

Mid-term Review of Domestic Free Television Programme Service Licences and Sound Broadcasting Licences

Summary of Public Views

A total of 460 submissions from the public were received during the consultation exercise from 10 September to 9 November 2021. The views collected are summarised as follows –

(1) Programme Variety

Free TV

General Views

- 1.1 TVB's programming focused mainly on dramas, HKTVE put more emphasis on reality shows, whereas Fantastic TV was particularly strong at providing sports programmes. The three TV stations had their strengths in specific aspects, thereby offering more programming choices for the viewers.
- 1.2 The three TV stations broadcast too many acquired programmes. The Government should require the stations to broadcast more local productions.
- 1.3 The TV stations should broadcast more programmes originated from Mainland China and those supplied by China Central Television (CCTV), as well as strengthening cooperation with their Mainland counterparts to provide more programmes about the Greater Bay Area (GBA) and the scenic spots along the Express Rail Link, Mainland-produced dramas/news, and information on Mainland's policy, which would promote a correct understanding of the country's developments as well as culture and customs.
- 1.4 The TV stations should increase/introduce the following programme genres –
 - Variety shows for all age groups, programmes for family entertainment, programmes for senior citizens, programmes on healthcare and programmes with educational values to meet the needs of an ageing population
 - Local sports programmes: to enhance public awareness of local sports events, such as Hong Kong Premier League and Hong Kong A1 Division Championship. There was suggestion that inter-school competitions should also be broadcast
 - Football matches
 - Performances by local stage productions
 - Programmes on local culture

- Live singing contests and cooking competition to discover new talents
 - Foreign movies and music programmes
 - Livecast or recorded meetings of Legislative Council
 - Variety shows originated from Japan and Taiwan
 - International news and current affairs programmes, talk shows / financial programmes, adult programmes
 - Programmes of environmental education and promoting vegetarian food, fun animal programmes
 - Programmes for young persons in collaboration with YouTube, Netflix and Disney
- 1.5 The TV stations should launch a sports/arts programme channel to promote such activities.
- 1.6 The TV stations should broadcast programmes which disseminated positive messages and promoted positive values, and at the same time reduce the broadcast of programmes which disseminated negative messages.
- 1.7 Programmes on financial information and real estate/property market should be reduced.

Views on TVB

- 1.8 Opinions expressing satisfaction with the programme variety of TVB included –
- TVB provided diversified programmes. Information programmes were produced in a professional manner by intermingling of entertainment and information to cater for the needs of the public.
 - Reality shows containing themes on singing, street dancing, sales and cooking competition served to keep up with the current trend, and the content was interesting.
 - Programmes for senior citizens and special programmes for epidemic prevention were of practical use as they engaged experts to disseminate anti-epidemic information and promote knowledge of preventive measures.
 - The GBA-related programmes broadcast on TVB News Channel served to provide relevant information to the public without having to set foot in the GBA due to the pandemic situation.

1.9 Opinions expressing dissatisfaction with the programme variety of TVB included –

- TVB’s dramas and variety shows were repetitive in content. It kept broadcasting nostalgic programmes which lacked creativity and were not appealing to viewers.
- There were too many programmes on GBA which were boring.
- Audience was annoyed by the excessive use of product placements in programmes like “Scoop” and “Come Home Love: Lo And Behold”. Indirect advertising of “big big shop” was also considered excessive.
- TVB often broadcast programmes with political stances, advertised products of companies in which TVB had an interest and made use of its TV platform for marketing.
- There was suggestion that TVB News Channel should be terminated.

Views on HKTVE

1.10 Opinions expressing satisfaction with the programme variety of HKTVE included –

- HKTVE provided diversified programmes, offering more programming choices for viewers.
- The programmes were creative, bringing new impacts on the industry.
- The programmes, produced in depth with a genuine reflection of the reality, were memorable to the audience and inspiring. ViuTV had made a big leap forward amidst the stagnant TV industry, broadening the viewers’ horizons and making breakthrough in the monotonous development of the TV industry.
- Broadcast of the National Basketball Association (NBA) games and the English Premier League games on free TV was great for sports fans.
- The emergence of boy groups helped to enhance programme quality.

1.11 Opinions expressing dissatisfaction with the programme variety of HKTVE included –

- HKTVE provided excessive exposures for the boy groups in the programmes, with repetitive themes and contents.

- HKTVE relied overly on acquired programmes and lacked local elements. Self-produced programmes were predominately variety shows. HKTVE should produce more local dramas and broadcast more acquired European dramas.
- There were too many reality shows.
- Some of the programme themes were too offbeat, not appealing to the public at large. Such themes might not cater for the tastes of Hong Kong people and might not be suitable for family viewing.

1.12 It was suggested that HKTVE should launch a self-produced TV programme channel featuring themes of popular boy groups.

Views on Fantastic TV

1.13 Opinions expressing satisfaction with the programme variety of Fantastic TV included –

- The quality of both acquired programmes and locally produced programmes was generally good. It was suggested that Fantastic TV should broadcast more local productions and dramas.
- Broadcast of football matches such as Bundesliga, EFL Championship and Copa America on free TV was good news to all football fans. Fantastic TV should broadcast more major football matches in the future.
- The broadcast of classic Hong Kong movies every Sunday was appealing to the audience.

