

Public Engagement Exercise

Public Views Collected on the Variety and Quality of Programmes Provided by the Domestic Free Television Programme Service Licensees

Communications Authority

2013

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Chapter 1 Introduction

In 2009 and 2010, the former Broadcasting Authority (the “former BA”) conducted a mid-term review of the domestic free television programme service licences of Asia Television Limited (“ATV”) and Television Broadcasts Limited (“TVB”). During the review, the former BA noted, among other things, the opinion that the former BA should consult the public more frequently on the variety and quality of the programmes provided by the two licensees. Therefore, in the context of the mid-term review of the licences of ATV and TVB, the former BA recommended to the Chief Executive in Council (“CE in C”), among others, that the two licensees had to participate in public engagement exercises in the form of focus group discussions to be conducted by the former BA to gauge public opinions on their programmes. This would help the licensees improve their programme variety and quality. The recommendations made by the former BA were approved by the CE in C.

2. The first public engagement exercise was conducted in late 2010/early 2011. The Communications Authority (“CA”) conducted the second public engagement exercise in 2013. As in the first public engagement exercise, the current exercise aims at providing a platform so that the two licensees would have the opportunity to receive direct feedback from the public on the variety and quality of their programmes. They may then take the public views into account in producing programmes and formulating programme strategies.

3. This report aims to set out the key opinions collected in the 2013 public engagement exercise, as well as the responses and follow-up actions of the two licensees on the opinions of members of the public.

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Chapter 2 Public Engagement Exercise

Format of the Public Engagement Exercise

The 2013 public engagement exercise has adopted a two-stage format. During stage one, members of the public were invited to submit their written views on the variety and quality of free television programmes. In stage two, members of the public were invited to participate in focus group discussions.

Written Submissions

2. During the period between 18 February and 2 April 2013, the CA, by publicising through various means including the CA website, other relevant websites, press releases and newspaper advertisements, invited members of the public to send in written views on the programme variety and quality of the two stations. A total of 7,639 written submissions were received from different organisations or individuals.

Focus Group Discussions

3. The CA organised two focus group discussion sessions in May 2013. A total of 34 members of the public joined the sessions, including professionals, representatives of concern groups, and people of different ages, sexes and professions. Participants of the first session included television and film production veterans, journalism and communications academics, commentators on television and film, and representatives of social welfare organisations. Participants of the second session included representatives of parent-teacher federation associations, members of the public who submitted substantive views in stage one, and members of the Television and Radio Consultative Scheme (TRCS)^{Note} under the CA. Representatives of the two stations attended both sessions to listen to the opinions of the public directly.

4. In addition, representatives of the CA attended the meeting of the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting of the Legislative

^{Note} The TRCS is a territory-wide consultative scheme to gauge public opinions on television and radio broadcasting. Members join the scheme on a voluntary basis. The TRCS currently comprises 540 members, recruited based on the population profile of the 18 districts supplied by the Census and Statistics Department.

Council (“the Panel”) on 27 May 2013 to brief the Panel on the arrangement for the public engagement exercise and to listen to views from members of the Panel.

Statistics of the Public Engagement Exercise

5. The CA received a total of 7,639 written submissions from members of the public in stage one of the public engagement exercise (including 97 late submissions).

6. Statistics on the types and modes of written submissions are as follows –

		Number of Submissions
Types of Written Submissions	Organisations	3
	Groups	7
	Individuals	7,629
Total:		7,639

		Number of Submissions
Modes of Written Submissions	By email	3,072
	By post	1,383
	By fax	3,181
	Voice messages recorded in writing by relevant departments	2
	By hand	1
Total:		7,639

7. After consolidating the 7,639 written submissions, the CA found the following –

- (a) a total of about 6,970 written submissions from different individuals were made in template or with similar content, including –
 - (i) a template with basically the same content, commenting that ATV lacked self-produced programmes and its

personal view programmes were biased, and that TVB's productions fell below standard (a total of 265 written submissions);

- (ii) a template with basically the same content, suggesting that the programmes of the two stations should promote the message of different sexual orientations/gender diversity and respect for others (a total of 207 written submissions);
 - (iii) various written submissions with similar content, mainly commenting on the decrease in the variety and deterioration in the quality of programmes provided by the two stations (a total of 500 written submissions);
 - (iv) a considerable number of written submissions in similar formats but with different content from different individuals, mainly expressing opinions on the programmes of one of the stations (a total of about 6,000 submissions);
- (b) most submissions were submitted with names of the members of the public concerned, but there were 21 anonymous written submissions; and
- (c) there were 10 written submissions made in the names of organisations or groups which were registered organisations or groups formed by individuals. Among them, two groups submitted the opinions from 14 and 150 individuals respectively collected on their websites. There was also a submission jointly submitted by 50 individuals. Since these three submissions were submitted in the names of the groups concerned, they were treated as a single submission from each of the groups concerned.

Chapter 3 Reporting Principles

The reporting principles are as follows –

(a) To record public views in an objective, comprehensive and systematic manner

The CA welcomes public views on the variety and quality of the television programmes provided by the two free television stations. The written submissions received by the CA in the public engagement exercise were highly diverse in terms of format and content. The CA has given careful consideration to all views collected and consolidated them in an objective, comprehensive and systematic manner.

(b) To accord equal weight to all views received

The CA did not attempt to analyse the views collected in a quantitative manner mainly because the views collected in the public engagement exercise were highly diverse in terms of format and content. It would be difficult to treat the views in a standardised way and to quantify them. In addition, the CA accords equal weight to views expressed by both the minority and the majority. Hence this report places emphasis on reflecting opinions received in a comprehensive manner.

(c) To keep the identity of opinion providers confidential

This report respects the source of each and every opinion. The names and contact information of opinion providers are kept confidential for privacy reasons.

2. The views put forward in written submissions and through focus group discussions have been carefully considered by the CA. They are categorised into the following three areas to facilitate easy reading –

- (A) Programme Variety
- (B) Programme Quality
- (C) Other Views

3. Views collected during this public engagement exercise may at times be repetitive. The CA has consolidated similar views to make the report user-friendly. Submissions that are not concerned with the themes of the public engagement exercise are excluded from the analysis.

Chapter 4 Summary of Views

Part 1: Summary of Written Views Received during 18 February and 2 April 2013

A. Programme Variety

General Comments

- The public expressed different opinions on the programme variety offered by the two stations. Some opined that the programmes provided by the two stations had catered for the needs of viewers of different ages, sexes and social backgrounds. In addition, the joint broadcast of the Olympic Games by the two stations, the re-run of classic programmes and the broadcast of programmes on trendy and sophisticated fashions/designs offered more programme choices to the audience.
- Some opined that the programme variety of the two stations was not satisfactory and that there were not enough choices and diversity. The comments included: the programmes of the two stations could not cater for different tastes; they did not deal with non-mainstream subjects or cater for the needs of the grass-roots; programme choices were limited as the two stations broadcast programmes of similar nature at the same time slots; there was a lack of programme variety during prime time; programmes from Taiwan and Korea could not cater for the taste of Hong Kong people and should not be acquired; programmes for the elderly were insufficient and poorly scheduled; and the two stations failed to acquire the broadcast rights of the Asian Games.

Programme Genres that Should be Reduced

- Programme genres that should be reduced by the two stations included –
 - Re-run and acquired programmes and dramas, gourmet

programmes and travelogues which encouraged a luxurious lifestyle, entertainment news which was vulgar and meaningless, variety shows, game shows, real estate programmes, religious programmes, Cantonese old movies broadcast after midnight, dramas targeting housewives, and phone-in programmes.

- Reality shows should be reduced or handled with care as they might have a negative impact on the audience.
- It was unnecessary to simulcast programmes on two channels if they were both in digital format. Such simulcast programmes should be reduced in order to provide more choices and minimise vicious competition.

Proposed Programmes Genres to be Provided

- The two stations should provide more channels or programme variety in order to enhance programme diversity and provide more choices of programmes to the audience. The proposed programme genres included –
 - Dramas: Mainland dramas, Mainland military dramas, sketch comedies, dramas for youngsters
 - News and current affairs programmes: programmes dealing with social issues in Hong Kong, commentaries on current affairs, satirical current affairs programmes, programmes reflecting Hong Kong people's views, programmes for the public to express their views/phone-in programmes, Mainland news
 - Information programmes: programmes on science/new technology/medicine/mental health/environmental protection/animal protection/financial management/insurance/self-guided tours, interviews with artists/inventors/scholars, nutrition/do-it-yourself (DIY)/cookery programmes
 - Education/Civic education programmes: National Geographic; courses for secondary schools/primary schools/open universities; children's programmes which had educational values and were inspiring; programmes promoting family and social harmony; programmes with healthy and positive themes broadcast during holidays for young persons and children; programmes teaching survival skills; interschool quiz programmes on common

knowledge and current affairs on China; programmes facilitating social development and enriching civic qualities

- Sports programmes: tennis, badminton, snooker, cycling, football, polo, hiking, sports events (such as NBA, marathon, snooker, Wimbledon, etc.)
- Music/Arts programmes: programmes on arts, fine arts, music (local and overseas), including: pop/classic/jazz/Chinese xiqu/Cantonese operatic song/musical/music videos/concerts
- Cultural programmes: programmes or documentaries introducing the environment/culture/history/customs and folklore/geography/ancient civilisation around the world; programmes introducing the lifestyle and culture of foreigners residing in Hong Kong; information programmes or documentaries promoting local culture and history; programmes about local trends; programmes about films and new books
- Others: programmes for the elderly and promoting respect for the elderly, programmes for family viewing, programmes enhancing the audience's understanding of the development and culture of the Mainland, programmes for the young viewers, programmes of Radio Television Hong Kong ("RTHK"), religious programmes, livecast of overseas mega entertainment events, channels/programmes for the audience to express their views on the television stations, interactive feature options (such as information on restaurants, shopping malls, entertainment venues, and choices of viewing angles when watching sports programmes), feature programmes, programmes co-produced by the Mainland and Hong Kong, programmes promoting sunset industries, Putonghua programmes, feature programmes for the audience to know about homosexuals/transgender people, acquired programmes/films concerning homosexuality, adult programmes/channels
- The two stations broadcast too many acquired dramas, lifestyle programmes, travelogues, reality shows, variety/game shows and entertainment news. However, there were also opinions that the two stations should broadcast more programmes of these genres.

