

Government releases review report on governance and management of RTHK

The Government today (February 19) released the Governance and Management of Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) Review Report and outlined the major findings and recommendations on improvement measures. The review seeks to ensure that RTHK, as both a public service broadcaster and a government department under the Charter of RTHK (the Charter), fully achieves its public purposes and mission, and complies with all applicable government rules and regulations.

The report covers six areas, namely mechanisms for editorial management and complaints handling, performance measurement and evaluation, management of RTHK's workforce, financial management, stores and procurement, as well as information technology management. Highlights of the report findings and recommendations are set out in the Annex.

"To objectively and impartially evaluate RTHK's performance and programme quality, we should examine whether it can fully abide by its mission and roles as stipulated in the Charter. The report has identified quite a number of inadequacies in RTHK's governance and management. RTHK needs to make improvements in its system and execution.

"Such improvements should include establishing a clear and transparent editorial process, and strengthening editorial training to ensure all its staff and programme production personnel have a full and comprehensive understanding of its public purposes and mission as a public service broadcaster. They should understand the Charter and abide by it," the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, said.

"I trust that RTHK will critically examine the issues identified in the report, act promptly and positively to implement the recommendations so as to ensure a quality public broadcasting service for the community to strengthen confidence in the work of RTHK," Mr Yau concluded.

In view of the wide public concern about RTHK's programmes and repeated breaches of the relevant codes of practice issued by the Communications Authority (CA), the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (CEDB) established a dedicated team in July 2020 to review the governance and management of RTHK. The dedicated team comprised members with knowledge and experience on broadcasting services, administration, resources management, as well as organisation management consulting. The scope of the review is as follows:

(1) to review RTHK's administration, including financial control, human resources management and procurement matters to ensure that its manpower and resource deployment complies with all applicable government rules and regulations, and that such deployment is made for the effective delivery of

services under programme areas as set out in paragraphs 17 to 20 of the Charter, and where necessary, to identify scope for improvement;

(2) to review RTHK's progress of implementing the recommendations of the Report No. 71 of the Director of Audit, including the need for a transparent and objective system for setting performance targets and benchmarks for measuring results; and

(3) to review RTHK's overall management systems, processes and practices, making reference to best practices of other public service broadcasters, to ensure full compliance with the Charter and the codes of practice on programming standards issued by the CA.

The CEDB has passed the review report to RTHK management today for follow up. RTHK is requested to draw up priority reform measures, an action plan and a timetable to fully implement the recommendations. During the process, RTHK should seek advice from the RTHK Board of Advisors and other stakeholders. The CEDB will monitor the progress of the reform.

The Governance and Management of the RTHK Review Report is available on the CEDB's website (www.cedb.gov.hk/ccib/en/consultations-and-publications/reports/rthkreview.pdf).