1.14 Opinions expressing dissatisfaction with the programme variety of Fantastic TV included –

- Programmes on weekdays lacked variety and were not appealing.
- Fantastic TV kept on broadcasting news, financial programmes and repeats of old programmes. Its productions lacked creativity. Fantastic TV should broadcast a greater variety of programmes.

Sound Broadcasting

General Views

1.15 The programme contents were unattractive and songs were played too frequently. The talk shows lacked quality.

1.16 Radio programmes lacked variety and showed no improvement.

Free TV and Sound Broadcasting

General Views

- 1.17 In the era of e-learning, it was no longer necessary for the stations to broadcast programmes provided by the universities and the “Capacity Building Mileage Programme” series. The airtime so released could be used to provide other programmes, thereby broadening the programme choices of the public.
- 1.18 Programmes giving information on and originated from the Mainland were considered excessive.

(2) Positive Programme Requirements

Free TV

- 2.1 TV stations were required under their licences to produce children’s programmes, programmes for senior citizens and current affairs programmes etc., which were costly but had low viewership. It was suggested that the broadcasting requirements of positive programmes should be relaxed to give TV stations greater flexibility in programme management, thereby reinvigorating the TV sector in Hong Kong.
- 2.2 Positive programmes should be broadcast by RTHK.
- 2.3 The types of positive programmes shown on free TV were not sufficient to cater for the needs of different sectors of the society.

Views on Specific Types of Positive Programmes to be Broadcast on Specified Programme Channels and Being Locally Produced

- 2.4 The requirement to broadcast specific types of positive programmes on specified programme channels (e.g. Chinese programme channels) should be maintained. If the TV stations were allowed to decide on which programme channels to broadcast the positive programmes (e.g. English programme channels), it could hardly meet the public demand for receiving information in Chinese. However, the CA might consider allowing flexibility for the TV stations to broadcast positive programmes on the Chinese / English programme channels in order to facilitate operation of the broadcasting industry.
- 2.5 If the TV stations were allowed to broadcast positive programmes on any of their programme channels, they would tend to broadcast programmes yielding higher ratings and advertising revenue than positive programmes on their Chinese programme channels, thereby affecting the choice of programmes for viewers.

- 2.6 Relaxation of the local production requirement would lead to acquisition of more overseas programmes for broadcast on free TV, which would in turn adversely affect the livelihood of local producers. The programme hours of local productions should be increased to protect local broadcasting sector.

Views on Children's Programmes

- 2.7 Noting that children attended more extra-curricular activities after school and given their interest in accessing information through multiple channels, the existing requirement to broadcast two hours of children's programmes daily between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. was outdated, resulting in wastage of resources of the TV stations. It was suggested that greater flexibility should be allowed for the TV stations in broadcasting children's programmes.
- 2.8 With the implementation of whole-day classes in primary schools, the broadcast hours of children's programmes should be adjusted accordingly, e.g. additional programme hours should be provided for children during holidays.
- 2.9 The TV stations should be given greater flexibility in scheduling their children's programmes on a weekly basis instead of maintaining a daily quota, so that they could take into account their individual programming strategies when providing such programmes to the public.
- 2.10 The number of daily broadcast hours of children's programmes should be reduced to one hour per day, while the decision on how to schedule the remaining hours of children's programmes should rest with the TV stations.

Views on Programmes for Young Persons

- 2.11 Nowadays young people tended to obtain information through the Internet and they seldom watched TV at home. It was suggested that the requirement for providing programmes for young persons, which was obsolete, should be lifted.
- 2.12 The existing requirement of broadcasting 30 minutes of programmes for young persons per week should be maintained, in order to cater for the information need of local youngsters.

Views on Other Positive Programmes

- 2.13 The provision of locally produced arts and culture programmes by a TV station (i.e. not less than 15 minutes per week) was insufficient.
- 2.14 The TV stations should broadcast more programmes for senior citizens and current affairs programmes.

- 2.15 News programmes were broadcast too frequently with repetitive contents. The TV stations should be required to broadcast one hour of news programmes only.

Sound Broadcasting

- 2.16 There should be more radio programmes for senior citizens in view of the ageing population as they would be more inclined to receiving information from radio.
- 2.17 Metro should produce more programmes on current affairs with commentary on its Cantonese programme channels, and invite stakeholders and phone-in public to participate in discussions in order to facilitate listeners to make informed analysis of the discussion topics.

(3) Language of Broadcast

Free TV

- 3.1 With the prevalence of mobile phones and tablets, it had been common for the general public to gain access to infotainment via mobile apps. The requirement for a TV station to provide one Chinese programme channel and one English programme channel became outdated, inhibiting the development of the broadcasting industry.
- 3.2 There was a lack of Putonghua programmes, especially entertainment programmes on the Chinese programme channels. No limit should be set on the number of Putonghua programme hours to be broadcast by a TV station.
- 3.3 There were too many English programme channels, and the overall viewership was low. Regulation on the number of English programme hours on the English programme channel should be relaxed to allow more non-English programmes (e.g. Korean, Japanese and Mainland dramas as well as variety shows to be broadcast in their original soundtrack) to attract viewers. There were also suggestions that financial programmes in Putonghua should not be broadcast on English programme channels during prime time and family viewing hours (FVH) on the weekends.
- 3.4 There were suggestions that the regulation on the broadcast of non-English programmes on the English programme channels should be relaxed to allow provision of more non-English programmes outside prime time, subject to an overall daily quota of 50% of the broadcasting time.