Comments on ATV

General Comments

- Favourable comments on ATV were mainly about its Classic and CCTV Channels.
- Opinions expressing dissatisfaction with the programme variety of ATV included –
 - There were few high definition (“HD”) channels, or no prior notice was given to the audience about the cessation of channels.
 - Re-transmitted channels from the Mainland should not be broadcast because the channels were not available in Cantonese.
 - The simulcast of horse racing programmes on both the Home and Asia Channels were unfair to non-racing fans.

Programme Genres that Should be Reduced

- Too many outdated and repeat programmes and dramas. In addition, programmes and dramas acquired from Korea, Taiwan, the Mainland and Japan were overly relied on. Self-produced programmes were primarily talk shows.
- Programme genres that were considered excessive or should be reduced included: re-transmitted channels and programmes, commentaries on current affairs, Putonghua programmes, news programmes and bilingual horse racing programmes.

Proposed Programmes Genres to be Provided

- Self-produced programmes, HD/digital programmes, information programmes, programmes on nature and ecology, fund raising programmes, dramas, docudramas about the modern history of China, children’s programmes, Japanese animations, hilarious programmes (e.g. “The Mad Mad Comedians” and “Fun Time”)
- ATV should –
 - Broadcast the theme songs of dramas/classic songs/music videos/abstracts of interviews with singers on the Classic Channel, use new technology to produce new series of old programmes, continue to organise “Miss Asia Pageant” and “Mr Asia Contest”.

- Re-transmit some programmes from Southern Television (“TVS”) and the Zhujiang Channel of Guangdong Television, and the Cantonese language service of the Public Channel of Shenzhen Satellite TV.
- Resume the broadcast of certain programmes of TVS, “Hong Kong Gossip” and “eCIA”.

Comments on TVB

General Comments

- Some of TVB’s programme channels/variety were satisfactory because –
 - Weekend afternoon programmes were diversified.
 - Programmes on HD Jade and Jade had great variety and complemented each other.
 - Programmes broadcast during prime time were re-run at late night on Jade to cater for the audience who were home late.
- Opinions expressing dissatisfaction with the programme variety of TVB included –
 - There should be more HD programmes.
 - News/information programmes should be broadcast on HD channels.
 - Sports programmes and attractive programmes should not be broadcast on pay channels only. TVB should cater for the needs of all the people in Hong Kong.

Programme Genres that Should be Reduced

- Too many re-run and acquired programmes and dramas, especially on the J2 and iNews Channels.
- The same acquired dramas or animations were broadcast on several channels.
- Programme genres that were considered excessive or should be reduced included: dramas and the sequels; travelogues; entertainment and variety shows; programmes on body slimming; beauty pageants; programmes on metaphysics, feng shui and fortune-telling which

promoted superstition; Japanese animations which were boring and short of educational value; and financial programmes advocating an idle lifestyle.

Proposed Programme Genres to be Provided

- Channels/programmes that should be increased included –
 - Programmes of quality, depth and purposes
 - Dramas (e.g. military dramas, dubbed western films)
 - Animations
 - Information programmes
 - 24-hour financial news and information channels, documentaries (such as military documentaries)
 - Educational programmes: intellectual programmes for children and young viewers, programmes of educational significance, phone-in tutorial programmes, programmes teaching Putonghua, and liberal studies programmes
 - Sports programmes: football (e.g. FIFA World Cup and the English Premier League), golf, basketball, the Olympic Games, X-Game; and attempts should be made to acquire the broadcast rights of international major sports events
 - Cultural programmes: programmes promoting the arts and cultural performance of local arts organisations, programmes featuring the cultures of the Mainland and Hong Kong, English programmes with a Chinese style appealing to foreigners
 - Variety shows: game shows, talk shows (e.g. “Telling Maria”), gourmet programmes (especially those introducing traditional foods in Hong Kong and foods for locals in other places), Japanese and Taiwanese variety/game shows, locally-produced reality shows and adventure programmes, fund raising programmes, beauty programmes, and “Miss Hong Kong Pageant” be continued
 - J2: intellectual programmes, Korean music programmes and sports programmes
 - Pearl: English programmes (acquired and local), variety shows. More programme variety should be provided. A diversity of films be broadcast three nights a week or on Sunday afternoons

- Others: Classic programmes and channels or programmes of collective memories, or to re-run classic dramas at late evenings. The Jade and HD Jade Channels should resume the broadcast of promos both aurally and visually at the end of programmes during prime time so as to facilitate the visually impaired

B. Programme Quality

General Comments

- Opinions expressing dissatisfaction with the programme quality of the two stations or considering the programme quality was deteriorating included: the programmes were lacking in creativity, formulaic, not entertaining, and boring; frequent repetition of actors/hosts/dubbing artists; poor quality of actors; inaccurate pronunciation of artistes; frequent mistakes in subtitles; unavailability of 24-hour bilingual subtitles; and frequent changes of programme schedules, etc.
- Production teams of domestic free television programmes were of quality. However, there were also opinions that the two stations' programmes failed to cater for the needs and taste of the general public in Hong Kong.
- Programmes should carry positive themes and convey positive messages.
- Programmes should not contain anything against homosexuals/transgender people. Homosexuals/transgender people should be referred to by gender-neutral terms instead of terms with negative connotations. Homosexuals/transgender people should be portrayed in a positive manner and not be smeared or distorted. Programmes should provide proper knowledge on homosexuals/transgender people and should not associate homosexuality/transgender with abnormality or psychosis. Programmes should establish the values of diversified families and introduce families with different compositions of members so as to promote acceptance of gender diversity. Programmes containing subject of homosexuality should not be classified as "Parental Guidance Recommended" ("PG").

News/Current Affairs/Documentaries/Factual Programmes

- The news reports of the two stations were biased; partial; not objective; misleading; self-censored; sloppily produced; formulaic; unprofessional; and lacked international perspectives, in-depth analysis and features. The reporters pronounced inaccurately and had low level of Chinese proficiency.
- It was suggested that the two stations should provide sign language interpretation for news programmes, extend the programme duration and broadcast the late news at an earlier time slot.

Comments on ATV

General Comments

- The overall performance of ATV was unsatisfactory. There were opinions that ATV did not keep its word to be the “conscience of Hong Kong” or that the people they knew did not watch ATV at all.
- Those who were satisfied with the overall programme quality of ATV considered its programmes positive, pragmatic, ethical, conscience-conscious and creative. The station was considered having the courage to produce offbeat programmes and providing programmes which combined information, entertainment and education elements, helped the disadvantaged, promoted good conduct and were based on Hong Kong people and issues (e.g. “Hong Kong Loving Hearts”, “Hong Kong 100 VIPs” and “ATV The 100 Celebrities” series).
- The major reasons for dissatisfaction towards the overall programme quality of ATV were that its programmes failed to cater for the needs and taste of the general public in Hong Kong, were biased, contained untruthful and misleading contents, were low-budget productions made in a rough and sloppy manner; the actors were not well known; the dubbing quality was undesirable; and that no subtitles and multi-language broadcasting were provided. Other reasons included –
 - The programme scheduling was confusing and incoherent, which made it difficult for the audience to develop viewing habits.

- Re-run programmes should be broadcast in full so as to preserve viewing pleasure and the completeness of the storyline.
- It was unsatisfactory that ATV ceased re-transmitting the TVS and CTI Asia Channels. It deprived the audience of the right to watch high quality programmes.
- The broadcast of non-classic programmes or programmes of bad themes (e.g. “Celebrity Talk Show”) on the Classic Channel undermined the mission of the channel. The channel should broadcast the classic programmes of Rediffusion Television, Radio Rediffusion, RTHK and TVB and announced the schedules in advance.

Dramas

- Satisfactory comments on ATV’s dramas were mainly on acquired dramas, such as the dubbing quality was excellent, the storyline was attractive and meaningful.
- The dramas of ATV were unsatisfactory, mainly because they were of poor quality, boring and there was too little location shooting.
- The acquired drama series broadcast on the World Channel were of the first season only and were repeated frequently.

