS(CCI)</u> advised that the Administration had reminded the licensees of their obligation to uphold national security. So far, no irregularities had been observed. To fulfill their obligations to promote national security under NSL, licensees had been required by the Administration to broadcast programmes and announcements in the public interest on national security and related subjects.

V. Any other business

50. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:33 pm.

Council Business Division 1
<u>Legislative Council Secretariat</u>
7 December 2021