

SCED speaks on RTHK

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, on matters relating to Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) at a media session after attending the Chief Executive's Question and Answer Session at the Legislative Council today (February 4):

Reporter: Is there any room for RTHK to make any mistakes at all, given that government officials make mistakes from time to time?

Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development: I have made myself very clear. As a media organisation, be it RTHK or others, I think the general principle is that there should be accurate and impartial reporting. It is a very fundamental principle that should be upheld by all news agencies. There should not be any exception for RTHK, being a media (organisation).

On the other hand, in the Charter (Charter of Radio Television Hong Kong), there is a requirement under Clause 7 asking RTHK, as a public service broadcaster, to uphold the highest professional standard of journalism in addition to being accurate and impartial (in reporting). I think this is a pledge that RTHK would need to uphold.

The Government's stance is very clear, as a government department, news agency or a public service broadcaster, RTHK should maintain this very important principle. If there is any sort of inadequacy or any error being made, I think they should have the responsibility to clarify, to make good and also to apologise. After investigation of any complaint, if they consider the complaint not justified, then of course, (they could) also come out to stand up to the public, explain and also articulate their explanation.

Of course, in addition to all those, RTHK is also subject to the scrutiny of the Communications Authority (CA) as far as complaints are concerned. There is also an established mechanism. In the past, we have seen the CA doing its job and RTHK giving appropriate responses.

Thank you.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)