News/Current Affairs/Documentaries/Factual Programmes

- The news programmes of ATV were of good quality, in-depth, impartial, accurate, clear, detailed, informative and produced in an earnest manner. Putonghua news reporting was interesting. Among all programme genres, news was the only programme genre on which ATV had better performance. However, there were also opinions that the news reports of ATV were inaccurate and untruthful.
- The current affairs and information programmes of ATV were of good quality, kept pace with the times, kept track of people’s lives, provided comprehensive analysis, were of educational relevance, and promoted social harmony (e.g. “News Bar Talk”, “Blog The World”, “Asia Policy Unit” and “ATV Focus”). However, there were also opinions that the current affairs and information programmes were vague and superficial, of outdated production standards, biased, partial and

abused public resources for self interests, and the hosts were not professional (e.g. “ATV Focus” made defamatory and untruthful remarks; “Caring Hong Kong’s Future” which livecast ATV’s rally was disgusting; “Blog The World” attacked potential competitors of free television operators; “Asia Policy Unit” was partial.)

- The documentaries of ATV were of good quality and interesting (e.g. “One Day”). However, there were also opinions that the programmes were biased and untruthful (e.g. “Hong Kong History Decode”).

Information/Sports/Children/Variety/Others

- Opinions expressing satisfaction with the information programmes/sports programmes/children’s programmes/variety shows of ATV included –
 - “Who Wants To Be A Millionaire” and “Happy Family” were educational and interesting.
 - “Director Ko’s Blog” was professional and entertaining.
 - “Stories From Afar” was of good quality.
 - The horse racing programmes gave detailed reports and the hosts were professional.
- Opinions expressing dissatisfaction with the information programmes/sports programmes/children’s programmes/variety shows of ATV mainly included –
 - The anniversary gala of the station was boring. With the event being held in the Mainland and conducted in Putonghua, needs of the local audience were ignored. The anniversary theme song “Gimme Five” was bragging.
 - The theme song of the station’s anniversary “萬里長城永不倒” (literally: The Great Wall Will Never Fall) and the promo stating that ATV was the conscience of Hong Kong were offensive.
 - In “Mr Asia Contest”, the postures of contestants were indecent and the comperes’ remarks were explicit. It was scandalous that the champion of the contest was an overstayer. The quality of “Miss Asia Pageant” was deteriorating.
 - “Hong Kong Loving Hearts Presentation Ceremony” amounted

to misuse of spectrum for self interests.

- “Happy Family” was lousy, neither entertaining nor providing useful tips for daily lives.
- “Science For Elders” contained advertising elements.
- Horse racing should not be promoted on free television.

Comments on TVB

General Comments

- The overall performance of TVB was satisfactory or acceptable. There were opinions that TVB’s programmes were suitable for audience of all ages, had a larger audience and hence provide topics in casual chats with others, encouraged creativity and that the station was willing to invest in new technology.
- Opinions expressing satisfaction with the overall programme quality of TVB were that the station’s programmes were creative; produced in a serious manner; blended with entertainment and educational values; not radical; not sensational; of outstanding dubbing quality; being accurate in subtitling; provided multi-language broadcasting which gave the audience an opportunity to learn languages; actors (e.g. Lisa Wang, Wong Cho Lam) were outstanding, renowned and popular; and new artistes were well-liked. Other reasons included –
 - Sign language interpretation was provided.
 - Programmes were broadcast at the same time as those of other regions, a great diversity of acquired programmes/dramas/documentaries was provided and the broadcasting time could catch up with the first-run schedules of the originating places.
 - There were improvements in computer special effects and animation designs.
 - Settings in studios were pleasant with a sense of reality.
 - Promos were exciting and attractive.
 - Programmes reflected the current social situation.
- Opinions expressing dissatisfaction with the overall programme quality of TVB were that its programmes were produced in a rough and sloppy manner; of bad taste; cheap; lousy; of bad themes; erotic; of low production standard; short of location shooting; the singing of

artistes was poor; there was a shortage of new artistes and departure of experienced artistes; and some of the artistes were disgusting. Other reasons included –

- Programmes did not depict the characteristics of Hong Kong. Some acquired programmes were repackaged as local productions after slight moderations.
- Films, western films, acquired dramas and variety shows were too outdated. The broadcasting time of acquired programmes/dramas could not catch up with the first-run schedules of the originating places.
- The translated titles of acquired programmes failed to convey the meanings in their original languages.
- Programmes did not cater for the needs of the disadvantaged and the ethnic minorities.
- It was unsatisfactory that the station provided excessive exposures for its artistes.
- The production crew (e.g. the dubbing artistes) could not be commended as the speed of the rolling of end credits was too fast.

Dramas

- TVB's dramas were of good quality; were suitable for all ages; appealed to the taste of the majority; had attractive plots; were creative and diversified; contained new themes; and contained positive themes with educational values. The production was serious with in-depth research; professionalism in filming; more location shooting, proper casting, remarkable artistes, nice costumes, and outstanding scripts. The programmes mirrored people's livelihood and could be echoed by the audience (e.g. "Inbound Troubles", "The Hippocratic Crush", "Gloves Come Off", "Reality Check" and "When Heaven Burns"). The sitcoms mirrored reality; reflected current social issues; were entertaining, warm and touching; and helped promote family harmony (e.g. "Come Home Love"). One-off dramas with a few episodes were creative and fast-paced (e.g. "Season Of Love"). Acquired dramas were of good quality and appealing. The themes were unique with outstanding scripts and dubbing, and that the translation was accurate (e.g. "The Good Wife", "Castle", "Downton Abbey", "Rich Man, Poor Woman").

- Opinions expressing dissatisfaction with the dramas of TVB mainly included: the dramas mainly catered for the needs of housewives and failed to satisfy those of young viewers; lacked creativity; were of deteriorating quality; unappealing; formulaic; copied from other programmes; boring; not entertaining; lousy; lacked adequate research; unrealistic; produced in a rough and sloppy manner; full of mistakes; illogical; of inappropriate casting; of low production standard; were small-budgeted productions; using shabby costumes and old-fashioned character designs; lacked in location shooting; sentimental; bloody; violent; depicted sexual violence and indecent behavior; erotic; contained foul language, flirtatious and threatening remarks; of bad themes; imposed bad images on the elderly characters; lacked educational values; corrupted social morality; employed the same background music repeatedly; contained prolonged front and end credits; and that the Chinese subtitles failed to convey meanings correctly (e.g. “A Bride For A Ride”, “Friendly Fire”, “Master Of Play” and “Sergeant Tabloid”). There were opinions that the acquired dramas of TVB were annoying and boring.
- The Cantonese old movies were worthy for viewing and should continue to be broadcast or be scheduled at daytime. However, there were also opinions that those old movies did not have the support of the audience and the picture quality should be improved.

News/Current Affairs/Documentaries/Factual Programmes

- News reports were comprehensive, neutral, impartial and updated frequently. The production was serious. On-site reports would be arranged for important news. Reporters/anchors were professional with outstanding performance and good language proficiency. Questions asked in feature interviews with renowned figures were intelligent. The provision of 24-hour news reports enabled the audience to watch news any time. Multi-language and split screen services provided the audience with more options. Subtitles in news reports helped the audience learn English.
- TVB’s anchors were unprofessional. News programmes should include sports news. It was unnecessary to simulcast news reports on three channels in the morning.

- The current affairs and information programmes of TVB were of high quality with contents of great diversity (e.g. “Sunday Report”, “News Magazine”, “On The Record” and “Weekend Chatroom”). The production was serious. The reports were impartial with professional analysis. The programmes helped stimulate thoughts. The station had actively shouldered the social responsibilities of the mass media by reflecting the livelihood issues and arousing concerns of people from all walks of life. However, there were also opinions that the current affairs and information programmes of TVB were partial and sensational (e.g. “News Magazine”).
- Self-produced documentaries of TVB were appealing. The filming angle was innovative. The themes reflected reality. The production was serious with detailed contents and educational values. The professionalism should be commended. The programmes helped broaden viewers’ horizons (e.g. “Pilgrimage Of Hope”, “Surviving SARS”). The quality of acquired documentaries was good, with contents of great diversity, suitable for all ages, with clear, sharp, vivid and attractive images, mingled entertainment with information, with good dubbing and translation quality (e.g. “60 Minutes”, “Life On Fire”, “The Secrets Of Everything” and other ecological documentaries).

Information/Sports/Children/Variety/Others

- The salient points of the opinions about the information programmes/sports programmes/children’s programmes/variety shows of TVB were as follows –
 - Information programmes: the programmes were of good quality, suitable for all ages, rich and interesting in content, and mingled information with entertainment; the programme hosts were remarkable; the prizes were attractive; the voting games enhanced the representativeness of the events and the audience’s sense of engagement (e.g. “Tricky Health Risks”, “Crazy For History”, “HK ARTchitecture”, “From Hand To Art”, TVB Fun in “Scoop”). However, there were also opinions that these programmes were of poor quality, lacked creativity, copied from other programmes, produced in a rough and sloppy manner, lousy,

shallow, contained obscene connotations, cheap, had an adverse effect on young people, organised voting game of no value at all, and contained weird and silly questions.

