

**Radio Television Hong Kong Board of Advisors
Annual Report 2016 - 2017
(1 September 2016 – 31 August 2017)**

Overview

The Radio Television Hong Kong Board of Advisors (the Board) was set up on 1 September 2010 pursuant to the Charter of Radio Television Hong Kong (the RTHK Charter). The Board advises the Director of Broadcasting on a range of issues relating to the services of RTHK including editorial principles, programme standards, performance evaluation, service improvements and community participation in broadcasting in accordance with the RTHK Charter. The Board also receives reports on complaints as regular agenda items and conducts public opinion survey on RTHK's performance bi-annually.

2. The Board comprises non-official Members from different sectors of the community who are appointed by the Chief Executive for a term of two years. The Director of Broadcasting is an ex-officio Member. The Membership list of the Board for the term of 1 September 2016 to 31 August 2018 is at Annex.

3. In the past year, the Board met on a bimonthly basis. Members were also invited to attend functions and observe the production of programmes by RTHK.

Highlights of works in 2016– 2017

Chairman's Visit to British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)

4. The Board noted the fruitful experience of the Chairman during the visit to British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in London on 4 April 2017. The Chairman shared his observations on BBC in respect of the way of funding, the annual number of complaints, complaint handling system and subsequent follow up mechanism, the reporting style and the challenges posed by new

social media platforms.

5. The Board was briefed on RTHK's collaborations with BBC and the Mainland media. The Board supported RTHK's initiatives to enhance collaboration with Mainland on programming and encouraged RTHK to provide more exchange opportunities with non-local broadcasters for its staff. Meeting between the Members and non-local broadcasters during the latter's visits to RTHK were also welcomed. To conclude, the Chairman looked forward to paying further visit to BBC or other non-local broadcasters in future and encouraged the Members to do so as well so that the Board could provide more insightful advice to RTHK.

Community Involvement Broadcasting Services (CIBS)

6. The Board was briefed on the latest development of the CIBS. The Board acknowledged the continuous contribution of CIBS in enhancing social inclusion and noted RTHK' efforts to step up the promotion of the project to connect with primary and secondary school sectors.

7. The Board also discussed the publicity coverage, administrative procedures and assessment criterion of the scheme. The Board supported the continuation of CIBS which had provided an opportunity for the public from different sectors to participate in radio programme production. The Board suggested that RTHK should prepare for seeking additional funds to enrich the programme.

Overview of Radio & Corporate Programming Division

8. The Board noted the operation and development of Radio & Corporate Programming Division as reported by RTHK. The Board appreciated the wide spectrum of genres produced by different radio channels.

9. The Board provided suggestions on the topics of programmes. The Board recognized the wide variety of radio programmes and commended in particular the educational programmes for their value in enhancing the general knowledge of students. The Board also noted RTHK's obligation to address the needs of people from all walks of life, and hence the need to produce programmes covering a wide range of topics instead of branding itself around a specific theme in order to fulfill its role and mission as a public broadcaster.

The Board advised that programmes with more interaction with audience should be produced.

10. The Board also recognized the difficulties in accessing the Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) channels and noted RTHK's efforts in maintaining and promoting DAB channels.¹

Overview of Television & Corporate Business Division

11. The Board was briefed on the operation of Television & Corporate Business Division. While Members expressed concern over the transmission of photo slides on RTHK TV 32 and the lack of Chinese subtitles on RTHK TV 33², they took note of the resource and technical constraints encountered on these issues. The Board welcomed the relay of China Central Television Channel 1 (CCTV-1) on RTHK TV 33 which started from May 2017. Nevertheless, in view of the high standard programmes carried by CCTV-9, the Board suggested that the feasibility of relaying CCTV-9 in future should be explored. The Board recognized RTHK's efforts in striving for improvement in TV programme production.

Overview of New Media Service

12. RTHK updated the Board on the development of new media service. The Board was pleased to note that RTHK was following the global trend of social media. The Board acknowledged the advantages of repackaging existing programmes as mobile applications, which enabled RTHK to fully utilise the existing resources and enhance cost effectiveness.

13. The Board also offered advice on the means to assess the penetration of RTHK's new media services. While noting that RTHK could not obtain the big data collected by other commercial broadcasters for comparison, the Board welcomed RTHK's undertaking to explore other means to facilitate such comparison as benchmarking was important in developing the services.

¹ With respect to the decision of the Chief Executive in Council on 28 March 2017 to discontinue the Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) services in Hong Kong, the DAB services provided by RTHK was terminated with effect from 12 midnight of 3 September 2017 accordingly.

² Before the switch of relay to CCTV-1 which started from end of May 2017.

