

貫徹公營廣播 提供優質節目 促進文化發展

香港中文大學新聞與傳播學院 對公營廣播服務檢討立場書

現在香港所慣稱的公營廣播，是本港歷史演變的特殊產物。香港電台在上世紀七十年代之前是殖民政府的喉舌，之後因應社會的發展需要，逐步走向編輯獨立，發展成爲今天以政府部門之身，局部實踐公營廣播職能的狀態。香港公營廣播的發展並不徹底，但是它在不同的年代對加強官民溝通、提供客觀持平的資訊和意見、建立文化新風等各個方面，均起著重要的作用。現今香港面對一個新時代，社會發生深刻的變化，這些變化無論對個人、機構或社會，都提出新的挑戰。

回應香港未來發展的需求

香港回歸差不多已有十年，中國內地與香港兩地的政治及經濟加速融合。香港要從新定位、經濟要轉型、政治參與意識上升、公民社會更趨成熟。香港不再是「借來的時空」，我們在檢討公營廣播時，應該從「香港是我家」的角度出發，積極考慮香港長遠的需要。

與香港內部發展同步出現的是資訊科技和全球化帶來的挑戰。資訊科技發展一日千里，對世界和社會的重構，發揮互爲因果的影響。資訊科技和全球化的發展一方面改變了傳播的生態，同時也爲傳媒提供新的發展空間。無論是公營或是私營媒體，都要在傳播無疆界的趨勢中，找尋自己的定位與方向。

我們認爲，在檢討公營廣播的時候，重點應超越個人化的節目興趣、個別團體的利益及政治取向。檢討公營廣播的出發點，不應只是爲了處理一個歷史遺留下來的問題，更重要的是要釐清香港廣播業長遠發展的理念，滿足市民的資訊及娛樂需要，達致發展社會文化的目標。

公營廣播的基本理念

公營廣播服務在不少歐洲先進國家由來已久，其歷史地位及推動文化發展的貢獻，可以媲美甚至超越商營廣播。它在拓寬民眾視野，促進公共事務的討論，凝聚社群，提高文化品味上，更是功不可沒。公營廣播服務的存在，並非要與商營機構爭利。它的核心理念是在商業廣播以外，提供多元化節目，並對商業廣播不足之處，作出補足甚至競爭。

商營廣播以追求利潤爲前提，過分強調利潤便容易忽略精緻文化和內涵較高的節目，不太重視小眾及弱勢社群關注的題材。商業媒體需要迎合「市場需要」，傾向於將媒體內容娛樂化。香港作爲中西文化薈萃的國際城市，需要提供多元口味的廣播節目。部分商業掛帥的傳媒內容，其文化內涵和視野一般較爲不足，未能完全滿足香港作爲國際都會的要求。

由於較少「市場」因素的考慮，公營廣播可以補足商業文化的不足，提升市

民品味，優化節目質素，並為觀眾提供不同的選擇，令市場趨向健康發展。如果認為公營廣播應該全不干預市場，並完全避免與商業廣播競爭，這是對公營廣播角色的誤解。公營廣播服務不應純粹提供另類或小眾節目，它更應提供切合整體社會大眾需要的多元化節目，特別是提供客觀、公正和可靠的資訊服務，並提供有廣度及深度的平台，讓社會各界自由對話。公營傳媒能夠和商營媒體良性競爭，節目類型上可以有某程度的重疊，從而促進市場進步，推動創意及提供精緻製作，令媒體市場更多姿采，讓市民有更多優質選擇。

廣播媒體和印刷媒體不同，前者接觸到的公眾更多，社會階層更廣泛，因而影響力更大。商營廣播內容以娛樂為主、資訊為副，公營廣播則以資訊及教育為主、娛樂為副，兩者側重的角色不同並互相補充。差不多所有發展地區都有公營廣播，可以說公營廣播是人類廣播歷史中的優良傳統和經驗結晶。