- Sports programmes: the programmes were informative; the programme hosts were of high standard; the bilingual commentaries were excellent (e.g. “Sports World”, “FIVB Volleyball World Grand Prix”, Grand Prix Macau, the Olympic Games). However, there were also opinions that these programmes were of poor quality, the commentaries were biased, the information was not updated, and that the programmes were full of mistakes and focused on the matches of the China national teams only.
- Children’s programmes: the programmes were educational, interesting and informative (e.g. “Ask Master”, “Are You Smarter Than A Fifth Grader?”, “After School”). However, there were also opinions that these programmes were silly, lousy, lacked creativity, repetitive in content, not educational or informative, and exerted an adverse effect on children. The children’s programmes on the Pearl Channel were educational and full of variety.
- Grand variety shows/Contests: the stage setting and the shooting were made with great effort; these programmes were produced in a professional and earnest manner (e.g. the anniversary galas, “Miss Hong Kong Pageant”, “Mr Hong Kong Contest”). However, there were also opinions that these programmes were indecent, of bad themes, of bad taste, disgusting, annoying, offensive, corrupted social morality, and unsuitable for children and young viewers. The election on a “one person, one vote” basis of “Miss Hong Kong Pageant” lacked transparency and misled the audience.
- Fund raising shows: the programmes were meaningful and touching, helped a lot of people and offered opportunities for donors to perform. However, there were also opinions that these programmes were boring and monotonous, and that the performance of artistes was poor.

- Reality shows: the programmes were of originality, produced in an earnest manner, entertaining, looked into social issues with a positive attitude and created common ground in the community (e.g. “Bride Wannabes”). However, there were also opinions that these programmes had a hidden agenda; were silly; denigrated and insulted the participants; conveyed improper messages; were of bad themes, of bad taste, offensive, and annoying; amounted to indirect advertising; manipulative, biased and produced misleading polling results; contained bad language; produced in a flamboyant way and exerted an adverse effect on children and young persons.
- Game shows: the programmes were interesting, healthy, creative, exciting (e.g. “Minute To Win It”, “HokoXTate~ Ultimate Clash~”, “Running Man”). However, there were also opinions that these programmes were silly, boring, contained obscene connotations, erotic, of poor quality, nonsense, lousy, explicit, of bad themes, untruthful, wasted food, made fun of artistes, contained bad language, and had an adverse effect on children (e.g. “Super Trio” series, “Beautiful Cooking” series).
- Travelogues: the programmes were of high standard, suitable for all ages, informative, contained well-selected scenic spots and a variety of contents (e.g. “Nat Around The World”). However, there were also opinions that these programmes were not informative enough and the programme hosts were not appealing.
- Lifestyle programmes: the programmes were of high quality; mingled information with entertainment; provided a wide choice of venues for eating, drinking and shopping; the performance of the hosts was good (e.g. “Dolce Vita”). However, there were also opinions that these programmes promoted a luxurious lifestyle and materialism, showed off richness, were of bad themes, helped advertisers gain profits, corrupted social morality, and exerted an adverse effect on children and young viewers.
- Gourmet programmes: the programmes were rich in content, full of diversity and eye-opening (e.g. “Neighborhood Gourmet”, “Joy Luck Cup”, “Tasting Life”). However, there were also opinions

that these programmes were boring, lacked creativity, amounted to indirect advertising for the restaurants, and that the table manners of the programme hosts were disgusting.

- Music programmes: the programmes nurtured many artistes; the award presentations and international galas were amazing (e.g. “The Voice”, “Session Timeout”, “Jade Solid Gold”, “J.S.G. Best 10 Awards Presentation”). However, there were also opinions that such programmes/award presentations/music videos were produced in a rough and sloppy manner, boring, lacked creativity, lost touch with the music world, only allowed a few record companies or artistes of TVB to join the music award presentations, and that the audience was annoyed by the excessive appearances of some of the singers.
- Animations: the programmes adopted Hong Kong-style dialogues and were creative (e.g. “Gintama”). The animations on the J2 Channel were full of variety and well-received by young viewers. The promos for animations were produced with great effort; the broadcasting time of the Japanese animations could catch up with the first-run schedules in Japan (e.g. “Mobile Suit Gundam Age”). There were re-runs of classic and popular animations (e.g. “Sailor Moon” and “Saint Seiya”). However, there were also opinions that these programmes were of fair quality, violent, indecent, contained crude language, and too commercialised (e.g. “Saint Seiya”), and that animations should be broadcast in full.
- Entertainment news programmes: the programmes were relaxing, interesting and up-to-date; the programme hosts were remarkable; the contents were full of diversity (e.g. “Scoop” and “Entertainment Tonight”). However, there were also opinions that these programmes were vague, superficial and silly; the hosts were disgusting; the contents were irrelevant to the daily life of the public or social issues, and that these programmes contained bad language, exerted an adverse effect on children and young viewers, and was unsuitable for broadcast during the family viewing hours (e.g. “Scoop” and “Weekly Exposé”).
- Other programmes: “Telling Maria” was appealing. The livecast

of “The Academy Awards” was satisfactory. The feature films were relatively new with a great variety, some of them were broadcast when a new film in the same series was released.

C. Other Comments

Advertisements/Promos

General Comments

- Advertisements broadcast on TVB were more appealing than the programmes broadcast on ATV.
- There were too many advertisements/promos/advertising magazines/advertisements adopting a programme style, amounting to an increase of advertising time.
- The advertising breaks were too long (e.g. “TV Easy”). Each break should be limited to no more than 60 seconds. A timer should be shown in the advertising breaks indicating the time left for advertising.
- It was annoying that the programmes of the two stations contained too many in-programme advertising materials. There were too many sponsored lifestyle/infotainment programmes which were misleading, offensive and partial. Sponsored products should not appear in programmes if their exposure was not editorially justified. Some were dissatisfied with the proliferation of mini-programmes in which references to sponsors were repeated in the front and at the end of the programmes. However, there were also opinions that advertisements built into programmes could help introduce more products to viewers.
- Like news programmes, weather reports/current affairs and information programmes/financial reports should not accept sponsorship.
- Advertisements should state clearly the data sources. In addition, advertisements for dietary products, medications and skin care products should state clearly the functions of the products and that they should be accredited by regulatory institutions.
- There was discontent over the frequent broadcast of credit/lending/mortgage advertisements or advertisements in

mini-programme style which had an adverse impact on young viewers. Captions containing risk warning should be shown. Advertisements on real property and flats were untrue, false, misleading, exaggerated and deceptive.

- Warning captions should be shown in advertisements for beauty and fitness services/fast food restaurants so as to encourage a balanced diet and inner beauty.
- Advertisements for non-refillable liquid products and beverages should cease to be broadcast in order to promote environmental protection.
- Advertisements for formula milk were of bad themes, exaggerated, untrue, misleading, annoying, had an adverse impact on children, and should not be broadcast. Merits of breastfeeding should be promoted.
- There were shots of drug abuse, horror and wild kiss in advertisements broadcast during children's programmes, which had an adverse impact on children.
- Advertisements that spoiled appetite (e.g. toilet cleansers, laxatives and medications for slimming) should not be broadcast during meal time.

Comments on ATV

- There were few advertisements on ATV. It mainly broadcast announcements in the public interest and programme promos.
- Commercial breaks should not be inserted on acquired channels or in live programmes.
- Contents of promos during festivals should be in line with the festivals being featured and take into account viewers' feeling.

Comments on TVB

- Advertisements/promos for advertisements on TVB were confused with programmes.
- There were too many Chinese advertisements on the Pearl Channel

and the subtitles were small and ran quickly.

- There was discontent over TVB's broadcast of advertisements for formula milk during the shortage of formula milk.

Picture Quality/Sound Quality/Interactive Feature

General Comments

- Digital broadcast was better than analogue broadcast. HD broadcast enhanced the picture quality, bringing high visual enjoyment to viewers.
- There were opinions that all digital channels should be broadcast in HD format.

Comments on ATV

- There was discontent over the picture quality, including dissatisfaction with the station persistently showing its logo on screen, which disturbed viewers, caused damage to the television set and made it difficult for viewers to distinguish between commercial breaks from programmes.
- A garish vertical stripe was displayed on the left and right margins of the screen when programmes of 4:3 aspect ratio were broadcast. Parts of the programme contents were covered. The viewing pleasure of the audience was thus affected.
- The picture quality of the Classic Channel was poor. The station logo was unpleasant to look at and its positioning at the centre of the screen was obtrusive to viewing.

Comments on TVB

- The effect of HD dramas was good. The picture was clear and colourful. Viewers could watch HD programmes produced in different places.
- The picture quality was relatively good and stable.
- The picture quality was enhanced after the Jade and Pearl Channels had switched to the H264 standard. The picture quality of the natural

ecosystems and animal documentaries on the Pearl Channel was better than that of pay television channels.

- There were no layering and surround sound in HD programmes. Distorted mosaic images were often found. The quality of picture and sound should be further improved.
- Interactive features and the interface were poorly designed and not user-friendly.

Programmes of RTHK Broadcast on Free Television Services

- Documentaries produced by RTHK were relatively better. Specific channels should be established to broadcast personal view programmes. “Legco Review” should be continued to be broadcast on TVB. There were opinions that programmes of RTHK were for the niche market and so they were not suitable for broadcast during prime time.
- The publicity of RTHK programmes was done well. It could draw viewers’ attention to the broadcast of RTHK programmes.

Part 2: Summary of Opinions Expressed in the Focus Group Discussion held on 15 May 2013

Attendants: 9 (Television and film production veterans, journalism and communications academics, commentators on television and film, and representatives of social welfare organisations)

A. Programme Variety

General Comments

- The two stations should allocate time slots to broadcast programmes produced by independent production companies, independent producers or outsourced contractors in order to provide viewers with more programme choices.
- Children's programmes of the two stations mainly targeted primary school pupils and failed to cater for the needs of the pre-school children.
- The trend of producing more talk shows on current affairs by the two stations in recent years was a good phenomenon.