- 3.5 With respect to the English programme channels, the TV stations should make reference to RTHK TV 31. More programmes in other foreign languages (e.g. Indonesian and Tagalog) should be broadcast on the English programme channels to broaden viewers' choices.
- 3.6 There should be more bilingual broadcasting or multi-language broadcasting services to cater for the diverse needs of the viewing public.
- 3.7 All acquired programmes should be required to be dubbed in Cantonese for broadcast on TV. On the English programme channels, Cantonese dubbing of those programmes should be made available on the second soundtrack. Meanwhile, free TV stations should be required to establish a dubbing unit with full-time dubbing artistes.
- 3.8 The stations should launch programme channels in foreign languages to broadcast programmes in Japanese, Korean or Putonghua.

(4) Programme and Advertising Standards

Free TV

Programme Standards

- 4.1 During the period of social events, inappropriate use of language, biased content and smear of facts were found in the news programmes of some TV stations, confusing the audience. The TV stations should maintain impartiality in their news programmes and ensure that news contents are accurate in order to prevent the spread of undesirable influences.
- 4.2 The news programmes of TVB were unfair and in violation of accepted codes of the journalistic profession. The news programmes of ViuTV and Hong Kong Open TV¹ were biased and often failed to ensure coverage of China's viewpoints and rebuttal, hence deepening hostility towards the nation in the long run.
- 4.3 The hosts of Hong Kong Open TV's current affairs programmes were biased and one-sided.
- 4.4 It was disappointing that all the three TV stations produced news and commentary programmes with biased contents over the past few years.
- 4.5 TVB's "Scoop" reported an online video clip in a highly exaggerated manner without understanding the underlying causes and facts. A free TV station should present facts in a fair and balanced manner. In reporting the item, the TV crew made improper entry into the premises.

¹ Later renamed "HOY TV".

- 4.6 Travelogues and variety shows on TV were laden with swimsuit segments. Also, the depiction of homosexuality issues in some dramas was of low quality. It was suggested that such programme contents should be regulated through legislative measures and relevant guidelines.
- 4.7 Prior notice should be given before presentation of any sensitive materials. Plots involving drinking or smoking should be reduced.
- 4.8 While ViuTV's drama "Ossan's Love" aroused controversy over the issue of homosexuality, its reality show "The Couples' Gambit" was vulgar, too erotic, indecent and advocated extramarital relationship, which contravened the moral standards and values. The CA should consider the matters with more care and take appropriate regulatory action, if substantiated, against the breach of the regulations by operators.
- 4.9 ViuTV, touting itself as being creative, produced vulgar and distasteful programmes which led to negative impact on young people.
- 4.10 The current programme standards for TV were too stringent and outdated. Restrictions on the use of coarse language such as "F" words in the Hollywood movies broadcast after 9:30 p.m. should be relaxed so that viewers could savour the original flavour of the movies.
- 4.11 Restrictions on the use of bad language in programmes should be relaxed outside the FVH for retaining the vivid portrayal of characters for enhancing the viewing pleasure.

Family Viewing Hours

- 4.12 There were views that the FVH requirement should be reviewed and in particular, such requirement on the thematic channels (J2, TVB News Channel and TVB Finance & Information Channel²) should be lifted.
- 4.13 The FVH requirement should be maintained and the period should be adjusted to 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. There were views that the FVH should not be shortened so as to protect children from exposure to undesirable contents.

Product Placement and Programme Sponsorship

- 4.14 When compared with the variety shows of the Mainland, there were more restrictions on the formats of programme sponsorship in Hong Kong, making it difficult for TV stations to obtain the resources necessary to keep themselves afloat. The restrictions on programme sponsorship should be relaxed to allow a broader range of advertising or product sponsorship in TV programmes.

² Later renamed "TVB Finance, Sports and Information Channel".

- 4.15 In face of the competition from online media in recent years, the room for survival of free TV stations had been diminishing. The CA should minimise the regulations on free TV and further relax the restrictions on product placement and programme sponsorship to allow pop-up advertisements in TV programmes, with a view to enabling the TV stations to widen their source of income.
- 4.16 The TV stations should be allowed to decide on their own how to display sponsor identifications on screen without compromising viewing pleasure, as long as there was a proper balance of display in terms of the size and frequency. More than one sponsor should be allowed to appear in each sponsor identification at a time.
- 4.17 The regulation of sponsorship for children's programmes should be relaxed. With reference to the practices in other jurisdictions (e.g. Australia and Singapore), product or information sponsorship in children's programmes should be allowed so that TV stations could increase their revenues, which in turn help raise the overall quality of programmes in face of fierce competition from the Internet.
- 4.18 Indirect advertising in information programmes should be more restrictive. Display of sponsor identifications should not be too frequent and prolonged to avoid misleading the viewers.
- 4.19 With reference to the practice of TV stations in Japan, names or trademarks of programme sponsors should be allowed to display at intermission of programmes.
- 4.20 Indirect advertising in programmes and dramas were excessive.