市民的聲音

公營廣播的財政支持源自公款，而其成敗得失也與市民的利益息息相關。因此公營廣播的檢討不能忽略市民的意見，我們有需要知道目前香港公營台（即香港電台）的表現、角色、功能、營運方式及其資源投放，從中探討市民對公營廣播的基本意向。為此，香港中文大學新聞與傳播學院在二零零六年二月廿四至廿八日進行了一項全港性的科學民意電話調查，隨機抽樣訪問了一千零四十四名十八歲或以上的香港市民，回應率為百分之五十六，抽樣誤差為正負百分之三。這次調查中有五條問題和這個主題相關，詳細數據可參見表一。

調查發現，在有意見的回應者當中，過半數對香港電台的表現感到滿意，認為「一般」的約佔四成，不滿的不及百分之四。香港港台無疑應有可改善之處，但總的來說，它的表現受到大多數市民的認可。有關香港電台的角色，八成回應者認為它應該監察政府和批評政府的政策，由此反映出市民強烈支持公營台應有編輯自主權，這和改變香港電台成為政府喉舌的想法相去甚遠。

有意見認為香港電台的存在，干預了商業廣播市場的營運；也有意見覺得香港電台只是補充了市場的不足。調查發現，大多數回應者認為香港電台對市場沒有影響，近三成贊同補充的說法，只有少於一成認為港台干預了市場。以上數字顯示，市民大眾不認為公營台對市場有很大影響，不會扭曲廣播市場，反而有不少人認為它可以有補充作用。

市民是否認為香港電台應該脫離政府，以公營機構方式運作？贊成的回應者佔多數（五成七），反對的則不及四成。這項結果跟市民支持香港電台編輯獨立的原則是一致的。資源方面，如果香港電台維持公營廣播的角色，近六成的回應者認為其資源應該維持不變，三成七的人認為要增加，只有百分之五的人表示應削減。值得注意的是，我們的調查是基於香港電台的現況來發問；我們相信，如果政府推出全面貫徹公營化的計劃，支持投放更多資源的市民應會更多。明顯的是，香港市民並不認為應該削減香港電台的資源。

總括而言，調查顯示市民認同香港電台的貢獻、強烈支持編輯獨立原則、主張香港電台應該從組織上脫離政府、大體贊成公營廣播補充市場不足的作用和增

加發展公營台的資源。

挑戰和建議

公營廣播服務對提供另類及多元節目、建立社群意識、優化香港文化及提高媒介市場品味等方面都有重要的角色。但目前香港的公營廣播服務，由於歷史因素及現實環境，無法全面發揮其功能。目前提供公營廣播服務的香港電台，在組織架構上仍隸屬於政府，但它在節目理念及規劃上卻扮演公營廣播的角色，這種「名不正、言不順」的錯配狀態，不但違背公營廣播的理念，還有礙香港電台提升效益，窒礙本地公營廣播服務全面的發展。

我們認為，政府有需要改變目前香港電台與政府的關係，讓其脫離政府架構，賦予其法定地位，以提高其自主性，使它成爲一個真正的公營廣播系統，免受政府及商業的壓力。香港電台應以公眾利益爲依歸，強調節目的質素和創意，員工以非公務員方式聘用，並有恰當的問責機制以提高效率。

要強化現時的公營廣播服務，特區政府必須提供專有的頻道及充足的財政資源。其次是在法定條款中賦與公營廣播機構高度的編輯和財政自主權，讓它可自行決定其節目方針、製作模式及播放安排。

公營廣播服務既然使用公共資源，就必須向公眾負責。具體的公營廣播體制設計有多種可能性，但當中一些基本原則不可違背。首先，公營廣播最高的管理委員會必須獨立於政府。其次，管理委員會的權力來源必須有廣泛的民意基礎及代表性，同時受到立法和行政機關的推許或認可，這樣管理委員會才會有廣泛的認受性。管理委員會只會監察公營台的重大決策、節目製作方針政策及資源調配，公營台人員則有運作的自主權。

香港投放在公營廣播的開支，遠低於已發展地區的水平。政府有需要增撥資源，壯大公營廣播服務，確保它在市場主導的媒體環境中，發揮應有的影響。面對全球化的經濟環境及中國高速的發展，本地廣播媒體不單可直接面向海外的華人社群，將來或有機會進軍中國內地龐大的文化市場。公營廣播服務的其中一些重要作用，是製作有香港特色的優質文化節目，讓它們成爲國內外人士認識香港的窗口，對內協助香港人建立本土身分認同，並加強香港和內地的交流。同時，公營廣播是創意產業的有機組成部分，發展創意產業已成了當前世界多國爭相競逐的目標，香港實應把握機會，大力發展有創意和優質內容的公營廣播。

