

**Minutes of the 49<sup>th</sup> Meeting of  
RTHK Board of Advisors  
held at 9:15 am, 16 August 2019  
at Conference Room, G/F, Broadcasting House  
30 Broadcast Drive, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon**

**Present**

Dr Eugene CHAN Kin-keung, BBS, JP (Chairman)  
Mr Walter CHAN Kar-lok, SBS, JP  
Ms Dilys CHAU Suet-fung  
Ms Linda CHOY Siu-min  
Mr Mohan DATWANI  
Professor Anthony FUNG Ying-him  
Ms Shirley LOO Marie Therese, BBS, MH, JP  
Dr TIK Chi-yuen, SBS, JP  
Ms Eva WONG Ching-hung  
Mr Augustine WONG Ho-ming, JP  
Mr LEUNG Ka-wing, Director of Broadcasting

**In Attendance from RTHK**

Mr Eugene FUNG, Deputy Director of Broadcasting (Special Duties)  
Ms CHAN Man-kuen, Deputy Director of Broadcasting (Programmes)  
Mr Albert CHEUNG, Assistant Director (TV & Corporate Businesses)  
Mr Vincent LEE, Controller (Television)  
Mr Brian CHOW, Acting Assistant Director (Radio & Corporate Programming)/Controller (Radio)  
Ms Kanas HUI, Acting Head/ Corporate Communications & Standards Unit  
Mr David HO, Head/Chinese Programme Service (Agenda Item 6)  
Ms Canace LAM, Head/General Programme (Agenda Item 6)  
Ms Mayella CHEUNG (Board Secretariat)  
Ms Vicky CHAN (Board Secretariat)

**Absent with Apologies**

Ms Helen KWAN Po-jen  
Professor WONG Kam-fai, MH  
Ms Elaine WU Siu-ling

**Secretary**

Ms Yvonne WU (Board Secretariat)

## **Agenda Item 1 : Confirmation of the Minutes of the Last Meeting**

1. The Chairman welcomed Mr Eugene FUNG, Deputy Director of Broadcasting (Special Duties), and Ms Mayella CHEUNG, member of the Secretariat, to the meeting, and thanked Mrs Sharon YIP and Ms Amy KWONG for their past contributions.
2. Ms Helen KWAN, Professor WONG Kam-fai and Ms Elaine WU sent their apologies for not being able to join this meeting.
3. The Chairman said that the Secretariat had circulated the draft minutes of the last meeting held on 14 June 2019 to Members' for perusal and no comments were received. The minutes of the last meeting were confirmed.

## **Agenda Item 2 : Matters Arising**

4. Members raised no item for discussion.

## **Agenda Item 3 : Role of RTHK as Public Broadcaster in Recent Community Events**

5. The Chairman remarked that the public expected RTHK to uphold its core value of impartiality as a public broadcaster in reporting and handling recent social events. He informed the Board that he had received a complaint letter from a member of the public expressing her dissatisfaction with the performance of the RTHK journalists in covering the issues. The letter was tabled to Members for reference. The Chairman enquired about the mechanism of RTHK in handling such kind of complaints.
6. Mr LEUNG Ka-wing responded that in general, RTHK would promptly acknowledge the receipt of complaints. The complaint cases would be referred to the subject officers for investigations. Upon completion of the investigations, follow-up actions or improvement measures would be taken where appropriate and a reply would be given to the complainants. The aforementioned complaint letter was related to an online video clip showing a female reporter being surrounded by a group of protesters who stopped her from leaving, after accusing her of not deleting the photos of protesters. It also showed a person who was alleged to be a RTHK reporter questioning the female reporter. Mr LEUNG Ka-wing explained that the alleged RTHK reporter was in fact a summer intern student in RTHK who was assigned to cover an activity of the non-cooperation campaign at Diamond Hill MTR Station in the morning of 5 August 2019. The RTHK management had reviewed the concerned video and talked to the intern student. The intern student explained that he intended to offer help to the female reporter and assist her to find a way out of the impasse. The intern student admitted that, with hindsight,

his behaviour at the time was improper despite of his good intent. The intern student was later redeployed to perform deskbound job in the newsroom and all other intern students had been reminded to adhere strictly to the general codes of conduct for journalists. Subsequently, the university that the intern student belonged to informed RTHK that the student concerned would like to cease the internship and hence mutual agreement had been reached between the university and RTHK to cut short his internship which was ended in mid-August.