Proposed Programme Genres to be Provided

- With the increasing number of senior citizens, the television stations should consider broadcasting a 30-minute programme daily for them. The contents of such programmes should be diversified in order to cater for the needs of senior citizens of different ages. Cantonese operas should be broadcast in the afternoon.
- More programmes/dramas which themed on tenderness and family bonds should be produced to promote traditional values.

Comments on ATV

Programme Genres that Should be Reduced

- There were too many repeat programmes. The mode of repeating programmes was only suitable for pay television.
- There was hardly any local production. The limited number of local

productions were mostly low-budget talk shows.

- Locally-produced programmes instead of acquired programmes or dramas should be broadcast during prime time.

Proposed Programme Genres to be Provided

- Information programmes of high quality, e.g. “Stories From Afar”

Comments on TVB

General Comments

- Programme of innovative style should be encouraged.

Programme Genres that Should be Reduced

- Gourmet/cookery programmes

Proposed Programme Genres to be Provided

- Programmes inspiring children’s creativity
- Features introducing classic figures, e.g. features in memory of the 40th anniversary of the death of Bruce Lee

B. Programme Quality

General Comments

- The younger generation could watch television programmes produced in various places around the world through different media. Local television stations were not able to attract these young viewers. The aging of existing viewers was unfavourable to the long-term development of free television. Television stations should strive to make progress and establish local brands to attract young viewers.
- Television stations should shoulder social responsibilities and should not be just concerned about audience ratings.
- The lack of local productions of good quality led to limited training opportunities for producers and artistes, especially hosts of variety shows/entertainment programmes.

- Owing to a lack of good/fair competition environment in Hong Kong, the two stations occasionally copied each other's programme styles and themes to compete for a high rating which in turn stifled creativity.
- Many programmes contained cruel, violent and extreme contents.

Comments on ATV

General Comments

- The Classic Channel, which broadcast old programmes, was more popular than other channels of ATV. This reflected that the quality of the existing programmes was lower than that of the old programmes.
- Programmes of ATV only targeted at the niche market and could not cater for the needs of the general public, e.g. "Performance Training Project Highlight" mainly targeted the artistes of the station.
- Some programmes were of quality, e.g. "Cheers Hong Kong" and "News In My Opinion With Rachel Miu & Robert Chow", but they had only been broadcast for a short period.

News/Current Affairs/Documentaries/Factual Programmes

- It was good to insist on producing in-depth talk shows such as "News Bar Talk". The programme would be more attractive if people from different political parties would be invited to appear in the programme.
- The contents of "ATV Focus" were one-sided. The style of the programme was similar to that of the Mainland and did not suit the taste of viewers in Hong Kong.

Comments on TVB

General Comments

- The deterioration of programme quality (particularly entertainment programmes/game shows) was due to the quality of the management but not the artistes.

Dramas

- The quality of TVB's self-produced dramas was acceptable. For example, "The Confidant" suited the tastes of both the cultured and the masses and could attract viewers who usually did not watch television dramas. However, the themes of many dramas were repetitive, e.g. cops-and-robbers dramas. The television station should try to explore new drama themes.
- "When Heaven Burns" suited the taste of young viewers. Its contents and dialogues were inspiring to young persons. The station's effort should be commended.
- TVB's drama productions might have less resource than its competitors. However, they did a better job in upholding humanity and values of humans. For example, "Come Home Love" promoted traditional values and was thus well-received.
- Dialogues of dramas about father-son relationships were tedious.

News/Current Affairs/Documentaries/Factual Programmes

- People from all walks of life should be invited as guests of talk shows on current affairs. For example, in "On The Record", government officials were always invited to be the guests. Members of political parties and other guests were rarely invited.
- Current affairs programmes showed favouritism towards consortia.

Information/Sports/Children/Variety/Other Programmes

- Variety shows were of low standard. They made fun by hurting, scolding or humiliating others, and undermined important values such as family and cultural values. Young viewers were adversely affected. The contents of the gala of the 45th anniversary of TVB disrespected the late artistes.
- The contents of game shows were frivolous, mischievous (e.g. the "Super Trio" series) and of bad taste. Games like sucking noodles/grapes and identifying lips embarrassed the participating artistes. Game shows should not please viewers or attempt to achieve audience ratings by embarrassing the participants.

- There were unnecessary and exaggerated contents in cookery programmes, e.g. female artistes in revealing attire, female artistes preparing food ingredients clumsily and in a panicky manner, and hosts being impolite to or shouting at the guests.
- “Office Of Practical Jokes” was interesting to mature viewers. However, the programme would instill wrong values into children and affect mutual trust among people. Since the programme contained shocking contents (e.g. psychic events), it was not suitable for broadcast during the family viewing hours.
- The arrangement that “PG” programmes were broadcast immediately after children’s programmes on Sunday mornings was not appropriate.
- When deciding to acquire and broadcast foreign animations, the television station mainly took into consideration commercial factors such as the ratings of the animations in overseas countries and the purchase of advertising time by toy manufacturers. The television station should strike a balance between running its business and safeguarding the physical and mental health of children in order to protect children’s rights to watch suitable animations independently.

C. Other Comments

Advertisements

- Advertisements for formula milk claimed that their formula contained essential nutrition for smart children. Moreover, the close-up shots and exaggerated dialogues in the advertisements made children into believing that they would not be as clever as others if their parents did not feed them the formula milk being advertised. This cultivated a sense of inferiority of the children and adversely affected parent-children relationship.

Part 3: Summary of Opinions Expressed in the Focus Group Discussion held on 29 May 2013

Attendants: 25 (members of the public, members of the Television and Radio Consultative Scheme, and representatives from the Federations of Parent-Teacher Associations)

A. Programme Variety

Proposed Programme Genres to be Provided

- The stations should make reference to foreign dramas and produce dramas of different types/themes.
- There were few large-scale drama productions in Hong Kong. The broadcast of quality large-scale productions like “The Mu Saga” could provide viewers with more choices.
- Dramas with positive messages could help promote family relationships and ethics and encourage young viewers to overcome adversity.
- Dramas depicting a particular profession or occupation could enable young viewers to understand more the profession and help them think about the most suitable career for them.
- Programmes giving information on housework and medical knowledge should be provided.
- Information and educational programmes such as “More Than Words” which introduced the correct writing form and pronunciation of words in a light-hearted manner.
- Travelogues introducing local customs and folklore of various places around the world should be broadcast to enhance viewers’ knowledge.
- Acquired programmes should be broadcast bilingually to provide viewers with more choices.

Comments on ATV

General Comments

- ATV Home had used to broadcast programmes for women e.g. “Afternoon Tea” and “Mrs Fong Family Plaza” in the afternoon for years. However, such programmes were replaced by financial programmes and re-runs of the talk show “News Bar Talk” in recent years. ATV should take care of female viewers and broadcast new programmes or first-run programmes in the afternoon to cater for their needs.
- Among the six channels provided by ATV, only the Home and the World Channels were considered acceptable. It was not necessary to provide the ATV Classic Channel, whereas the CCTV 1 and the SZTV Channels were only re-transmitted channels with no local programmes. The above was a waste of the public spectrum and a failure to fulfil the social functions of free television programme services.

Programme Genres that Should be Reduced

- The frequent re-runs of so many programmes was a waste of resources. It was annoying that some programmes were broadcast three to six times a day/a week, e.g. “ATV Cantonese Opera Selection”, “ATV Focus”, “Hong Kong Loving Hearts”, “ATV The 100 Celebrities”, “News Bar Talk”, “Blog The World”, “Asian Entertainment”, “The Mu Saga”, “Director Ko’s Blog” and “Performance Training Project Highlight”, etc. By uploading programmes to the website for viewing, the number of repeats could be reduced so as to enable a better use of the public spectrum.
- Acquired dramas on the World Channel were repeated soon after their first-runs, e.g. “CSI” and “Hawaii Five-O”.

Proposed Programme Genres to be Provided

- Local productions/new productions/first-run programmes
- Dramas
- Music programmes

- Game shows, e.g. lucky draw
- Programmes for young viewers
- Programmes for senior citizens
- Programmes catering for the grass-roots and the youth

Comments on TVB

General Comments

- Overall speaking, the programme genres were acceptable and could cater for the needs of viewers of different social backgrounds.

Programme Genres that Should be Reduced

- Gourmet/cookery programmes

B. Programme Quality

General Comments

- The two stations should foster viewers' viewing habits. This could be achieved by better programme scheduling so that viewers could have a clear picture of the broadcast channels or time of different programme genres (e.g. broadcast of Japanese and Korean programmes on the Cantonese channels, broadcast of European and American programmes on the English channels, broadcast of old programmes on designated channels, etc.).
- Programmes of the two stations should promote anti-drug messages and convey positive values of life.

Dramas

- Over the past two years, dramas of good quality had been fewer than before. Dramas were formulaic.
- Whether a drama was attractive or not depended on the completeness of the story, whether the messages intended to be delivered were accepted by viewers, and whether the artistes could deliver the lines clearly and pronounce accurately.