Advertising Time and Standards

- 4.21 There were too many advertisements on TV affecting viewing pleasure and programme integrity. The amount of advertisements and advertising breaks should be reduced.
- 4.22 While the Government had acquired the broadcasting rights to the Olympic Games for broadcast by TV stations, the stations interrupted the broadcasts with too many advertising breaks.
- 4.23 Regulation of advertising on medical preparation, immunotherapy, clinical laboratory testing services and medical treatment should be relaxed.
- 4.24 Regulation of election advertisements should be relaxed to facilitate the public to gain a better understanding of the candidates and hence a higher voter turnout.
- 4.25 The prohibition on religious advertising should be lifted.

- 4.26 Advertising for liquor, medical aesthetics, property mortgage, lending and loans, as well as programmes and advertisements on real properties should be prohibited.

Sound Broadcasting

Programme Standards and Sponsorship

- 4.27 News programmes on some radio programme channels were partial and not neutral, and had biased contents.
- 4.28 The radio stations should review the quality of programme hosts and require them to be objective and impartial when hosting programmes.
- 4.29 While there was the view that the hosts of CRHK's programmes "Summit" and "On A Clear Day" often used provocative language with an intention to incite hatred against the Government, there were also comments that CRHK's programmes achieved neutrality by giving both views of supporting and criticising the Government.
- 4.30 Some hosts of programmes on current affairs with commentary, infotainment, interviews with local personalities and dramas on CR 1 and CR 2 made frequent satirical remarks on Government policies and took a biased stance on issues, which had the effect of misleading listeners.
- 4.31 It was suggested that the message "The following programme and programme segments contain indirect advertising" be given prior to the broadcast of the relevant programmes.
- 4.32 Programme hosts of talk shows and personal view programmes should be prohibited from featuring issues that endanger national security, promote superstition or contain indecent content.

Advertising Time and Standards

- 4.33 Advertisements were broadcast too frequently.
- 4.34 Advertisements of intoxicating liquor should be prohibited.

Free TV and Sound Broadcasting

Advertising Standards

- 4.35 Advertisements for fortune-tellers and the like should be allowed, given that a large number of audience was interested in horoscopes or fung-shui. Moreover, there had been broadcast of fortune-telling programmes during Chinese New Year. Relaxation could be acceptable subject to

the requirement that the content must not lead people into beliefs of superstition and cults, as well as the insertion of an advisory message.

- 4.36 The Government should conduct a comprehensive review on the advertising time restrictions applicable to TV and radio services.
- 4.37 The stations should neither accept political sponsorship nor broadcast any programmes for a political purpose.

Programme Standards

- 4.38 The contents of programmes should show respect for the National Security Law in Hong Kong. The stations should be required to broadcast Announcements in the Public Interest (APIs) and Government programmes to promote national education and instil awareness of national security as well as the One-China Principle to the general public. Anti-government conduct should be prohibited on the media. There were also views that the opposing views expressed in the media had been decreasing in recent years.
- 4.39 There should be a certain proportion of fund-raising charity programmes, Mainland programmes and related information on TV and radio services.

(5) Programme Scheduling

Free TV

Overall Programming Approach

- 5.1 Information on firing practices should be announced on the Chinese programme channels daily between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m.
- 5.2 The programmes broadcast during the small hours were unattractive. The TV stations should not re-run dramas only, but produce programmes for niche audiences, such as “phone-in” programmes, talk shows, mystery programmes and programmes on adult themes or homosexuality.
- 5.3 There were frequent repeats of TV programmes.
- 5.4 The TV stations kept on broadcasting ghost movies and programmes on mysteries and supernatural matters before and after the seventh month of the lunar year or Halloween, thereby causing disturbance to the audience.
- 5.5 Fantastic TV was criticised for making changes to its programming schedule without giving prior notice to the viewers.

Scheduling of Certain Types of Programmes

- 5.6 Programmes on scientific researches should be broadcast between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
- 5.7 There were too many commercial and financial programmes, whilst other types of programmes (e.g. documentaries, current affairs programmes, information and educational programmes, as well as talk shows on the English programme channel) were not sufficient.
- 5.8 ViuTV's "The Couples' Gambit" contained materials on the sex life of the married couples which were explicitly erotic, advocated extramarital relationship, were indecent and contrary to moral standards. The programme was not suitable for broadcast at 9:30 p.m.
- 5.9 There were frequent repeats of movies on TVB. It was suggested that the frequency of repeats in respect of any specific movie should be clearly specified. There were also comments that more movies from India and other countries should be broadcast.
- 5.10 In its locally produced documentary programmes, TVB frequently inserted video footage retransmitted from other third-party sources.
- 5.11 TVB's J2 should cease broadcasting horse racing programmes and livecast of Mark Six Lottery, while there should be more bilingual broadcast of dubbed acquired programmes.
- 5.12 Horse racing programmes had been broadcast on TVB exclusively. The other TV stations should be allowed to livecast these programmes.
- 5.13 TVB should broadcast 30 minutes of documentaries at 7:00 p.m. from Mondays to Fridays.
- 5.14 NBA games should not be broadcast exclusively on ViuTV. The other TV stations should be allowed to broadcast these games.
- 5.15 The news reports of ViuTV were broadcast too frequently.
- 5.16 The acquired dramas of ViuTV were too vulgar.
- 5.17 HKTVE should advance the broadcasting time of ViuTVsix to the hours between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.
- 5.18 Hong Kong Open TV's "The Awakening Age" was broadcast during evening hours when people were commuting from work to home, which was not convenient for viewers.