7. A member was concerned that there could be possible infringement of privacy if the intern student requested the female reporter to delete the photos. Some Members commented that it was understandable that the intern student lacked experience and it was unfortunate that he had got himself into such difficult situation. A Member opined that RTHK should not arrange the intern students to work alone in frontline position as they might not be experienced enough to manage emergencies. The Member added that to restore the corporate image, RTHK might consider giving an account of the incident to the public. Members remarked that all frontline reporters should be thoroughly briefed about the importance of their role for being objective and impartial. A Member suggested that RTHK should develop a disciplinary system to ensure that the journalists would strictly adhere to the codes of conduct. Another Member echoed and further suggested that the proposed disciplinary system should include a monitoring mechanism to record the number of cases handled and measure the effectiveness of the system. Another Member was concerned about the psychological stress of the frontline journalists and enquired if there were any counselling services available to them.
8. In response, Ms CHAN Man-kuen said that arrangement had already been made for the intern students to work in pairs or in groups with staff reporters, but it was unavoidable that they might lose sight of each other when on location. The intern students would mainly be deployed to work in a relatively safe environment as their safety was always of paramount importance. In this particular case, to avoid causing psychological stress to the concerned intern student, RTHK would explain the case to the complainant in writing instead of issuing a public statement. With regard to the mental health support, counselling services would be provided by the Social Welfare Department if staff were in need.
9. The Chairman summarised that the case of the intern student revealed that RTHK had been exposed to reputational risk and remedial actions should be taken as appropriate. He reiterated that RTHK had an important role to play in covering the current social events and the Board fully supported RTHK in upholding the editorial principles as stated in the Charter of Radio Television Hong Kong. Since credibility was built up over time, RTHK should be constantly on guard to retain the trust from the community. He hoped

that the journalists of RTHK would cherish the uniqueness and credibility of RTHK by standing firm to its core values as a public broadcaster.

10. The Chairman and Members also discussed about the attitude and behaviour of two reporters of RTHK in their way of raising questions during recent media sessions. Some Members opined that journalists might have their own emotions and judgements towards the current social events and asked how RTHK would ensure that its journalists and presenters would remain professional and would not be affected by emotions or personal values while reporting news or hosting programmes.
11. Mr LEUNG Ka-wing stressed that RTHK endeavoured to cover the ongoing events from a highly balanced and impartial perspective. For instance, guests from different background were invited to RTHK's programmes to strike a balance of views. Besides, RTHK journalists of different levels had been repeatedly reminded to provide an objective coverage on the issues in accordance with the RTHK Producers' Guidelines ("Guidelines"). Regarding the cases of the two reporters who questioned the Chief Executive at the media sessions, Mr LEUNG Ka-wing indicated that RTHK received huge numbers of feedbacks. Some of them appreciated the reporters for speaking out for the citizens while some of them complained about their professionalism. RTHK had been handling the cases according to the prevailing guide to complaint handling. The management had also reminded and advised the concerned reporters that they should strictly adhere to the Guidelines, uphold their professionalism all the time and avoid being emotional during reporting.
12. Some Members considered that apart from reminding the journalists to comply with the Guidelines, the RTHK management should be more proactive in ensuring that the image and credibility of RTHK would be vigorously defended and the journalists of RTHK would behave in a prudent and neutral manner at all times. A Member was pleased to note that action had been taken under the prevailing mechanism to manage the performance of the reporters and improvement had been shown after the counselling. To strengthen solidarity and harmony in the community, the Members suggested RTHK to produce programmes to promote those concepts.
13. To take forward, the Chairman suggested the RTHK management to step up the efforts on upholding professionalism amongst the frontline journalists and strengthen RTHK's risk management profile by proactively responding to complaints, unfair criticisms or accusations. He further suggested RTHK to ensure that there were established procedures to handle complaints in a transparent and well-documented manner. He expressed that the Board was determined to act as a bridge between the public and RTHK to ensure that the editorial principles and programming standards of RTHK would meet

the expectations of the community of Hong Kong. He suggested that RTHK should produce programmes to deliver positive messages. Mr LEUNG Ka-wing responded that RTHK welcomed the advice and suggestions of the Board and would explore the feasibility of producing the suggested programmes.

#### **Agenda Item 4: Updates on RTHK's Response to Audit Commission's Report**

14. The progress report had been issued to Members for reference. Details were set out at **Appendix**. Members had no comments on the paper.

#### **Agenda Item 5: New Media Updates**

15. In view of the time constraint, the Chairman, in consultation with Members, decided that this item would be discussed at a future meeting.

#### **Agenda Item 6: Promotion of Xiqu**

16. In view of the time constraint, the Chairman, in consultation with Members, decided that this item would be discussed at a future meeting.

#### **Agenda Item 7: Platforms for Young Talent**

17. In view of the time constraint, the Chairman, in consultation with Members, decided that this item would be discussed at a future meeting.