隨著數碼科技的發展，頻道資源供應充裕，應有足夠頻道讓商營及公營廣播機構同時運作，提供不同類型的節目。政府甚至可以考慮開放部分頻道，讓公眾及個別小團體參與。提供公營廣播與開設公眾頻道兩者並行不悖，各有功能。香港的一些文化藝術團體，希望能利用公眾頻道來播放它們的作品，在現今科技條件成熟的環境，政府在分配頻譜資源時，應可充分考慮和滿足這些需求，但公眾頻道不應與公營廣播混爲一談。

特別是在頻道分眾的年代，社會上的不同社群更需要互相對話，加強溝通，對重大的社會議題進行廣泛而深入的探討。公營廣播可以提供一個凝聚民意、屬

於全民的媒介平台，讓民眾之間及與政府對話，對建立「和諧社會」和加強政府的「強政勵治」均有好處，因此目前的香港比任何時候更需要有公營廣播這種公共空間。

結語

我們認為檢討公營廣播服務，必須從香港長期發展的需要出發，並充分認識公營廣播的社會功能與作用。經過仔細思考和討論，並與香港市民的意見互相印證，我們的理念和具體建議摘要如下：

I. 公營廣播的理念及功能

- 追求優質和創意，提供高質素節目，為廣大市民提供實質的選擇，促進香港文化發展；照顧社會多元需要，提供小眾節目。
- 基於公眾利益，提供公平而開放的平台，促進社會民主議論，建構全面視點，找尋共識。
- 從組織、資源和人事上，讓公營廣播獨立於政治權力和商業利益。

II. 財政來源和支配

- 財源必須穩定有力，以公款為主、捐贈及公司贊助為輔。
- 提供充足頻道及資源，使公營廣播得以完全貫徹。

III. 管治架構及機制

- 管理委員會應獨立於政府。
- 管理委員會的權力來源必須有廣泛的民意基礎及代表性，並且得到立法及行政機關的推許或認可。
- 管理委員會只管方針政策和資源調配，而公營台則有運作的自主權。

附件

表一：市民對香港電台的想法

問題	回應 (%)			總數 (%) (樣本數)
	幾差/ 十分差	一般	幾好/ 十分好	
1. 整體來說，你認為香港電台表現怎樣呢？	3.5	41.4	55.1	100 (960)
	幾差/ 十分差	一般	幾好/ 十分好	
2. 你認為香港電台應否監察政府、批評政府的政策呢？	80.5	6.7	12.9	100 (966)
	應該	視乎情況	不應該	
3. 你認為現在香港電台的廣播服務對商業廣播市場有甚麼影響呢？是干預廣播市場，補充廣播市場，還是無影響呢？	7.6	63.6	28.8	100 (895)
	干預市場	無影響	補充市場	
4. 你認為香港電台應否改變政府部門的身份，以公營機構形式運作，即是由一個非官方的管理委員會管理港台？	56.7	5.2	38.1	100 (906)
	應該	視乎情況	不應該	
5. 如果香港電台維持公營廣播的角色，你認為政府應該增加香港電台的資源，削減它的資源，還是保持不變呢？	37.4	57.8	4.7	100 (931)
	增加資源	保持不變	削減資源	

註：百分比以有意見者為基數。無意見者及拒絕作答者合共佔去樣本總數百分之八至十四之間。

Carrying through Public Service Broadcasting, Providing Quality Programming and Promoting Cultural Development

The Position Paper of School of Journalism and Communication, The Chinese University of Hong Kong on Public Service Broadcasting Review in Hong Kong

The public service broadcasting that we used to know is an unusual outcome of the historical development of Hong Kong. Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) was a mouthpiece of the colonial government before the 1970s. It gradually secured editorial independence through special programming strategies that could satisfy the peculiar needs of Hong Kong's social development during the 1970s and 1980s. RTHK finally evolved into its current state by partially playing the role of a public broadcaster and being a government department at the same time.