Sound Broadcasting

- 5.19 The programming of CR 1 was generally satisfactory except that advertisement should be avoided in the course of broadcast of horse racing events.
- 5.20 CR 2 should provide time slots for the broadcast of radio dramas to cater for the needs of young listeners.
- 5.21 CR 2 should broadcast news at intervals of 30 minutes.
- 5.22 CR 1 and Metro Finance should provide time slots for the broadcast of Putonghua news.
- 5.23 The national anthem should be broadcast at specified time or before news programmes in order to build up national awareness among the public.
- 5.24 Recently, the broadcast of news on the two Cantonese programme channels of CRHK daily between 12:00 midnight and 6:00 a.m. had been reduced to one session per hour. CRHK should resume the broadcast of hourly and half-hourly news during the early hours of the day to cater for the needs of different listeners.
- 5.25 The annual music awards presentation of CR 2 should be broadcast between 7:00 p.m. and 12:00 midnight and the prelude at 5:00 p.m.
- 5.26 It was suggested that the programme "Research Alert" currently broadcast after the simulcast of Metro Info and Metro Finance in the morning be changed to be broadcast before the national anthem.

Free TV and Sound Broadcasting

- 5.27 The news reports should provide more coverage of reality of public interest and those of personalities or historical events.
- 5.28 More programmes should be produced with participation of audience.
- 5.29 More local sports events should be broadcast to draw public attention to these events, which could enhance TV and radio stations' social responsibility as well as increasing the advertising revenue of the stations.

(6) Types of Specific Programmes / Advertising Materials

Free TV

Views on TVB

- 6.1 Information programmes were highly professional and rich in content. Examples included “News Treasury”, “Please Mind The Gap”, “Easy Come Easy Health”, “Revel In Retirement”, “As Long As You Live”, “Vital Lifeline”, “No Poverty Land”.
- 6.2 Reality shows were commendable. Examples included “STARS Academy”, “Top Sales”, “Dub Of War”, “Dance For Life”, “Cook War”, “Young And Restless” and “Where Are We Going, Dad?”.
- 6.3 Programmes for senior citizens and special programmes disseminating anti-epidemic information, including “Better Be Healthy” and “Happy Old Buddies” were praiseworthy as viewers benefited significantly from the health-related information given by the medical practitioners regarding causes of disease, symptoms and related dietetic therapies from their professional perspective. However, there were suggestions that TVB should broadcast fewer programmes for senior citizens as the contents were similar. It was also opined that “Better Be Healthy” was poorly made and lacked credible medical knowledge.
- 6.4 Variety shows were reformed successfully and were produced in a serious manner. Programmes such as “Dub Of War”, “Cook War”, “Breathe In The Forest”, “Grow Grow Grow With You”, “Good Cheap Eats 5”, “Have A Big Laugh”, “Master Chef Challenge Working”, “Big Big Old World”, “Family Feud”, “Fast & Delicious” and “Oppa’s Cuisine” were very entertaining.
- 6.5 Programmes were produced professionally with innovation. The productions were of high quality and viewers were enthralled by the programmes closely related to current affairs in Hong Kong. For example, “Scoop” followed closely hot topics and explored the latest livelihood issues. The programme often revealed unscrupulous scams in society, and reminded people not to fall into traps.
- 6.6 “Miss Hong Kong Pageant” being shot in the form of reality show was a breakthrough from its old frame. The show had a high standard of stage effect and attractive cast.
- 6.7 There was a major and refreshing reform in music programmes. Programmes such as “Jade Solid Gold”, “STARS Academy” and “Music War Hall” were all good productions and allowed viewers to enjoy the performances by a variety of singers.