- Dramas with positive messages were well-received by viewers. In particular, positive characters could set an example for students. However, students were busy with their homework and did not have much time to watch television programmes. Television stations should clearly label the genres of dramas to facilitate students in making viewing choices. Besides, messages conveyed by dramas should be direct and easy to understand and there was no need for students to spend too much time understanding the relationships among characters and the plots. Otherwise, they would rather allocate their time to internet or other media to acquire more useful knowledge.

News/Current Affairs/Documentaries/Factual Programmes

- The provision of English subtitles in news reports broadcast on the English channels was commendable.

Information/Sports/Children/Variety/Other Programmes

- Micro films with encouraging and positive messages were meaningful. They were short in duration and were thus suitable for students because there was no need for them to spend too much time watching the films.
- Animations should focus on tenderness and be suitable for all ages and should not be too cruel and violent.

Comments on ATV

General Comments

- Overall quality of programmes was declining/poor and should be improved.
- The very limited resources, with only twenty odd artistes could hardly meet the production needs of a television station.
- Most programmes were low-budget productions. Acting of artistes was not good and the quality of dubbing was poor.
- When a programme reached a good rating (e.g. “Hong Kong Gossip”), ATV would add more episodes of the programme. However, the

additional episodes lacked attractive contents, leading to a decline in the programme quality.

- Programme schedules changed frequently. There was no consistency in scheduling and the programme schedule was not updated. Viewers could hardly develop viewing habits.
- The broadcast of non-HD programmes, e.g. “Those Were The Days” and Cantonese old movies on the only HD channel, the Asia Channel, was a waste of resources.
- Re-run programmes broadcast on the ATV Classic Channel were edited and not shown in full, which adversely affected the completeness of the programmes and viewing pleasure. It also could not serve the purpose of providing an opportunity for viewers to review classic programmes. ATV had not explained the reasons for the editing, i.e. whether the excision was due to elements unsuitable for broadcast during the family viewing hours or differences between the prevailing standards and those at the time of the first-run. This was disappointing and viewers might feel being cheated. ATV had once promoted that the ATV Classic Channel would re-run “Blowing In The Wind”, but it was disappointing and puzzling that the programme had yet to be broadcast.
- European and American dramas broadcast on the World Channel did not catch up with their countries of origins. For example, the seventh season of “Doctor Who” had been broadcast in its country of origin, but ATV World was still showing the third season.

News/Current Affairs/Documentaries/Factual Programmes

- “News Bar Talk” was primarily a talk show. Some guests who had greater influence on the society seemed to promote themselves in the programme. The programme should add other contents, e.g. phone-in segments and interviews with members of the public.
- “News Bar Talk” was a thoughtful production. The programme invited various guests to express their views on different topics. The programme format was interactive.

Information/Sports/Children/Variety Shows/Other Programmes

- The Miss Asia interviewed in programmes were little known.
- It was unacceptable that ATV regarded its training course, “Performance Training Project Highlight”, as a programme.

Commended Programmes

- “iFit@tv” provided correct knowledge on exercise. “Those Were The Days”, “Hong Kong Loving Hearts” and “Ramble Round The Southern Guangdong Green Way” were worth watching.

Comments on TVB

General Comments

- The programme quality was acceptable.

Dramas

- The quality of dramas was acceptable. There were also various types of dramas.
- Light and happy dramas rather than those of sad themes should be broadcast during the family viewing hours or meal time.
- The depiction of characters performing duties in dramas themed on a particular profession or occupation should reflect reality and provide knowledge. The working procedures and professional codes of conduct should be depicted correctly. The station should not mislead viewers for the sake of adding dramatic effects.
- Dramas should be educational and teach people what was right and wrong. Some dramas contained controversial contents, e.g. cannibalism in “When Heaven Burns” and the personality change from righteousness to evil in “Beauty At War”. The messages conveyed in the dramas were confusing, unable to state clearly to viewers who was right and who was wrong and the moral values that one should have. This would have a bad impact on immature children.
- Some dramas contained crude expressions, e.g. “Slow Boat Home”.

The explicit depiction of resentment about love affairs in some dramas was offensive, e.g. “Silver Spoon, Sterling Shackles”.

- Actors and themes often overlapped. Programme scheduling should be improved. For example, the broadcast of two dramas about mental disorder successively, “Bullet Brain” and “A Great Way To Care II”, was unnerving.

News/Current Affairs/Documentaries/Factual Programmes

- Sports news should be included in the evening news bulletins.
- The provision of 24-hour news reports on the iNews Channel enabled the public to view the latest news and information.
- “Sunday Report” and “Tuesday Report” were worth watching as they looked into the experiences of people from different sectors of society.

Information/Sports/Children/Variety/Other Programmes

- Most of the animations broadcast on the Jade Channel were Japanese productions, but there were more and more contents that were not suitable for children, e.g. “Accel World”. As it was broadcast during the family viewing hours, some contents that were not suitable for children were excised. The broadcast of incomplete version made animation fans very disappointed.
- Magazine programmes like “Scoop” used to report entertainment news only, but it had spent a considerable time reporting livelihood issues in recent years. However, the production team did not have training on journalism and communications, and hence resulted in partial editing and reporting.
- Games in game shows (e.g. “Super Trio” series) often wasted food and played pranks on artistes. They would have a negative impact on children. Warning captions should be shown to remind children not to imitate the acts.
- Travelogues misled viewers because they did not reflect the local situations realistically. For example, it was illogical that programme hosts could communicate in Chinese with shopkeepers in Japan. This had a negative impact on viewers.

- The translation of animations was poor and failed to express the original meaning.
- Some programmes (e.g. animations) on the J2 Channel were broadcast twice or thrice a week, including their first-run. The arrangement enabled viewers with different daily schedules of work and rest to watch the programmes.
- Consistent scheduling arrangements for animations enabled viewers to familiarise themselves with the broadcasting time of the programmes.

Commended Programmes

- “Beauty At War” was a serious production and its theme was unique. “When Heaven Burns” was thought-provoking. “Come Home Love” was warm and entertaining. “Ghetto Justice” and “The Hippocratic Crush” contained positive messages and gave viewers a better understanding of certain occupations or professions. “Reality Check” and “When Lanes Merge” were warm and encouraging.
- Self-produced programmes “Pilgrimage Of Wealth” and “Pilgrimage Of Hope”, and the acquired local programme “Driving Suzi” were satisfactory.

C. Other Comments

Advertisements/Promos

- The programmes of the two stations contained too many in-programme advertising materials. There were hard-sell elements in TVB’s dramas. The sponsorship identifications in children’s programmes and animations of ATV were too large, affecting viewing pleasure.
- Repeated references to “poo” in advertisements for formula milk broadcast during meal time were unnerving.
- Commercial breaks in ATV’s horse racing programmes were too frequent and prolonged. Programme promos were broadcast repeatedly during the breaks.

- Too many programme promos were broadcast in commercial breaks on ATV.

Chapter 5 Follow-up Actions

Responses from Licensees

The CA sent the views collected through written submissions and focus group discussions to ATV and TVB for response. The responses of the two licensees are attached at Appendices 1 and 2.

The CA's Observations on the Licensees' Responses

2. The two licensees have generally taken into account the concerns expressed by the public before making responses and follow-up actions. The CA notes the following –

- (a) ATV has responded that the broadcast of locally-produced programmes has gradually increased, especially those broadcast during prime time on the Home Channel. However, the CA notes that the programmes broadcast during non-prime time comprise much more repeat programmes and the percentage of first-run locally-produced programmes during non-prime time is still on the low side;
- (b) on repeat programmes, ATV has only offered to reduce the number of repeats from four to three times a day. As to its proposal to reshuffle the time slots of the re-runs, it is not apparent as to how that could help ATV meet the public demand for fewer repeat programmes. In sum, ATV's proposed improvement measures fall far short of addressing the public concern in this regard;
- (c) while programme hosts and guests enjoy the freedom of expression as pointed out by ATV, all PVPs have to comply with some ground rules as set out in the codes of practice issued by the CA, viz. providing a suitable opportunity for response and the need for a sufficiently broad range of views; and
- (d) the quality of game shows on TVB has been a major concern in both the current and the last public engagement exercises. TVB should more fully take into account the public views on its game shows in its future productions.

3. Regarding paragraph 2(a) and (b) above, there is currently no general requirement governing local productions and repeat programmes on domestic free television programme services. The CA may revisit these issues in the context of the forthcoming renewal of ATV and TVB's licences. Regarding paragraph 2(c) above, the CA is reviewing the provisions governing PVPs in the codes of practice. A public consultation will be conducted and the result will be announced upon completion of the review.

Chapter 6 Acknowledgement

In this public engagement exercise, members of the public expressed enthusiastically diverse opinions on the variety and quality of programmes provided by the two domestic free television programme service licensees. The CA would like to thank the two stations for their participation, and all individuals, organisations and groups who have given their views.

2. The CA attaches great importance to public views and the responses of the two stations are generally positive. The CA will continue to collect public views on free television programme services, content regulation, programme variety and quality, etc. through regular reviews of licence and codes of practice and public engagement exercises so as to ensure that the codes of practice reflect the changes in community standards and expectations of the public, and that the services provided by the television stations live up to the expectation of local audience.