#### **Agenda Item 8(a): Updates on Programmes (BOA Paper 7/2019)**

18. The paper had been issued to the Members for reference. Members had no comments on the paper.

#### **Agenda Item 8(b): Updates on Complaints (BOA Paper 8/2019)**

19. Ms CHAN Man-kuen introduced the paper. Ms Kanas HUI introduced a summary of direct feedback from the public. Members had no comment on both documents.

#### **Agenda Item 9: Any Other Business**

20. Members did not bring up any other matter for discussion.

## **Agenda Item 10: Date of Next Meeting**

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21. The next meeting was scheduled for 27 September 2019.
22. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:45 am.

**Secretariat**

**RTHK Board of Advisors**

**Radio Television Hong Kong: Provision of Programmes**  
**Progress in Implementing the Audit's and Public Accounts Committee's Recommendations**  
**(as at 16.8.2019)**

| Para. No.                               | Audit's Recommendations   | Progress   |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Part 2: Production of Programmes</b> |   |  |
| 2.10                                    | <p><u>Planning and Budgetary Control</u><br/>           Audit has recommended that the Director of Broadcasting (DB) should –</p>   |  |
|   | <p>take into account information for performance evaluation of individual radio and TV programmes, in order to facilitate the making of more meaningful planning decision for the programmes.</p> | <p>A high level working group was set up in each of the Radio and Corporate Programming Division and the Television and Corporate Businesses Division in March 2019. Chaired by Assistant Director of Broadcasting (Radio and Corporate Programming) and Assistant Director of Broadcasting (Television and Corporate Businesses) respectively, the working groups sought to examine the full palette of information for performance evaluation of individual radio and TV programmes in a structured manner with a view to drawing up meaningful parameters and reviewing mechanism for programme planning decisions. The two working groups had submitted the reports to senior management in July 2019.</p> |

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| 2.54 | <p align="center"><u>Community Involvement</u><br/><u>Broadcasting Service (CIBS)</u></p> <p>Audit has recommended that the DB should –</p> |   |  |
|      | (a)   | <p>ensure that the Selection Committee (SC) gives views and assessment on each CIBS applicant in respect of each of the five selection criteria and records such views and assessment;</p>  | <p>The selection process had been revised to ensure that the SC would record their views and assessment on each applicant in respect of each of the five selection criteria. The revised selection process was implemented in March 2019.</p>  |
|      | (b)   | <p>take measures to ensure the timely submission of the programme recordings, self-evaluation reports and Limited Assurance Engagement Reports (LAER) by the CIBS participants, and terminate the agreements with the participants with long delay in their submission;</p> | <p>The submission mechanism for programme recordings, self-evaluation reports and Limited Assurance Engagement Reports had been reviewed and revised. Enhanced measures had been implemented in July 2019. Details were set out as follows –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) programme recordings: setting of an agreed deadline with the successful applicants according to programme schedule;</li> <li>(ii) self-evaluation reports and LAER: sending reminders to the CIBS participants before deadline of submission and arrangement of facilitation talks for the successful applicants emphasising the requirements for timely submission; and</li> <li>(iii) documenting delayed submission of programme recordings, self-evaluation reports and LAER for future reference in assessing their applications, if any, to CIBS.</li> </ul> |



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|  | (c) | regularly conduct focus group studies to assess the cost-effectiveness of the projects funded by the Community Involvement Broadcasting Fund (CIBF);           | RTHK would organise focus group study on an annual basis. The first focus group study would be conducted in the fourth quarter of 2019 taking into account the lead time to define the mechanism for conducting the study, selecting focus group participants (proposed categories of focus group participants included successful applicants, unsuccessful applicants and listeners), procuring service to conduct the study and the time necessary for the service provider to conduct the study. |
|  | (d) | post questionnaires on the CIBS website to collect audience views on CIBS projects;  | The questionnaire to collect views of the audience was uploaded onto the CIBS website in March 2019. Promulgation of the arrangement was announced on both radio and online platforms, including the CIBS website and Facebook, in March 2019. Regular reports would be made to the Board of Advisors (BoA) thereafter.   |
|  | (e) | require the CIBS applicants to set expected deliverables that are measurable and evaluate the achievements of the expected deliverables; and                   | The application form had been revised to facilitate applicants to set measurable and practical expected deliverables. The revised application form had been in use starting from March 2019.  |
|  | (f) | step up promotion on the CIBS to the community and ethnic minority organisations and individuals to enhance its reach to the service targets and listenership. | A new promotional strategy had been implemented from April 2019 onwards which included –<br>(i) placing advertisements on public transport such as minibuses and MTR trains;<br>(ii) placing advertisements on newspapers and magazines, including publications of ethnic minority groups, Chinese and English publications;<br>(iii) producing trailers to be transmitted on radio channels, TV, internet and social media platforms;  |