- 6.8 Programmes of the Olympic Games were commendable, such as “Prelude To TVB All Star Games: The Ring” and “TVB All Star Games”. The fencing event was even blended into the drama series “Come Home Love: Lo And Behold” in its plot to cheer up Hong Kong athletes. There were also views expressing appreciation for the professionalism of the guest hosts of TVB’s Olympic Games programmes.
- 6.9 The themes of drama series were creative. Some dramas were filmed on location and the stories resonated with viewers. Examples were “AI Romantic”, “Plan ‘B’”, “Come Home Love: Lo And Behold”, “Heart City Hong Kong”, “Prop Up Youth, Brutally Young”, “Hong Kong Love Stories”, “Kids’ Lives Matter”, “The Line Watchers”, “Murder Diary”, “My Unfair Lady”, “Fraudstars”, “The Runner” and “Airport Strikers”.
- 6.10 TVB continued with its production of programmes for overseas and local tours during the pandemic so as to enable viewers to gain some interesting insights about the livelihood, tourist attractions, histories and cultures of different places. These programmes included “Long Time No See Japan”, “Do Did Eat”, “Homegrown Flavours”, “Chow HK Block To Block” and “Touring The Hood”.
- 6.11 Children’s programme “Hands Up” was joyful and educational to children.
- 6.12 The animations “Cells At Work!” and “Demon Slayer: Kimetsu No Yaiba” were professionally dubbed.
- 6.13 J2’s self-productions about Taiwan tours provided a more authentic and in-depth introduction of the place.
- 6.14 “Cantoxicating”, which talked about the Cantonese dialect, was produced in a light-hearted format with educational value. There were suggestions that TV stations should produce more programmes of similar nature to enhance people’s understanding of the Cantonese dialect.
- 6.15 Pearl’s arrangement to rerun classic movie series dubbed in Cantonese was commendable. Movies shown at cinemas at that time had also been taken into account in programme scheduling so that viewers could have a review of the movies before going to the cinema for the same series, such as “The Underworld”, “Ocean’s Eleven”, “The Matrix”, “Harry Potter”, “The Twilight Saga”, “Toy Story” and Marvel series. However, some viewers regretted at the decrease in the number of drama series on Pearl.
- 6.16 “New Creation TV” on Pearl catered for the special needs of religious viewers. While there were suggestions that TV stations should acquire

more similar types of religious programmes in order to meet the viewers' demand, there were also views that Pearl should ensure balance or coverage of diverse religious viewpoints, rather than focusing on a particular religion.

- 6.17 Since RTHK TV 33 would provide live telecast of "CMG Spring Festival Gala" produced by CCTV, some viewers hoped that J2 could resume the relay of "Super Star" produced by TTV on Chinese New Year's Eve as there was no need for simulcasting the same programme.
- 6.18 There were too many programmes on real estate, e.g. "A Property A Day", "Closer Look At Property", "Weekend Property Guide", "A Dream Home Planning" and "Own Sweet Home".
- 6.19 "TV Easy" should cease to be broadcast following the relaxation on the regulation of product placement in programmes.
- 6.20 Contestants in talent show "STARS Academy" were turned into pop stars at the age of 16 or below, which had a bad influence on young people. This might encourage schoolchildren to pursue their dream of becoming pop stars and become sluggish in their studies.

Views on HKTVE

- 6.21 The dramas were refreshing, creative and rich in layers. Many new artistes were cast in dramas such as "Leap Day", "Single Papa", "Ossan's Love", "The Republic", "Generation Slash" and "My Very Short Marriage".
- 6.22 The programmes were of high quality and entertaining. They reflected the social reality of Hong Kong with educational value. Examples included "Travel With Rivals", "Le Petit Paradis", "Divorce Tour", "Free Your Home", "The Film Fighters", "Love Avatars", "Midlife Crisis", "Rhapsody In Property", "Brickspert", "Tagger", "Battle Of The Throne", "Nano Life Without Fire", "Talker: Foodie Talkies" and "Ten Thousand Tours".
- 6.23 "ERROR Selfish Project" was funny and entertaining to the audience. It was hoped that TV stations in Hong Kong could produce more high quality programmes.
- 6.24 "Cheer Force Special Team" was a touching programme which promoted positive message of helping other members of the society. It was hoped that ViuTV could produce a greater variety of programmes.
- 6.25 "The Couples' Gambit" was a serious production which aimed to explore spousal relationship problems in a light-hearted manner. It helped viewers to gain a better understanding of marital relationship and encouraged them to cherish marriage, which was commendable. On the

other hand, there were comments that the programme was of bad taste, too erotic, indecent and advocated extramarital relationship, which were against the moral standards and values about marriage.

- 6.26 “Chill Club” established a new music platform which was more open than those on other TV programme channels. As a result, more chances were opened up to singers. The programme was praiseworthy and should be encouraged.
- 6.27 “Rus Back Home”, which was produced in line with the World Cup, was refreshing and should be encouraged.
- 6.28 “King Maker” revitalised the entertainment industry of Hong Kong and turned the spotlight on the industry again. However, other viewers criticised that the programme had tempted youngsters to abandon their studies and make unrealistic dreams on becoming pop stars.
- 6.29 Some programmes such as “8 Percent” and “Master Is Coming To Town” were suitable for niche market, offering in-depth contents which reflected the uniqueness and cultural diversity of Hong Kong.

Views on Fantastic TV

- 6.30 The live coverage of the Olympics Games was impressive as it brought in high quality and professional programmes to the audience. The programmes, hosted and narrated by athletes, were informative and entertaining.
- 6.31 Some programmes were interesting, for instance, “Where Does She Go?” had good themes and hosts. However, the rest of the programmes were mainly talk shows, which was boring.
- 6.32 Programmes like “Undercover Tour”, “Hong Kong Phenomenon”, “In The Middle Of Nowhere”, “CASA” and “Osamu Hayashi’s Lecture” were good and there should be more similar programmes in the future. However, the number of artistes in Fantastic TV was too small to support the station productions.
- 6.33 “Road To Healthiness” gave an explanation of the causes and treatment methods of different diseases, hence disseminating relevant healthcare information for the easy understanding of the elderly.