Appendix 1

ATV's Responses to the Summary of Views Collected in the Public Engagement Exercise for Gathering Views on the Programmes Provided by Domestic Free Television Programme Service Licensees

The need for greater programme variety

In the mid-term review of our licence, many viewers expressed that there were too many serial dramas scheduled during prime time on our Home Channel. They hoped that our station should provide more programmes on current affairs and information programmes. Therefore, we have gradually replaced the serial dramas by infotainment programmes and current affairs programmes on our schedule during prime time.

There were three lines of serial drama between 7:30pm and 10:30pm in October 2010, including “The Legend of Bruce Lee”(李小龍傳奇), “Likable Or Not” (愛情犀利哥) and “Who’s the Hero” (勝者爲王). In July 2013, two lines of drama series which originally scheduled between 7:30pm and 10:30pm, were replaced by other types of programme, such as entertainment programmes “Asian Entertainment” (星動亞洲), “Blog the World” (微播天下) and financial programme “Vision on International Finance” (國際財經視野). At present, only a line of serial drama is kept. It is scheduled between 9:00pm and 10:00pm.

The programmes about current affairs and infotainment have also been increased in recent years. Apart from the financial programme “Vision on International Finance”, talk shows on current affairs such as “News Bar Talk” (把酒當歌), infotainment programmes such as “ATV The 100 Celebrities of Miss Asia” (亞姐百人) and “Chiu Chow Tycoon” (傑出潮商系列) are scheduled within the time slot from 7:00pm to 11:35pm. The variety of programming since then has obviously become more diversified during prime time when compared with the schedule in 2010.

Demand on more local/station-produced programmes

Since 2009, our broadcast of locally-produced programmes has gradually increased, especially the broadcast during prime time on the Home Channel. The percentage of the broadcast of local productions during

prime time has increased from around 32% in 2009 to 64% in 2012.

As we mentioned before, the scheduling of serial dramas has been replaced by locally-produced infotainment programmes and current affairs programmes, such as “Hong Kong 100 VIPs” (香港百人), “After 11 PM” (11 點後特區), series one and two of “I Want to be CE” (我要做特首), “East Wing West Wing TV” (東宮西宮 TV), “Cheers Hong Kong” (香港有飯開), “Hong Kong Loving Hearts 2011” (2011 感動香港), “A Century to the Republic” (百年共和) in 2011, “ATV the 100 Celebrities” (亞視百人), “I Want to be CE 3” (我要做特首 3), “Asia Policy Unit” (亞洲政策組), “eCIA” (娛樂 CIA), “A Movie” (微·電影) in 2012, “ATV 100 Celebrities of Miss Asia” (亞姐百人), “Asian Entertainment” (星動亞洲) and “Chiu Chow Tycoon” (傑出潮商系列) in 2013. The programmes “Blog the World” (微播天下), “Vision on International Finance” (國際財經視野), “News Bar Talk” (把酒當歌) and “ATV Song” (ATV 每日一歌) have been broadcast since 2012.

In the weekends, we have also scheduled a lot of local productions, such as “Director Ko’s Blog” (高志森微博), “Performance Training Project Highlight” (亞洲大學堂), “Those were the Days” (與星光同行), “Hot Topics”, “News Magazine” (時事追擊), “Money Talk” (金錢世界), “Gold Coast Tour@Guangdong of China” (廣東黃金海岸遊) and “Step on Stage of ATV CNY Show” (我要上 ATV 春晚).

We also heard the opinions about the demand on some programme types, such as programmes for senior citizens, at the meeting held on 15 May 2013. Thus, we have already scheduled more programmes on Cantonese Opera, including “ATV Cantonese Opera Selection” (粵曲會知音) and “林家聲粵劇特輯”, especially for the elder viewers. We will continue to do so.

Concerns about repeat programmes

Regarding the criticisms on the schedule of the repeat programmes, we intend to better serve the need of different viewers with various television viewing habits. Due to the trend of the prolonged working hours of the people in recent years, many viewers would have missed the programmes scheduled during prime time when they are still at work. They may wish to have a chance to watch these programmes after work. We hope that they will be able to watch the prime time programmes at their

convenience by rescheduling these programmes after midnight and on the following early morning.

Nonetheless, there are criticisms on the frequent repeat of our programmes. We have adjusted our re-run schedules to better serve our purpose and respond to our viewers.

Starting from July 2013, the repeat time slots of some programmes have been cancelled. For examples, the repeat time slots of the programmes “Blog the World” (微播天下) and “Performance Training Project Highlight” (亞洲大學堂) on the Home Channel have been reduced from four times to three times a day.

At the same time, other re-run time slots of some programmes have also been reviewed. To better serve the target viewers, these re-run time slots were either re-scheduled to earlier hours or pushed to subsequent hours. For instance, the re-run time slot of the talk show “News Bar Talk” (把酒當歌) on the Asia Channel have been changed from 2:30am to 6:00am.

Concerns about views expressed in programmes on current affairs

Since 2011, we have gradually increased the broadcast of programmes on current affairs and hot topics in the society. These programmes include three series of “I Want to be CE” (我想做特首), “East Wing West Wing TV” (東宮西宮 TV), “Asia Policy Unit” (亞洲政策組), “News Bar Talk” (把酒當歌) and “ATV Focus” (ATV 焦點). Most of them criticised the policies of the HKSAR Government as well as political parties and their members. Views on various hot topics from the hosts and the guests are considered as personal views. They are exempted from the provisions governing due impartiality when the programme is classified as “personal view programme” (“PVP”).

Due to the increasing public’s willingness to explicitly express their views and discontent on many political and social issues, criticisms against opinion programmes which contain unpopular views have significantly increased recently. Although the right of hosts and guests to express personal views in such programmes is protected when the programmes are labelled as “PVP”, we have taken measures to ensure that a broad range of views can be expressed in the programmes.

For example, the format of the programme “ATV Focus” (ATV 焦點) has

been fully revised. Extra hosts have joined the programme. Different parties have the chance to express and exchange their views within the programme. Opinions taken from the forum of our website are also broadcast at the end of each episode.

We believe that the prosperity of our society depends on the freedom of speech. We hope that the popularity of views will not become a factor which affects the opportunity for unpopular opinions to be expressed in the programme, even in PVP.

Concerns about frequent changes to programme schedules

Since the mid-term review of our licence, we realised that viewers would like to have a choice to watch different types of programmes in the same time slot from the two free TV licensees. Thus, we began to diversify our programming and provided programme types different from our competitor at the same time slot, especially during prime time. The process of fine-tuning the suitable patterns of programme schedule takes time. During the process, our viewers may find that the time slots of our programmes are not uniform. The weekly schedule may slightly different from time to time. The process of fine-tuning is almost over. Our scheduling of programmes is going to be more uniform.

During this year's public engagement exercise, various opinions are received and heard. We are willing to continue to hear more views and criticisms on our services from the public. Apart from the traditional channels for collecting views, internet is definitely a convenient way for the public to express their opinions. We are going to enhance and fully renovate our website, including the function to collect views from the public. Upon completion of the renovation around the end of this year, we will launch a campaign to promote our website to invite the public to express their opinions via our website.

We welcome and treasure any opinions from our viewers as we believe that this is one of the ways to improve our service and meet the expectations of our viewers.

Appendix 2

TVB's Responses to the Summary of Views Collected in the Public Engagement Exercise for Gathering Views on the Programmes Provided by Domestic Free Television Programme Service Licensees

Television Broadcasts Limited (“TVB”) wishes to thank the public members for their views and recommendations. In particular, we would like to respond to the views on the variety and quality of our programmes, summarised as follows:

- (1) need for greater programme variety and better quality;
- (2) more programmes for the elderly;
- (3) more drama of new and/or positive themes;
- (4) concerns about the quality of game shows; and
- (5) proliferation of cuisine and gourmet programmes encouraging a luxurious lifestyle;

Referring to point (1) above, we believe that we have been providing a free-to-air broadcasting service of consistently high standard and quality, with a broad range of choices and diversity in programming. The range of programmes broadcast on our domestic free platform in recent years, which included station-produced and acquired productions, were scheduled strategically on different channels and at different time zones to cater for the needs of the mass and niche TV audience.

Drama Programmes

Within the drama genre, there has been a wide choice of themes and settings, ranging from historical, period to contemporary, offering viewers high quality viewing pleasure and experiences.

Station-produced Dramas

In the past few years, we explored a broad range of themes in drama production. We had detective stories like “Every Move You Make” (讀心神探), “Forensic Heroes III” (法證先鋒 III) and “Highs and Lows” (雷霆掃毒). Dramas with themes on law and medical professions used to be the most popular genre, amongst which we had “Ghetto Justice” (怒火街頭), “Friendly Fire” (法網狙擊), “A Great Way To Care” (仁心解碼)

and “The Hippocratic Crush” (On Call 36 小時). As a mirror of the reality, our recent drama “L’Escargot” (缺宅男女) evolved around local housing problem while “Inbound Trouble” (老表，你好野!) touched on the cultural differences between Hong Kong and the Mainland. Besides, we produced fantasy dramas such as “Fly with Me” (飛女正傳) and “Three Kingdom RPG” (回到三國), romances like “Only You” (Only You 只有您), “The Rippling Blossom” (魚躍在花見), “Let It Be Love” (4 In Love) and “Season of Love” (戀愛季節) and Kung Fu dramas such as “A Fistful of Stances” (鐵馬尋橋) and “Grace Under Fire” (女拳). All of them were well-received by our audience.