The development of public service broadcasting in Hong Kong was not complete in the past decades. RTHK played an important role in strengthening the communication between the ruler and the ruled, providing objective and fair information service and opinion, and establishing new cultural trends. Now, Hong Kong is entering into a new age with profound changes taking place. These changes inevitably create new challenges to individuals, organizations and the whole community.

Meeting the Needs of Future Development in Hong Kong

Hong Kong has returned to China's sovereignty for almost 10 years. During this period of time, political and economic integration between the mainland and Hong Kong has accelerated. In line with this, Hong Kong needs to re-position herself to face new challenges such as economic re-structuring and increasing demand for political participation that are results of the increasing maturity of the civil society. The previous colonial mentality of "borrowed time and borrowed place" can no longer be the background of the review on public service broadcasting. Instead, we must take the position that "Hong Kong is our family" to actively consider Hong Kong's long-term development.

Side by side with these domestic developments are the advancement of information technologies and the challenges of globalization. Developing at a tremendous pace, information technologies have significant impact on the restructuring and cause-and-effect relationship of the world and society. The forces of information technologies and globalization change the media ecology and while also providing new spaces for further development of existing media. The commercial and public media have to reposition themselves and move in new directions as the traditional boundaries become increasingly blurred.

We believe that the focus of the present review must transcend personal interest as well as political preference of individual groups. The starting point of this

review should not only aim at solving an historical problem but also clarify the broadcasting philosophy of Hong Kong, fulfill citizens' information and entertainment needs, and attain the goal of developing civic culture.

Basic Values of Public Service Broadcasting

Public service broadcasting has a long history of development in many European countries. Its contribution in promoting cultural development and promoting the overall progress of the broadcasting industry in many nations can rival and even surpass its commercial counterparts. Broadening citizens' horizon, promoting debate on public affairs, enhancing social integration and elevating cultural taste are some of the distinctive features of public service broadcasting. Competing for profit is not the primary goal of a public broadcaster. Instead, its core values are to provide diversified programs, modulate and supplement the inadequacies of, and even compete with, commercial broadcasters in the broadcasting market.

Generating profit is the major target of commercial operators. Excessive pursuit of profits may result in the ignoring of "high culture" programs as well as downplaying topics which are of high concern to small and neglected social groups. To meet market demand, commercial media content tends to be entertaining in nature. As a metropolis of multi-national cultures, Hong Kong should have pluralistic broadcasting programs. But some commercial media content may not have enough cultural value and horizon; their programming cannot fully satisfy the needs of Hong Kong as an international metropolis.

Due to the relative absence of the market influence, public service broadcasting can supplement the inadequacies of the commercial culture, elevate citizens' cultural taste, improve program quality, provide alternative choices, and promote a healthy broadcasting market. To say that the existence of the public broadcaster is a form of market intervention, or to say that it should not compete with commercial broadcasters at all is a misunderstanding of public service broadcasting. It should not only provide alternative or niche programs but should also produce diversified programs to satisfy the needs of the general public. In particular, public service broadcasting should provide objective, fair and reliable information service, and serve as an open platform for free discussion with width and depth among the citizens. Public broadcasters can compete with commercial service providers in a positive way, and the program types can overlap to a certain extent. This could enhance the market, promote creativity and provide quality production, making the media market more diversified and offering more good choices to the citizens.

There is some difference between the broadcast media and the print media. The former can reach a broader audience from all walks of life and with larger impact. Commercial broadcasting delivers more entertainment programs supplemented with information programs, whereas public service broadcasting concentrates more on producing informational and educational programs supplemented with entertaining genres. They have different roles and yet are complementary to each other. As public service broadcasting exists in almost all developed societies, public service broadcasting can be regarded as an excellent tradition and presence in human broadcasting history.

