

Case 9 – Television Programme “News Roundup” (晚間新聞) broadcast on the Jade Channel of Television Broadcasts Limited (“TVB”) from 11:00pm to 11:30pm on 4 July 2019

A member of the public complained about the captioned programme. The main allegation was that the news report had distorted the remarks made by Mr Jeremy Hunt (侯俊偉), the then Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, in his interview on 4 July 2019 (the “Interview”) by adding a line to the remarks made by Mr Hunt which was not uttered by Mr Hunt.

The CA’s Findings

In line with the established practice, the CA considered the complaint case and the representations of TVB in detail. The CA took into account the relevant aspects of the case, including –

Details of the Case

- (a) the news item mentioned, among others, that Mr Hunt talked about his views on recent social events in Hong Kong in the Interview. A footage of the Interview was shown;
- (b) following the footage of the Interview, the reporter said, as a conclusion to the news item, that “侯俊偉認為，香港已暫緩修訂逃犯條例，當局應處理引發示威的問題根源...” (“Jeremy Hunt considered that the extradition bill had been suspended and the authorities had to deal with the root causes of the protests...”) (“Concluding Remarks”); and
- (c) according to some media reports, Hunt did not mention the underlined part in the Concluding Remarks (viz. “香港已暫緩修訂逃犯條例” (“the extradition bill had been suspended”)). It gave rise to doubt as to whether the underlined part was supported by factual evidence.

Relevant Provisions in the Generic Code of Practice on Television Programme Standards

- (a) paragraph 1 of Chapter 9 – news programmes should offer viewers an intelligent and informed account of issues that enables them to form their own views. The licensees should ensure that news is presented with accuracy and due impartiality; and
- (b) paragraph 1A of Chapter 9 – the licensees shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that the factual contents of news are accurate.

The CA's Considerations

The CA, having regard to the relevant facts of the case including the information submitted by TVB, considered that –

- (a) according to the clarifications of TVB, the Concluding Remarks were sourced from a report of an international news agency;
- (b) in any event, it was unlikely that the report of the Concluding Remarks would significantly affect viewers' comprehension of the news item as a whole; and
- (c) there was insufficient evidence to conclude that the Concluding Remarks were inaccurate, or TVB had not made reasonable efforts to ensure the accuracy of the news concerned.

Decision

In view of the above, the CA considered the complaint **unsubstantiated** and decided that **no further action** should be taken against TVB.