

**Renewal of the Analogue Sound Broadcasting
Licences of Hong Kong Commercial Broadcasting
Company Limited (“CRHK”) and
Metro Broadcast Corporation Limited (“Metro”)
Group Discussion with Members of the
Television and Radio Consultative Group
(27 October 2014)**

Summary of Views

Programme Diversity

1. Community involvement in the production of programmes could help enhance programme diversity and quality.
2. The licensees had provided too many music programmes on the AM channels, which deprived listeners of choices.
3. The licensees should provide more programmes on local and international current affairs, radio dramas, programmes promoting public awareness of health issues and civic education, sports programmes, children programmes, informational programmes, arts and culture programmes, and programmes for ethnic minorities.
4. There were insufficient programmes for senior citizens on Metro. It should also broadcast more phone-in programmes and PVPs on current affairs.

Editorial Freedom and Independence of Licensees

5. The licensees should be given more editorial freedom and the right to refuse to broadcast announcements in the public interest (APIs) with predetermined stances on political and social issues, as such APIs promoted biased thinking.

Accuracy, Impartiality and Fairness

6. CRHK was biased towards the Occupy Central Movement and the students. However, there were views that CRHK's programme hosts had also criticised the persons who initiated the Occupy Central Movement.
7. Some programme hosts of CRHK's current affairs programmes were partial.

Programme Quality

8. It was impossible for a programme to please every listener, and the most important point was that the licensees should comply with the regulatory requirements in the production and broadcast of programmes.
9. Successful callers to the phone-in programmes of CRHK and Metro were not given sufficient time to put forward their views and the calls were frequently interrupted by news and advertisements and the broadcasting time allocated to such programmes appeared to be very little.
10. The quality of some programme hosts was low. They were noisy, laughed too much and frequently talked about issues with no substance. They spent too much time talking about their personal matters, and were not professional and not knowledgeable about the issues being discussed.
11. The quality of programme hosts should be improved. Briefings for the hosts should be conducted before and after the broadcast of programmes.
12. Certain contact information, e.g. email address of CR1, was read out too quickly in its programmes. Listeners were unable to follow and note down the details.

13. The quality of CRHK's programmes had improved by the replacements of some of the hosts.
14. CRHK's horse racing programmes were of good quality.
15. The quality of the hosts of Metro's current affairs programme was good as they were impartial. However, there were views that the quality of its news anchors and programme hosts was poor as they failed to provide accurate factual information.

Programme Scheduling

16. CRHK should schedule its programmes for senior citizens on Sunday mornings instead of Saturday nights when most elderly were busy preparing dinner or had already slept during the time slot concerned.

Advertising

17. There were views that the permission of title sponsorship of programmes for senior citizens and arts and culture programmes, and product/service placement in radio dramas might help the licensees get more financial resources and thus increase their incentives to produce such programmes. However, there were also views that the licensees, as commercial operators, should have already considered such proposals, which might not be feasible.
18. There were too many sponsored programmes on Metro, in particular during weekend. Some programmes on treatment of cancer and alopecia and fortune telling were suspected to be designed to circumvent the prohibition of advertising for related products and services.
19. Some programme hosts and guests talked about their stand-up comedies in programmes, which might amount to indirect advertising.

20. Licensees or programme hosts might have received contributions from entertainment companies for promoting their singers by broadcasting the singers' songs repeatedly, which bored listeners.
21. There were views that the licensees should be allowed to broadcast more advertisements to generate more revenue. However, there were also comments that there were too many advertisements on radio.
22. There were too many advertisements for beauty treatments on Metro.

Reception

23. It was disappointing that listeners could not receive radio services when travelling on MTR.
24. There was interference to radio services, sometimes from Mainland channels, in some areas, e.g. Shatin, Tuen Mun, West Kowloon and Sheung Wan.

Management and Operation of the Licensees

25. CRHK did not provide training for young persons who wanted to be DJs. Metro provided such training opportunities which were not free of charge.

Other Comments and Suggestions

26. Detailed reports on financial capability, improvement measures to avoid repeated breaches of regulatory requirements and fulfilment of licensees' commitments should be submitted to the regulator for assessing whether their performance could meet public expectation.

27. There were concerns as to whether there were newcomers to provide sound broadcasting services.
28. The regulations on the licensees should not be too stringent. While the licensees were obliged to comply with the regulations and codes of practice, being commercial organisations, they should have the editorial freedom to decide on their programme plans and business modes to attract target audience and generate advertising revenue.
29. The regulator should consider whether to impose restrictions on repeated programmes as Metro would broadcast some of the digital channel programmes on its analogue channels and vice versa.
30. The choice of colours for the pie charts in the information booklet should have been better arranged.