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Replies to initial questions raised by Legislative Council Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2026-27

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Session No. : 10

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

CEDB202

(Question Serial No. 1645)

Head: (160) Radio Television Hong Kong

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (1) Radio, (2) Public Affairs and General Television Programme

Controlling Officer: Director of Broadcasting (Angelina KWAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

Regarding the work on informing, educating and entertaining the general public through the provision of high quality television programmes, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What were the amounts, numbers of hours and related expenditures for the in-house produced programmes, commissioned programmes and acquired programmes of Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) in each of the past 3 years respectively?
2. What were the numbers of transmission hours for various types of RTHK programmes by programme genres (such as news, current affairs, government information, national education, sports, culture, lifestyle, education and dramas) in each of the past 3 years respectively?
3. What were the amounts and numbers of hours for local and overseas sports events broadcast live and recorded by RTHK in each of the past 3 years, broken down by local and overseas sports events? What were the expenditures involved in acquiring the broadcasting rights of the relevant events? What are the local and overseas sports events expected to be broadcast live or recorded by RTHK this year? What is the expenditure involved?
4. What were the numbers of hours for events of the 15th National Games (NG), the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th National Special Olympic Games (NGD and NSOG) broadcast live and recorded by RTHK last year? What were the amounts and numbers of hours for programmes produced in relation to the NG, NGD and NSOG? What were the actual expenditures incurred by RTHK for the promotion, programme production and live broadcast of the NG, NGD and NSOG respectively?
5. What were the amount and number of hours for programmes produced by RTHK regarding "2025 Legislative Council General Election" last year? What was the actual expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kapui, Judy (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

In the past 3 years, the total number of hours of first-run programmes produced and acquired by the Television (TV) Division of Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) is as follows:

Year	Hours of first-run produced programmes	Hours of first-run acquired programmes
2023-24 (Actual)	4 895.5	1 007.3
2024-25 (Actual)	5 431.6	855.5
2025-26 (Revised Estimate)	5 358.0	992.0

The overall provisions of Programme (2) (Public Affairs and General Television Programme) of RTHK for 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26 (Revised Estimate) are \$671.8 million, \$725.2 million and \$985.5 million respectively. Moreover, the TV programme commissioning has ceased since 2019.

RTHK programmes are produced in accordance with the 8 Programme Production Goals (PPGs) derived from the public purposes, mission and programming objectives set out in the Charter of RTHK. In the past 3 years, the number of transmission hours of RTHK TV programmes by PPG is as follows:

PPG	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
1 (news and public affairs)	2 664	2 631	2 800
2 (sense of citizenship and national identity)	3 015	3 097	3 010
3 (public policies)	449	398	430
5 (social inclusion and pluralism)	609	464	430
6 (education)	494	464	550
7 (culture and arts)	664	530	470
8 (information and entertainment)	9 625	9 936	9 830
Total transmission hours	17 520	17 520	17 520

*PPG 4 is only applicable to radio services.

In the past 3 years, the number of hours of live broadcast and recorded local and overseas sports events on RTHK TV is as follows:

Year	Number of transmission hours for local events	Number of transmission hours for overseas events	Total transmission hours
2023-24	270	276	546
2024-25	710	3 090	3 800
2025-26	226	1 979	2 205

RTHK plans to continue to live broadcast and record local and international sports events in 2026-27, including the National Basketball League, the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) Men’s and Women’s World Cup, the ITTF Mixed Team World Cup, the FIBA 3x3 World Tour, the Hong Kong Premier League, competitions for local education sector and tertiary institutions, etc.