Sound Broadcasting

Views on CRHK

- 6.34 Production of current affairs programmes with commentary was excellent.

(7) Subtitles / Sign Language / Audio Description

Free TV

Provision of Subtitles

- 7.1 TV stations should provide Chinese and English closed captioning for news programmes, current affairs programmes, weather programmes, emergency announcements, dramas and pre-recorded programmes as well as all programmes shown between 7:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. on all TV programme channels. Some suggested that the provision of subtitles should be extended to 24 hours a day.
- 7.2 Traditional Chinese subtitles should be provided for all acquired programmes.
- 7.3 Chinese subtitles should be provided for the bilingual broadcast of children's animation on ViuTV.
- 7.4 TVB should provide traditional Chinese subtitles (as opposed to simplified Chinese) for the Putonghua news reports on TVB Finance & Information Channel.

Sign Language Interpretation

- 7.5 The TV stations should be required to provide sign language interpretation for news reports on the integrated Chinese channels and integrated English channels as well as the live programmes on all programme channels. Such requirement should be extended to cover news reports on thematic channels in order to create a barrier-free environment.
- 7.6 Only Chinese sign language interpretation was provided in Cantonese news programmes broadcast on Pearl. Given the differences between the two sign language systems, both Chinese and English sign language interpretations should be provided.

Audio Description

- 7.7 To facilitate access to information for people with visual impairment, the TV stations should be required to provide audio description soundtracks for TV programmes broadcast in specific time slots (e.g. news and information programmes, dramas shown during prime time, programmes for family viewing). The TV stations should also be required to provide verbal description of the programme guides, say by reading out the name of the upcoming programme.

(8) Broadcasting Technology

Free TV

- 8.1 The reception of Fantastic TV's service was poor in some districts of Hong Kong, and was very inconvenient.
- 8.2 The programme channels of Fantastic TV could not be received in Tai O District, where the reception quality of other TV programme channels was not stable either. It was suggested that Fantastic TV's programme channels should be made available to outlying island residents via digital terrestrial television services (by means of transmitter station).
- 8.3 No free TV signal could be received on Fung Yau Street East in Yuen Long District.
- 8.4 The TV stations should make use of optical fibre to transmit TV signals to the common antenna broadcast distribution system in buildings so as to provide clearer TV signals for the viewers.

Sound Broadcasting

- 8.5 The radio stations should consider enhancing public reception facilities along the railway lines and in the countryside, with a view to improving the signal reception in those areas.
- 8.6 There was suggestion to allow the set-up of TV programme channels for transmission of radio programmes, to facilitate the public who only had conventional TV sets to listen to radio programmes.
- 8.7 Digital audio broadcasting (DAB) should be reactivated to fully replace FM and AM analogue broadcasting and for better sound quality, which could be achieved by using digital TV programme channels, the broadcasting function of digital TV sets, DAB or Convergent Digital Radio (CDR) services for radio broadcast.

Free TV and Sound Broadcasting

- 8.8 The audio control of programmes was uneven. For example, the voices of hosts in talk shows were always too loud whereas the guests' voices were too soft. There should be provision in broadcasting licences governing control of audio level with a view to aligning the audio level of different TV and radio programme channels.

(9) Other Comments / Suggestions

Changes in Viewing / Listening Habits

- 9.1 The emergence of online infotainment media had changed the viewing habits of the audience. Compared to traditional TV which offered fixed programmes at specified times, audience increasingly chose to access infotainment at a time that suited them through online content services, thus spending less time on watching traditional TV.
- 9.2 The online archive services provided by the TV stations changed the viewers' habits of watching TV at designated hours. Viewers found it very convenient to watch programmes at a time that suited them.
- 9.3 Some listeners pointed out that they spent less time on listening to radio through a radio set. Instead, they would listen to online archived radio programmes and use mobile apps to listen to online music which gave a wider choice of music and personalised services.
- 9.4 There was suggestion that live broadcast of TV and radio news programmes should be provided on public transport.

Broadcasting Policies

- 9.5 The existing regulatory requirements had become obsolete and the declining revenues could harm the free TV stations' competitiveness. The Government should foster the development of free TV and remove the barriers by relaxing the regulation of programme and advertising standards.
- 9.6 With increasing prevalence of online media, the free TV stations had to face significantly intensified competition as well as low audienceship. It was suggested that the Government should regulate online media services through legislation.
- 9.7 The amount of APIs on TV was excessive and obtruded on viewing pleasure. The Government should promote its policies through publicity in programmes rather than the APIs, as the former would be more acceptable to the public. It was also suggested that the Government should adopt a soft-sell approach of publicity to a larger extent.
- 9.8 To provide equal opportunities of access to information for people with visual impairment, it was proposed that any on-screen website addresses and telephone numbers should be read out in the APIs for broadcast.
- 9.9 The Government's acquisition of the broadcasting rights to the Olympic Games for broadcast by the TV stations brought great joy to the entire city.

