

**Minutes of 1st meeting of
RTHK Board of Advisors
held at 3:00 pm, 27 September 2010
at Board Room, Broadcasting House, RTHK**

Present:

Mr Lester G. HUANG, JP (Chairman)
Dr Eugene CHAN Kin-keung
Miss Lisa Marie DJENG Kar-yee
Ms FUNG May-gay
Mr C.K. LAU
Mr Maurice LEE Wai-man, JP
Mr Raj Sital MOTWANI, BBS, JP
Ms Marisa YIU
Mr Franklin WONG (Director of Broadcasting)

Absent with apologies:

Mr. Ringo LAM Wing-kwan
Ms Jolly WONG Ka-chi

In attendance from RTHK

Mr Gordon LEUNG, Deputy Director of Broadcasting (All agenda items)
Mr. TAI Keen-man, Assistant Director of Broadcasting (Radio) (All agenda items)
Mr. CHEUNG Man-sun, Assistant Director of Broadcasting (TV) (Agenda item 1)
Mrs. Helen WAN, Departmental Secretary (Agenda item 1)
Mr. KOO Kai-fai, Controller (Production Services) (Agenda item 1)
Ms. Natalie CHAN, Principal Programme Officer, TV Administration (Agenda item 1)
Ms. Amy KWONG (Board Secretariat)
Mr. David CHOW (Board Secretariat)

Secretary:

Miss Alice CHAN (Board Secretariat)

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1. This being the first meeting of the Board, a photograph of the Board was taken. Some members requested that the photograph should be used for internal record purposes only because their employers or professions had restrictions on their personal publicity.

2. Without the prior agreement of the meeting, two representatives of the RTHK Programme Staff Union entered the meeting room. They held placards and demanded to sit in at the Board meetings, and said that they had put such a request to the Chairman some time ago. The Chairman said that as he made clear during his meeting with the Union before, this request would need to be discussed by the Board at the meeting and invited the Union representatives to leave the meeting room first. The Staff Union representatives then left the meeting room.

Opening remarks

3. The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting. He said that, in consultation with Mr Franklin WONG and members, the initial meetings would include items aimed to introduce RTHK's operations to Board members.
4. Mr. Franklin WONG also welcomed all the Board members to the meeting; he then briefly introduced members of the RTHK directorate and their portfolios, and the Secretariat staff, to the Board.

Agenda Item (1) – Presentation by RTHK

a) General Introduction about RTHK

5. Mr. TAI Keen-man, made a presentation on RTHK by way of a general introduction. A corporate video and a powerpoint presentation giving an overview of RTHK were presented to members. (A copy of the powerpoint presentation “An Overview of RTHK” is at Appendix I.)
6. Some members enquired about the progress of reprovisioning of premises at Broadcast Drive. Mr TAI said that a site had been reserved at Tsueng Kwan O but for various reasons development had since been held in abeyance; RTHK was at present closely working with concerned departments to bring forward the reprovisioning project.
7. Regarding an apparent discrepancy between the hit rate and the listeners' figures, Mr. TAI explained that 30% to 40% of the people only accessed the news pages which were in text form instead of tuning in to listen to news reports. In June 2010, RTHK launched an iPhone App called “RTHK on the Go”, which allowed iPhone users to listen to live RTHK programmes and watch selected RTHK TV programmes. This new service was well received. For example, there had been over 3 million streaming/downloads for “Hong Kong Connection (鏗鏘集)” in 3 months' time.

8. A member enquired about the revenue obtained from programme sales. Mr TAI said the licensing fee was around \$3M to \$4M per year. Mr. CHEUNG Man-sun added that programme sales were mainly aimed at enhancing audience reach rather than generating revenue.
9. The meeting also noted that some presenters and DJs were employed as service providers and hence were not RTHK's staff.

b) TV & ETV Operations

10. Mr. CHEUNG Man-sun introduced RTHK's Television services to the Board with a powerpoint presentation "An Overview of RTHK's TV Services" (copy at Appendix II).
11. Mr. Franklin WONG added that, in order to support the local creative industry, RTHK had been commissioning television programmes to local production companies. RTHK also aimed to widen the perspective of the local audience by collaborating with international broadcasters such as National Geographic (NatGeo). RTHK was collaborating with NatGeo in a joint project to train up local independent producers, whereby their products would be broadcast on RTHK's prime time slots as well as on the international network of National Geographic.
12. Mr. CHEUNG added that with RTHK's multimedia platform comprising TV, radio and the internet, the station had made conscious efforts to enhance the synergy among these platforms. For example, "Hong Kong File.X" was a programme made in 2008 leveraging on all the three platforms.

[Mr. CHEUNG Man-sun, Mr. KOO Kai-fai, Mrs. Helen WAN and Ms. Natalie CHAN left the meeting at this juncture.]