In 2010, “Can’t Buy Me Love” (公主嫁到), a costume comedy, won a number of awards at various television festivals at home and in the South-east Asia region.

“When Heaven Burns” (天與地), a drama serial produced in 2011, adopted a less conventional approach and embarked on a daring theme. The drama gained unprecedented popularity amongst young viewers and netizens. That was an encouragement to our station in exploring new directions in drama production.

In 2012, “The Hippocratic Crush” (On Call 36 小時) earned the highest viewership among all our programmes in the first quarter of 2012. It also received a number of important awards in Hong Kong and Malaysia. Again, that was an indication of our station’s continued efforts in striving for excellence in drama production.

Acquired Dramas

The mix of dramas on the J2, HD Jade and Pearl Channels comprises some of the best acquired programmes of general appeal as well as those of a selective-viewing category. Renowned and popular series, some of which being Emmy Award winners, included titles such as “Modern Family” (摩登家庭); “Three Kingdoms” (三國); “Moon Embracing the Sun” (懷抱太陽的月亮), to quote but a few.

Theatrical Movies

Theatrical movie is undoubtedly a popular genre on free-to-air television. Some of the blockbusters and mega movies shown on the Pearl Channel in recent years included: “Transformers” (變形金剛); “Ocean’s Thirteen”

(盜海豪情 13 王牌); “Mission: Impossible III” (職業特工隊 III); “Brokeback Mountain” (斷背山); “The Dark Knight” (蝙蝠俠-黑夜之神); “Iron Man” (鐵甲奇俠); “Over the Hedge” (4 條腿拯救隊); “Transformers Revenge of the Fallen” (變形金剛狂派再起); “2012” (末日預言 2012); “Journey to the Center of the Earth” (地心探險記); “Spider-Man3” (蜘蛛俠 3); “The Mummy Tomb of the Dragon Emperor” (盜墓迷城 3); “Ice Age 3” (冰河世紀 3); “Dawn of the Dinosaurs” (大威龍駕到); and “Gulliver’s Travels” (小人國大歷險).

The above were only a few examples of top class acquired programmes and movies that were broadcast on TVB’s free-to-air channels in recent years.

Non-drama Programmes

TVB has produced a substantial number of successful variety and game shows. The “Super Trio” (獎門人) series, the flagship and all-time popular game show; “Fun with Liza and Gods” (荃加福祿壽), a variety show featuring hilarious impersonations, were amongst many successful non-dramatic programmes broadcast in recent years.

“Bride Wannabes” (盛女愛作戰) of 2012, the current “Bachelors At War” (求愛大作戰) and “Xtreme Marathon” (極地狂奔) are examples of innovative and well-received reality shows on our programme schedule.

“The Magic Ring” (魔法擂台); “Kung Fu Supernova” (功夫新星); and “Apprentice Chef Series” (大廚出馬) are a special kind of entertainment game programmes inviting people in the trade for competition.

“Water of Life” (水之源), an enrichment programme taking the audience to three famous rivers in the world – the Yellow River of China, the Ganges of India and the Mekong in Vietnam, to help raise awareness of the delicate environmental balance between mankind and limited water resources.

“Health Oddities” (健康奇案錄) and “Tricky Health Risks” (體通體透) were educational programmes looking at health issues which adopted a comical approach in presentation. This was innovative.

TVB had also produced light-hearted enrichment programmes on the

legends of Hong Kong. They included “Open Sesame” (開館有益) on museums and exhibits; “Big Fun on Little Rocks” (小島怡情) exploring off-shore islands; and “Hong Kong Back Then” (香港演義) on some inspiring and interesting local legends; and “HK ARTchitecture” (香港築跡) presenting the designs and cultures of local heritage and modern architectures.

“One From the Heart” (霎時感動), a series of mini-programmes featuring artistes talking about meaningful and touching personal experiences, was amongst the highly-acclaimed edifying programmes in recent years.

The above examples demonstrate that a great variety of choices and diversity is being offered to viewers on our free-to-air platform.

Award-winning Programmes

Since 2010, a substantial number of programmes of different genres, both station-produced and acquired, have received merits and awards.

Programmes for Senior Citizens

With regard to point (2), we have significantly increased the broadcast of programmes for the elderly from 60 to 120 minutes every week since the conclusion of the mid-term review in 2009.

“Happy Old Buddies” (快樂長門人) and “Good Time Old Buddies” (開心老友記) scheduled on the Jade Channel provide a total of 90 minutes of elderly programming per week, while “Health Talk” (扁鵲會) on the HD Jade Channel offers an additional 30 minutes of such programmes.

The two long-running “Old Buddies” programmes encompass a wide range of topics catering for the specific needs of the elderly. The contents are regularly revised and updated. Doctors and social workers are often interviewed and provide practical advice on matters relating to both physical and mental health of senior citizens. Emphasis is placed on how to maintain a healthy diet, exercise suitably and rejoin society as voluntary workers, through programmes organised by charitable organisations or age concern groups. Social integration and involvement are considered beneficial to the mental well-being of the aged. Retirees who can sing, dance or play musical instrument are regularly invited to perform in our studio.

In 2010 and 2011, the station received praise and commendations from the Hong Kong Council of Social Service (香港社會服務聯會) for the broadcast of “Happy Old Buddies” (快樂長門人) and “Good Time Old Buddies” (開心老友記).

We are honoured to have received the awards. The public’s request for more programmes for the elderly will be considered in future reviews of our programme schedule.

New and Positive Themes in Drama

Regarding point (3), we wish to reiterate that our station is always striving for excellence on drama production. Looking back, drama serials in recent years have embodied quite a broad range of themes, as explained in the foregoing paragraphs. Nonetheless, the station will continue to explore and break new grounds in dramas, a genre which is still considered the most popular.

We note the concern expressed by some viewers about undesirable thematic material in our dramas. We hope viewers would agree that drama mirrors reality and reality has a pleasant and unpleasant side. It is often unavoidable to show the rough and less attractive side of life within a dramatic context. Yet, the ultimate purpose of doing so is to promote family bonds, love, friendship, righteousness and good morals. We take this opportunity to reassure viewers that our production people are and will remain vigilant about scenes in dramas which may have a negative impact on young audience.

Quality of Game Shows

On point (4), we reckon that our game shows are of high production quality, not inferior in any way to world-renowned counterparts produced in the region.

Many of our game shows are of an infotainment nature, mingling entertainment with facts and knowledge. These include “Neighborhood Treasures 4” (千奇百趣高 B 班); “Outsmart” (財智達人); “The Law Society of Hong Kong Law Week Special” (知法守法); and “Number Matters” (700 萬人的數字). On the other hand, some are designed to purely provide entertainment, like the flagship “Super Trio” (獎門人)

game show or “All Star Glam Exam” (華麗明星賽); all of which intended to offer a kind of escapism to help viewers unwind after a long working day. “Minute to Win It” (決戰一分鐘) is a game programme adopting an innovative format acquired from the United States. Our station will continue to source and produce top quality programmes of this genre and we are totally prepared to listen to viewers’ opinions.

Cuisine and Gourmet Programmes

Referring to point (5), culinary programmes are quite an established and popular genre on television around the world. While we have produced a wide variety of cuisine and gourmet programmes, we have never intended to advocate or encourage an undesirable lifestyle in such programmes.

Indeed, programmes such as “Chua Lam’s Feast” (蔡瀾品味) and “China à la Li” (李純恩大食遊) are a combination of travel documentary and gastronomy looking at eating habits and life through the eyes of experienced celeb travelers and connoisseurs of fine foods. These programmes impart knowledge on how the art of cooking has evolved and influenced by differences in culture.

In contrast, the programmes “Good Cheap Eat” (食平D), “Neighborhood Gourmet” (街坊廚神) and “Eat This Way” (為食一條街), hosted by icons of grassroots, tell the audience how to have a decent and nourishing meal without being ostentatious.

Some other cuisine programmes on our schedule can be in a documentary-like format or talk shows targeting different types of audience and featuring celebrities talking about their careers and life experiences. Cooking and eating are sometimes only incidental, serving as a backdrop for the programmes. Examples of such programmes are “Cooking Away Lady May” (May 姐有請); “Stars on the Menu” (名人廚房); “Tasting Life” (珍情品味); and “A Bite of China” (舌尖上的中國), the last of which listed was a successful station-repackaged programme with footage from an acquired documentary produced by CCTV of China.

Conclusion

We always have viewers’ demands and expectations in mind, and we have been making our best efforts to provide the best possible television programme service to the public. That explains why we have, for

consecutive years, covered the Academy Awards (Oscars), the most prestigious annual event of the film industry globally televised. In 2012, after much endeavour, we managed to acquire the eagerly anticipated event, London 2012 Olympic Games and aired them live to all Hong Kong viewers.

Our *Jade*, *Pearl*, *HD Jade*, *J2* and *iNews Channels* offer a great variety of entertainment, informational and educational programmes. We are proud to highlight that, at present, the *iNews Channel* is the only 24-hour fully-subtitled Cantonese news channel available free for viewing in Hong Kong.

Television Broadcasts Limited will continue to play the role of a responsible, responsive and conscientious broadcaster serving the interests of Hong Kong people. In this connection, views, opinions and suggestions made in this public engagement exercise have all been taken on board and will be given serious consideration in our future production planning.