

CEDB responds to CA's decision on complaints against "Headliner"

In response to media enquiries on the Communications Authority (CA)'s decision regarding complaints against the Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) TV programme "Headliner", a spokesman for the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (CEDB) said the following today (May 19):

"The CA held that the complaints against an episode of the RTHK TV programme 'Headliner' broadcast on February 14 this year was in breach of various provisions in the Generic Code of Practice on Television Programme Standards (the Code). The CA decided that RTHK should be warned to observe more closely the relevant provisions.

"The CEDB took the view that the situation is very serious given that RTHK, as a public service broadcaster, has been repeatedly ruled to have breached the various provisions in the Code, including failure to ensure the accuracy of the factual contents in the programme; remarks and content regarded as hate speech, denigrating and insulting the Police; and failure to include a sufficiently broad range of views in the personal view programme. The CEDB has asked RTHK to undertake the following:

- (1) To state clearly that RTHK fully accepts the CA's decision regarding complaints against the programme 'Headliner' and to offer an apology;
- (2) To examine whether there is any negligence and error committed by staff and personnel in the course of the programme production and editorial processes, and, if so, to follow up or take disciplinary actions; and
- (3) To conduct a full review of the programme production and editorial system in order to ensure that all RTHK programmes fulfil in full the public purposes and mission specified in the Charter of RTHK.

"The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development has been stressing that RTHK must fully abide by the Charter of RTHK, duly meet its responsibility as a public service broadcaster and strictly comply with the relevant codes of practice issued by the CA. RTHK should address the concerns raised by different stakeholders on its programmes, management and governance. It should take positive and proactive follow-up actions and give an account to the public," the spokesman said.