In 2025-26, apart from live and recorded broadcast of the 15th National Games (NG), the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th National Special Olympic Games (NGD and NSOG) events on TV, RTHK also established 10 high-definition channels on its website to provide comprehensive live coverage of the NG, NGD and NSOG events. The total transmission hours on TV and online platforms were over 3 500 hours. RTHK has also produced 5 series of special programme “Towards the National Games 1-5” and the special programme for the NGD and NSOG “Inclusive NGD and NSOG 2025”. Among them, “Towards the National Games 2: Path to Victory”, “Inclusive NGD and NSOG 2025” and “Towards the National Games 4: Journeying Through the National Games” were co-produced with the Asia Pacific headquarters of the China Media Group and Guangdong Radio and Television. Furthermore, RTHK has produced several short informative videos for the NG, titled “National Games Discovery” and “A Guide to the National Games”, and presented information on the NG, NGD and NSOG in the regular programmes “Sport in RTHK”, “Hong Kong United” and “Vibrant Hong Kong”. In addition, RTHK has integrated artificial intelligence (AI) technology into the production of the NG programmes, including generating visual elements for promotional videos with AI tools and editing highlights of events with AI, thereby enhancing production efficiency and visual effects of the programmes. Before the official commencement of NG events, RTHK also assisted the National Games Coordination Office (Hong Kong) in the production and live broadcast of various test events in handball, U22 basketball, triathlon, fencing, etc. The Radio Division also produced the special programme “Thrilled National Games 2025” and English programme “Inside the National Games”, while the Newsroom produced a series of reports and exclusive interviews. Other radio programmes also promoted the NG, NGD and NSOG comprehensively through games, short segments, outreach projects, etc. In 2025-26, the expenditure incurred by RTHK for the production and live broadcast of the NG, NGD and NSOG programmes is about \$85 million whereas the expenditure incurred for promotion is about \$3 million.

The total transmission hours for live TV programmes and TV productions relating to the 2025 Legislative Council General Election were 65 hours, including “2025 Legislative Council General Election Seminar”, “2025 LegCo General Election-Platform”, “‘Patriots Collaborate for Good Governance’ 2025 Legislative Council Election Forums”, “Hong Kong United: A Note on Voting”, etc. RTHK TV 32 also provided full live coverage of the election press conference, vote counting and election results on the Election Day and the following day; and disseminated election information on the TV ticker and banner to encourage the public to vote. For radio programmes, the transmission hours for programmes relating to the 2025 Legislative Council General Election were 59.5 hours, including “Live broadcast of Election

Forums”, recorded broadcasting of “2025 LegCo General Election-Platform” and “Live Broadcast on the Vote Counting Day”.

Apart from the expenditure related to the NG, NGD and NSOG, the expenditure of the above projects is absorbed within the existing resources. RTHK does not have a breakdown on the expenditure for these projects.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

CEDB203

(Question Serial No. 2802)

Head: (160) Radio Television Hong Kong

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (3) New Media

Controlling Officer: Director of Broadcasting (Angelina KWAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

The estimate will increase by \$77.0 million (up to 133.7%) from \$57.6 million in 2025-26 to \$134.6 million in 2026-27. The increase "is mainly due to the increased provision for personal emoluments, departmental expenses and capital expenditure". Please provide details of the items with higher increases in provisions and the respective amounts.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

The estimated expenditure under Programme (3)(New Media) of Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) for 2026-27 will increase by 133.7% to \$134.6 million when compared with the revised estimate for 2025-26. This is mainly due to the consolidation of the estimates for personal emoluments, departmental expenses and capital expenditure relevant to new media content production, which were used to be covered under Programmes (1) and (2), into Programme (3) so as to more comprehensively reflect the resources devoted by RTHK into new media content production. The increase mainly covers the estimates for operating the video news platform, including the 9 posts responsible for video news production; the expenses for cross-platform dissemination of new media content internally produced by Radio and Television Divisions; and the expenses for publicity used on third-party online platforms. In addition, RTHK is enhancing the website (rthk.hk) and consolidating mobile applications. The related additional expenditure is also included under Programme (3). The above expenditure will be met by internal redeployment of resources within RTHK. No additional manpower and resources are involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1992)

Head: (160) Radio Television Hong Kong

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (2) Public Affairs and General Television Programme

Controlling Officer: Director of Broadcasting (Angelina KWAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

The estimated expenditure of Radio Television Hong Kong in 2026-27 is about \$574 million, representing decreases ranging from 20% to 41.7% when compared with the previous 2 financial years. To understand the reasons for and specific circumstances of the reduction in estimated expenditure, please list the details of changes in the establishment, programme production costs and administrative expenses, broken down by year. Regarding the operation of 5 Digital Terrestrial Television channels, please explain the adjustment plan for programme scheduling in light of the estimated expenditure; and list the types of affected programmes, the revised budget amount, and how the Government assesses the impacts of the adjustments on the audience reach and public service quality.