Voice of the Public

Public service broadcasting mainly relies on public funding and its success or failure directly affects the Hong Kong people. Thus, the public's view cannot be overlooked in this reviewing exercise. We need to know the public's view about the performance, role, functions, mode of operation and resource allocation of Hong Kong's only public service broadcasting provider (RTHK) in order to gauge the general public's thinking on public service broadcasting. In light of this, the School of Journalism and Communication at the Chinese University of Hong Kong administered a community-wide scientific telephone poll from 24 to 28 February, 2006. Using a random sampling method, a total of 1,044 citizens aged 18 or above were successfully interviewed. The response rate is 56% and the error margin is +/-3%. There are five questions in the survey related to RTHK and public service broadcasting. Detailed results are available in Table 1.

The survey finds that more than half of the respondents were satisfied with the overall performance of RTHK. About 40% of them rated it "so so" and less than 4% found it dissatisfactory. RTHK should have room for improvement but its performance on the whole is positively recognized by the majority of citizens. Concerning the role of RTHK, 80% of the respondents felt that RTHK should bear the responsibility of monitoring the government and criticizing its policies; this shows that citizens strongly support an independent editorial policy for the public broadcaster. This is in stark contrast to an alternate view that RTHK should be turned into a government mouthpiece.

Some people think that public service broadcasting is a form of intervention towards the commercial market. Other people have the view that the existence of RTHK can supplement the inadequacies of the commercial market. The survey finds that the majority of respondents thought that RTHK does not affect the market at all. Nearly 30% of them held the supplementary view while less than 10% agreed to the market intervention hypothesis. The data show that citizens did not find that the existence of a public broadcaster would distort the broadcasting market. On the contrary, a sizable proportion of them thought that a public broadcaster can play a supplementary role to the market.

Do citizens think that RTHK should be separated from the government and operated as a public body? A majority of respondents (57%) gave a positive answer while less than 40% said otherwise. This result is in line with the citizens' support of RTHK's editorial independence. In terms of resources, close to 60% of respondents said RTHK's funding should remain unchanged if it maintains the role of a public broadcaster. Another 37% said there should be an increase in funding to RTHK while only 5% thought that funding should be cut. It is worth noting that the survey elicited the respondents' assessment of RTHK's current situation. We believe that if public service broadcasting is fully realized, citizens' support for allocating more resources to this service would be increased. It is clear that Hong Kong citizens do not want to trim the budget of RTHK further.

In conclusion, this survey shows that the general public acknowledges RTHK's contribution to the community and strongly supports RTHK's editorial independence and separation from the government. They also generally agree that

public service broadcasting has a supplementary role to play in the broadcasting market, and extra resources should be given to facilitate full development of the public broadcaster.

Challenges and Suggestions

Public service broadcasting plays an important role in providing alternative and diversified programming, strengthening social consciousness, elevating Hong Kong culture, and enhancing the taste of the media market. But the existing public broadcaster is unable to optimize its performance due to historical factors and practical constraints. At present, RTHK plays a public broadcasting role but remains a government department. Such an embarrassing mismatch not only contravenes the fundamental values of public service broadcasting but also affects the efficiency of RTHK, thus limiting the full development of public service broadcasting.

We think that the government has to change its relationship with RTHK and let RTHK become independent. With a statutory status, RTHK can increase its autonomy and become a real public service broadcasting system free of government and commercial pressure. RTHK should use public interest as its guiding light, emphasize program quality and originality. Its staff should be recruited on non-civil servant terms with proper accountability mechanisms to ensure its efficiency and effectiveness.

To strengthen the current public broadcasting service, the SAR government must provide dedicated channels and adequate financial resources. The public broadcaster's statutory status should spell out a high degree of editorial and financial autonomy so that it can freely decide on its programming strategies, production modes and transmission arrangements.

The public broadcaster must be accountable to the people who pay for it. There are various forms of public service broadcasting. However, some basic principles cannot be violated. First, the top management committee or the board of governors of that public broadcaster must be independent from the government. Second, the authority of the members of the management committee must be based on wide public support. This committee should receive the endorsement of, or recognition by, the legislative and executive branches of the government in order to have legitimacy. This committee is only responsible for deciding on major policies, programming strategies and resource allocation. The personnel of the public broadcaster should have operational autonomy.