Agenda Item (2) – RTHK Charter

(The RTHK Charter is attached at Appendix III)

13. The Chairman invited the Board to go through the Charter. The Chairman drew members' attention to the Section on "Board of Advisors and its Relationship with RTHK", in particular Clause 13 on the functions of the Board and Clause 15 which stated that "[t]he Board is advisory in nature. It has no executive power. The ultimate editorial responsibility for RTHK rests with the Director". The meeting also noted that according to the Charter, it should be the duty of the Director of Broadcasting to deal with the

day-to-day operation and staffing matters in RTHK.

14. The meeting agreed that, after the initial introductory briefings, RTHK would propose some topics, e.g., youth programmes, community broadcasting, etc. for the Board to discuss. On the “Community Broadcasting Involvement Fund”, the meeting noted that RTHK would be responsible for the administration of the Fund, and the Board’s advice on its detailed operation would be sought in due course.

Agenda Item (3) – General Working Parameters of the Board

a) Declaration of Interests

15. All Board members agreed that possible conflicts of interests should be declared. It was agreed that the member concerned should inform the Secretariat when he or she envisaged any potential conflict of interests when a particular topic was to be discussed by the Board. The Secretariat would inform the Chairman who would then bring it to the Board’s attention to decide whether the member concerned should abstain from the discussion or whether any other action needed to be taken.
16. Some members queried whether they should accept complimentary tickets or programme DVDs from RTHK. The meeting agreed that, for the purposes of better understanding RTHK’s operations and productions, there was in fact a need for Board members to attend some RTHK events and watch RTHK DVDs. It was therefore agreed that individual members should exercise their judgment in deciding whether to accept complimentary tickets or programme DVDs from RTHK, and that if they could not attend an event after receiving tickets, they should preferably return the tickets to RTHK.

b) Key Features of a Public Service Broadcaster (PSB), and Roles of the Board and Individual Members

17. Mr. TAI Keen-man introduced the concept of Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) with a powerpoint presentation “Public Service Broadcasting” (copy at Appendix IV).
18. Mr. TAI added that BBC, ABC, CBC, KBS and NHK were all examples of PSBs. Further details could be provided to the Board if members were interested to know more about other PSBs.

c) **Handling of Invitations to Attend Media Programmes and Events**

19. The Board agreed that it would be up to individual members to decide whether to accept requests for interviews or to speak to the media in their personal capacity, but they were advised to inform the Secretariat if they had spoken on the Board's decisions, for the Board's reference.
20. In response to members' enquiry, Mr. TAI responded that RTHK would provide press secretarial support to members on an as-needed basis.

d) **Handling of Complaints Addressed to the Board**

21. The Chairman drew members' attention to Clause 13(b) of the Charter, which stated that the Board would be "receiving reports on complaints against editorial principles, programming standards and quality of RTHK programming".
22. The meeting discussed and agreed that the Board would not handle individual complaints normally; complaints received by individual Board members should be forwarded to RTHK to follow up in accordance with its established complaint handling procedures. The Board should concern itself with the regular reports on complaints against editorial principles, programming standards and quality of RTHK programming, and such regular reports should be compiled by RTHK and presented to the Board on a quarterly basis.

e) **Frequency of Board Meetings**

23. After discussion, it was agreed that the Board should meet on a quarterly basis. Additional meetings would be held if necessary.

Agenda Item (4) – Dissemination of Information to the Public

a) **Spokesman's Arrangement and Responding to Media Enquiries**

24. Members agreed that it was preferable to have the Chairman as the official spokesman for the Board to minimise miscommunications. If individual members were approached by the media, such requests should be forwarded to the Secretariat.

b) **Annual Report**

25. The Board agreed to compile annual reports on its work.

c) **Setting up of a Webpage for the Board**

26. All members agreed that the Board should operate in a transparent manner, and that a special webpage on the RTHK website should be set up for the Board to disseminate information to the public. The webpage should contain the Board's functions, members' names and professions, and the Board's agenda, discussion papers and minutes of meetings.

Agenda Item (5) – Any Other Business

Request by SaveRTHK Campaign and RTHK Programme Staff Union to sit in at Board meetings

27. The Chairman said that when he met the Staff Union in August, the Union put forth requests to webcast the proceedings of the Board meetings and/or to allow Union representatives or the public to sit in at the meetings. The SaveRTHK Campaign made a petition to the Chairman making similar requests at the entrance of Broadcasting House when he entered the building for the meeting. He invited members for their views.
28. Members generally understood that there were concerns in some quarters of the community about the nature of the Board. However, the meeting considered that, with the posting of the Board's agendas, discussion papers and minutes of meetings onto the internet, the concerns about the Board's transparency should have been addressed. In addition, the meetings of many other advisory boards were not open to the public, and opening up the meetings might inhibit the flow of discussions. The meeting also noted that the Director of Broadcasting was already the representative of RTHK and other members of RTHK staff would be invited to join future meetings for discussions on specific topics where necessary. The Board therefore decided that the requests by the Staff Union and the SaveRTHK Campaign should not be acceded to.

Agenda Item (5) – Date of Next Meeting

29. The next meeting would be held on a date to be decided. In the meantime, Members are invited to a further familiarization visit to be held at RTHK at 1430 hours on 4 November 2010.

Adjournment

30. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1745 hours.