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|  |  |  | <p>(iv) launching outdoor activities for outreaching potential applicants;</p> <p>(v) providing outreach consultation services for potential applicants;</p> <p>(vi) displaying banners in different districts; and</p> <p>(vii) arranging featured interviews with the applicants by different media, etc.</p> <p>As an on-going arrangement, RTHK would review the effectiveness of the promotion in the light of feedback gathered from the website and the applicants; and views of the focus group to be organised in the fourth quarter of 2019.</p> |
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**Part 3: Broadcasting of Programmes and New Media Services**

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| 3.6 | <p><u>Management of TV Broadcasting Hours</u></p> <p>Audit has recommended that the DB should endeavour to enrich the TV programmes, including –</p> |   |
|     | <p>explore ways to enrich the miscellaneous contents of TV 31 and TV 32 with a view to enhancing the channels' attractiveness.</p>                   | <p>For TV 31, programmes were scheduled round-the-clock (i.e. 24-hour a day) according to programming strategy from 1 April 2019. Miscellaneous content was no longer broadcast on TV 31.</p> <p>For TV 32, the working group as mentioned in para. 2.10 was in the process of reviewing its programming strategy. Consideration would be given to producing more programme varieties, such as live coverage of local sports events, live relay of important Mainland and overseas events and short interview videos on various topics. The working group had submitted the report to senior management in July 2019.</p> |

**Part 4: Evaluation of Programmes and Other Administrative Issues**

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| 4.33 | <u><i>Evaluation of TV Programmes</i></u><br>Audit has recommended that the DB should –    |  |  |
|      | (a)  | ascertain the reasons for low ratings of RTHK’s programmes and take measures to enhance the popularity of its TV programmes, especially for those which are intended to be popular programmes; and | A working group on audience surveys for TV and radio programmes had been set up in March 2019. Chaired by the Deputy Director of Broadcasting (Programmes), the working group would address, amongst others, the issues of low ratings of RTHK programmes. The working group would conduct a survey in the third quarter of 2019 to gather information and statistics on the penetration/take-up pattern of the DTT channels, viewing habits and preference of the audience to ascertain the reasons for low ratings as well as the performance of RTHK’s TV programmes on cross-media platforms. Based on the survey’s findings, RTHK would be in a better position to work out measures to address the issues of low TV ratings and to enhance the popularity of its TV programmes. Results of the survey were expected to be available in the fourth quarter of 2019. |
|      | (b)  | take measures to address the issue of lower TV ratings of RTHK TV programmes broadcast on RTHK channels than the ratings of the same programmes broadcast on a commercial channel.                 |  |
| 4.44 | <u><i>Evaluation of Radio Programmes</i></u><br>Audit has recommended that the DB should – |  |  |
|      | (a)  | keep in view the number of listeners for each of the seven radio channels and take appropriate action to boost the number of listeners for radio channels with decreasing number of listeners; and | To keep in view the number of listeners for each of the seven radio channels, RTHK conducted annual Audience Surveys and kept track of online performance of radio channels. It also monitored feedback from “Channel Heads’ Hotline”. Based on the foregoing, RTHK reviewed and revised its programming and promotional strategies on a regular basis. In April 2019, RTHK fine-  |

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|      | (b) | take measures to improve the appreciation index and awareness level of RTHK’s radio channels.  | <p>tuned the programme and promotion strategies by reshuffling programmes to strengthen the channel identity of Radio 1 and 2. Correspondingly, an extensive social media campaign, covering Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, had been conducted from March 2019.</p> <p>With a view to building up an evaluation mechanism in a holistic manner, the working group as mentioned in para. 4.33 (a) was now reviewing the strategy of the Audience Survey, including programmes to be included, frequency, methodology, etc as well as identifying any other appropriate channels to keep in view the listenership. The working group was also mapping out measures to boost the number of listeners for radio channels with decreasing number of listeners and improve the appreciation index and awareness level of RTHK’s radio programmes. The working group had submitted the report to senior management in June 2019.</p> |
| 4.73 |     | <p><u>Matters Relating to the Charter of RTHK</u></p> <p>Audit has recommended that the DB should –</p>  |   |
|      |     | submit the reports on performance evaluation of RTHK and RTHK’s compliance with performance evaluation indicators to the Board of Advisors on a regular basis as required by the Charter of RTHK to facilitate the Board of Advisors to advise on its actual performance against the performance targets and ways to improve service delivery. | RTHK would submit the report on performance evaluation of RTHK and RTHK’s compliance with performance evaluation indicators to the BoA annually. The 2018-19 report on the subject had been presented to the BoA at its meeting on 14 June 2019.  |