Hong Kong is among the lowest in public service broadcasting expenditure when compared to other developed societies. The government should increase the resources for public service broadcasting to strengthen it and make sure it can exert desirable impact in the market-dominated media environment. In view of a globalized economic environment and the fast development in the Chinese market, local broadcast media can directly appeal to the overseas Chinese communities and also have opportunities to enter into the vast cultural market in mainland China. Some important functions of public service broadcasting include: producing quality cultural programs with Hong Kong characteristics and using them to promote Hong Kong to various groups of people outside Hong Kong, helping build local identity inside Hong Kong, and promoting interflow between Hong Kong and the mainland. At the same

time, public service broadcasting is an integral part of the creative industry, which has become the much sought after goal of many countries. Hong Kong should seize the opportunity to put greater effort to develop creative and high-quality public broadcasting program content.

Digitization of media technologies brings along a proliferation of program channels, which should have sufficient channel resources for both commercial and public services to provide a variety of programs. The government can even consider opening up some channels for the general public and individual small organizations as well. There should be no conflict between the public channels and public service broadcasting as they have their own functions. Some local art and cultural organizations have requested a public channel to air their programs. With abundant channels available after digitization of the broadcasting network, the government could seriously consider and fulfill these needs in distributing channel resources. However, it should not treat public channels and public service broadcasting as the same thing.

In an age of multi-channel narrowcasting, different groups in society need to talk to one another in order to facilitate communication and discuss major social issues. Public service broadcasting can provide a platform to generate public opinion, as well as to let the public speak among themselves and to the government. This would be conducive to the government's effort of establishing a "harmonious society" and practicing "strong leadership." In this regard, Hong Kong needs a stronger public service broadcasting to build up such a public sphere now more than ever.

Conclusion

We think that the review of public service broadcasting should take into consideration the long term development needs of Hong Kong, and fully understand the social functions and role of public service broadcasting. After careful consideration and discussion, and noting the views of the Hong Kong citizens, we wish to summarize our ideas and suggestions as follows:

I. Rationale of public service broadcasting

- Striving for excellence and creativity, providing quality programs and real choices for the citizens, promoting the development of Hong Kong culture, catering to the diverse needs of the community and providing programs for minority populations.
- Grounding in public interest, providing a fair and open platform to facilitate democratic public discussion, constructing a comprehensive view and seeking consensus.
- Allowing public service broadcasting to be free from political power and commercial interest in terms of organizational, resource and personnel matters.

II. Financial resources and allocation

- Stable and adequate financial provisions should mainly come from public money, supplemented with private donations and sponsorship.
- The government should provide sufficient channels and financial resources to

fully implement a bona fide public service broadcasting system.

III. Management structure and mechanism

- The management committee/board of governors should be independent from the government.
- The power of the management committee should come from wide bases of public support and representation. It has to be endorsed or recognized by the legislative and the executive branches of the government.
- The management committee only takes care of major policy issues, programming strategies and resource allocation. The personnel of the public broadcaster should have operational autonomy.

[Note: This is the English translation of the original position paper, which was first written in Chinese.]

Appendix

Table 1: Citizens' Views on RTHK

Question	Response (%)			Total (%) (N)
1. Overall, what do you think of RTHK's performance?	Quite Bad/Very Bad	So So	Quite Good/Very Good	100 (960)
	3.5	41.4	55.1	
2. Do you think RTHK should or should not monitor the government and criticize government's policies?	Should	It depends	Should Not	100 (966)
	80.5	6.7	12.9	
3. Do you think RTHK's broadcast services have any impact on the commercial broadcast market? Does RTHK interfere with the broadcast market, supplement the market or has no influence at all?	Interfere Market	No Influence	Supplement Market	100 (895)
	7.6	63.6	28.8	
4. Do you think RTHK should or should not change its status as a government department and become a public body? That is, it shall be governed by a non-government management committee?	Should	It depends	Should Not	100 (906)
	56.7	5.2	38.1	
5. If RTHK maintains its public service broadcasting role, do you think the government should provide RTHK with more resources, reduce its resources, or give the same amount?	Increase Resources	Remain the Same	Reduce Resources	100 (931)
	37.4	57.8	4.7	

Note: The above percentages are based on those who expressed views. Those without an opinion or refused to answer together had a share of 8-14% of the total sample.