Facilitating Competition and Development in the Broadcasting Industry

- 9.10 Market dominance of one single TV station and lack of competition among the free TV stations had impacts on the programme variety and quality as the choices for audience were reduced tremendously. It was suggested that more free TV licences should be issued.
- 9.11 The CA must maintain a level-playing environment for all the broadcasting operators. The CA should follow the market-led approach and therefore should not interfere with the industry.
- 9.12 Some were concerned about the financial position of Fantastic TV's parent company.
- 9.13 The TV industry was shrinking. The Government should allocate more resources in support of the TV stations, or offer tax concessions to attract investors to support local TV productions.
- 9.14 The Government should attach greater importance and provide more support to sound broadcasting services.
- 9.15 In view of the difficult operating environment, there was suggestion to reduce the number of sound broadcasting licences from two to one so that the only radio operator could make reasonable profits as well as focusing their resources on providing better quality sound broadcasting services to the public.

Regulatory Issues

General Views

- 9.16 The CA should establish a clear reward and sanction system to commend or penalise the broadcasters according to individual performance. There were also views that the existing penalties on the broadcasters were too lenient and failed to produce any deterrent effect.
- 9.17 The number of complaints against the TV and radio stations in the past should be taken into consideration in determining the validity period of their renewed licences. Individual broadcasters should be liable to sanctions for their biased reporting on the social events. Additional terms and conditions should be imposed on the broadcasters upon renewal of their licences to ensure that they would abide by the rules.
- 9.18 The operational strategies of the broadcasters should be regulated and incorporated in the licence conditions. Any contravention of such licence conditions would be subject to sanctions by the CA.
- 9.19 The Government should enable the conveyance of TV and radio channels of Mainland China to Hong Kong, and there should be a licence

condition requiring each TV station to provide at least one programme channel for the relay of CCTV's programmes. Meanwhile, the legislation should be amended to enable such TV and radio programme channels, programmes, advertisements, etc., already regulated by the Mainland authorities to be exempted from the CA's scrutiny.

Views on Free TV

- 9.20 Horse racing programmes should be prohibited to prevent teenagers and children from gaining access to gambling information and to maintain a healthy environment for the community.
- 9.21 More children's programmes should be produced. A TV programme channel should be vacated for creation of a children's channel to allow viewing of the programmes by children at any time.
- 9.22 Putonghua programmes should be enhanced, whereas the related regulation should be relaxed to facilitate the broadcast of such programmes without Cantonese dubbing.
- 9.23 The Government should monitor the news and current affairs programmes produced by TV stations on issues like social events to ascertain whether or not the reports were biased and whether they had taken sides.
- 9.24 The licences of the three free TV stations should include a new condition requiring the stations to broadcast more local dramas acquired from independent producers, viz. up to at least 30% of the total broadcasting time of dramas per annum during prime time on Sundays. This could create more job opportunities for local TV artistes and production crews.
- 9.25 Given their good performance, the three TV stations should have their licences renewed six years later. However, some commented that the free TV licence of an individual station should be revoked.

Views on Sound Broadcasting

- 9.26 There were views that the licence of individual radio station should not be renewed and all the sound broadcasting licences should be revoked, thereby ending the era of radio.
- 9.27 It was suggested that the two sound broadcasting licences should be suspended and replaced by two new TV licences six years later.

Other Views / Suggestions

- 9.28 The Olympic Games broadcast on TV programme channels were produced in a professional manner. The presentation of guest hosts was

very informative, while some of the commentaries made by them were touching and impressive.

- 9.29 By shortening the rolling end credits of the dramas during prime time, TVB Jade showed no respect for the contributing efforts of the production crews.
- 9.30 Some called for the provision of more information related to the programmes. Such information included: the production crew list at the rolling end credits of dramas; a reminder message prior to the broadcast of news and financial programmes; the purpose of donation for fund-raising charity, and the copyright information related to the pictures or footage used in news programmes.
- 9.31 Programme names should be superimposed on the screen and remain visible during the programmes for easy identification. It was also suggested that the information bar on TVB Jade should be displayed 24 hours a day.
- 9.32 With the proliferation of talent shows, young people were encouraged to support their idols through large amounts of spending and advertising by means of crowd-funding. The TV stations should be prohibited from tempting the fans to splurge on pop stars, which produced adverse impact on the development of young people.
- 9.33 There was suggestion that the Government should set up direct hotlines for the public to lodge complaints against the TV stations so that the public could play a role in monitoring the performance of TV stations.
- 9.34 Fantastic TV should improve its online platform and extend the service hours of its online archive service.
- 9.35 Some TV stations presented their artistes in the image of “gods” or “goddesses”, thereby risked promoting excessive individualism. Such phenomenon should not be encouraged.
- 9.36 The money lender’s licence number of the lending company sponsoring the weather report on Metro Finance was not updated.
- 9.37 Operators of free TV and sound broadcasting service should adopt accessibility design in their websites and mobile apps to facilitate use by the visually impaired. Some versions of CRHK’s app denied access to its AM864 Channel when the screen reader function was turned on.
- 9.38 News anchors and TV artistes should wear masks in programmes and comply with the requirements of anti-epidemic measures.

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