News & Current Affairs Programmes

14. The Board was briefed on the news and current affairs programmes produced by the Television and Radio Divisions of RTHK. The Board commended RTHK for its successful coverage of the Chief Executive Election and appreciated the dedicated efforts of RTHK colleagues in the process.

15. The Board also discussed the potential of televising more radio programmes with a view to maximizing the synergistic effect and looked forward to a long-term plan of investing more resources on this front. The Board also noted the funding and technical constraints faced by the Television Division in providing bilingual subtitles for its non-live programmes.

16. In addition, the Board noted that there were concerns of some sectors of the public about RTHK's news and current affairs programmes such as Talkabout and City Forum, which had given the impression that RTHK had anti-government political stance. The Board encouraged RTHK to take note of the public feedback and avoid intensifying such misunderstanding in future production.

Youth Engagement

17. RTHK briefed the Board on the youth programmes produced by the Television and Radio Divisions, as well as the New Media Unit of RTHK. The Board was impressed by efforts of RTHK on attracting young audience.

18. The Board commended the mobile app developed by the New Media Unit for its educational value. In respect of the format of youth programmes on social media platforms, the Board was of the view that interactive elements could enrich the programmes. The Board also discussed the feasibility of televising youth-related radio programmes on RTHK TV 31 in order to generate synergetic effect.

Programmes on 20th Anniversary of the Establishment of HKSAR

19. RTHK presented to the Board programmes on 20th Anniversary of the Establishment of HKSAR. The Board noted the resource constraints encountered by RTHK and rendered advice on programme content for the occasion, such as producing retrospective documentaries about Hong Kong's

economic development. The Chairman congratulated RTHK for its successful production of the programmes for this occasion.

Report on Television Appreciation Index Survey

20. The Board was briefed on the outcome of Television Appreciation Index survey and commended it for providing a perspective to gauge the performance of TV programmes other than TV ratings. The Board noted the publicity strategy of RTHK and discussed the way forward to expand audience reach. While Members suggested repeating popular programmes on RTHK TV 32, they took note of the channel's identity as a live channel and the technical and programming difficulties involved in broadcasting repeats on a live channel as such.

21. The Board commented on the methodology of the survey with a view to deriving more insights from the result. The Board recognized the survey's usefulness in programme planning and development.

RTHK Annual Plan

22. RTHK publishes its annual plan to give members of the public an outline of the programming directions of RTHK for the year. The Board provided comments and advice for the consideration of RTHK management when the Annual Plan for 2017-18 was being drawn up.

RTHK Controlling Officer's Report

23. The Board was updated on the allocation of resources in the RTHK Controlling Officer's Report 2017-18. The Board acknowledged the efforts of RTHK in all aspects of its work.

Programmes and Complaints Updates

24. The Board received reports on a bimonthly basis from RTHK on programmes/major projects and the complaint cases concerning RTHK handled by the Communications Authority, as well as summaries of direct feedback from the public. The Board offered advice on some complaints of concern with a view to minimizing similar complaints in future and maintaining the impartial image of RTHK. The Board commented that political sensitivity of

frontline officers should be enhanced, the relevant supervisory mechanism should be refined and views from different parties should be taken into account during programme production so as to avoid misperception of the public. The Board was confident that with the guidance and support of RTHK management, RTHK production staff would continue to follow the Producers' Guidelines. To facilitate Members to grasp a full picture of public opinion, RTHK would provide a summary of feedback statistics to the Board at every meeting.

Acknowledgement

25. The Board appreciated the support of the RTHK staff for the meetings of the Board, in particular the many useful in-depth briefings given by RTHK colleagues on their work.

**The RTHK Board of Advisors
November 2017**

Membership List of RTHK Board of Advisors
(for the term 1 September 2016 to 31 August 2018)

Chairman:

Dr Eugene CHAN Kin-keung, BBS, JP

Members:

Mr Walter CHAN Kar-lok, SBS, JP

Ms Mimi CHEUNG Yee-may

Mr Leslie CHING Pui-wai

Mr Robert CHUA Wah-peng

Mr Mohan DATWANI

Ms Anna HUNG Wing-chee

Ms Helen KWAN Po-jen

Mr Douglas LAM Tak-yip

Mr LEE Luen-fai

Dr Carol MA Hok-ka

Mr Jimmy NG Wing-ka, JP³

Mr Augustine WONG Ho-ming, JP⁴

Professor WONG Kam-fai, MH

Dr YEUNG LAW Koon-chui, JP

Ex-Officio Member:

Director of Broadcasting

³ Mr Jimmy NG resigned on 18.11.2016.

⁴ Mr Augustine WONG joined the Board on 3 March 2017.