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

The estimated expenditure of Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) under Programme (2)(Public Affairs and General Television Programme) in 2026-27 is lower than that in 2024-25 and 2025-26. This is mainly because RTHK was given additional provision in the last 2 financial years for supporting the production, promotion and live broadcast of the 15th National Games (NG), the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th National Special Olympic Games (NGD and NSOG). NG, NGD and NSOG were concluded successfully at the end of 2025. Furthermore, RTHK will reduce the departmental expenses and capital expenditure in 2026-27 in accordance with the overarching principle of continued implementation of the reinforced fiscal consolidation programme announced in the Budget.

The financial provisions and establishment for the relevant years are tabulated below:

Item	2024-25 (Actual)	2025-26 (Revised)	2026-27 (Estimate)
Financial provision for Programme (2) (\$m)	725.2	985.5	574.4
Establishment (as at 31 March)	418	409	402

The programme production costs and administrative expenses are part of the overall expenditure of RTHK. RTHK does not have a breakdown of the relevant categories of expenses.

As mentioned above, since the decrease in estimated expenditure in 2026-27 is mainly attributable to NG, NGD and NSOG, the adjusted budget for 2026-27 will not have much impact on regular programmes. Furthermore, to implement the reinforced fiscal consolidation programme, RTHK will utilise existing resources fully and make good use of technologies to enhance production efficiency and ensure the quality of public service can be maintained, so as to fulfill the public purposes and mission in the Charter of RTHK.

At the same time, RTHK will adopt a more proactive strategy and leverage the established film and television cooperation mechanism to promote RTHK programmes to buyers from both local and overseas organisations. Furthermore, RTHK will explore the appropriate collaboration approach and proposals for externally promoting signature cultural brands to expand the reach of RTHK programmes, engage wider audience groups, and enhance the influence of Hong Kong's film and television productions.

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

CEDB205

(Question Serial No. 2959)

Head: (160) Radio Television Hong Kong

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (3) New Media

Controlling Officer: Director of Broadcasting (Angelina KWAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

The estimate under Programme (3) for 2026-27 will increase by 133.7% when compared with the original estimate for 2025-26, while the estimates for various indicators are similar to those for 2025-26. What is/are the use(s) for the increase in departmental expenses and capital expenditure?

Asked by: Hon FONG Kwok-shan, Christine (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

The estimated expenditure under Programme (3)(New Media) of Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) for 2026-27 will increase by 133.7% to \$134.6 million when compared with the revised estimate for 2025-26. This is mainly due to the consolidation of the estimates for personal emoluments, departmental expenses and capital expenditure relevant to new media content production, which were used to be covered under Programmes (1) and (2), into Programme (3) so as to more comprehensively reflect the resources devoted by RTHK into new media content production. The increase mainly covers the estimates for operating the video news platform, including the 9 posts responsible for video news production; the expenses for cross-platform dissemination of new media content internally produced by Radio and Television Divisions; and the expenses for publicity used on third-party online platforms. In addition, RTHK is enhancing the website (rthk.hk) and consolidating mobile applications. The related additional expenditure is also included under Programme (3). The above expenditure will be met by internal redeployment of resources within RTHK. No additional manpower and resources are involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

CEDB206

(Question Serial No. 0612)

Head: (160) Radio Television Hong Kong

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (-) -

Controlling Officer: Director of Broadcasting (Angelina KWAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

What are the total number of established posts and the anticipated wastage rate for Radio Television Hong Kong in 2026-27? In the estimated expenditure for promoting “multimedia convergence development”, what are the proportions of expenditure to be used for commissioned productions and internal productions respectively?

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

In 2026-27, the establishment of Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) is 743 posts. RTHK does not maintain figures for the anticipated annual wastage rate. RTHK will plan prudently and utilise the manpower resources effectively, in accordance with the overarching principle of continued implementation of the reinforced fiscal consolidation programme announced in the Budget.

The estimated expenditure for new media services in 2026-27 will mainly be used for personal emoluments, departmental expenses and capital expenditure. The new media content is mainly produced by RTHK's in-house production staff. RTHK will also, depending on actual circumstances (such as when implementing specific-themed or large-scale major events), utilise departmental manpower fully whilst giving due consideration in procuring relevant services from the market as appropriate to leverage on the professional skills and relevant experience available in the market, in order to enhance flexibility and production output.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0613)

Head: (160) Radio Television Hong Kong

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (1) Radio, (2) Public Affairs and General Television Programme

Controlling Officer: Director of Broadcasting (Angelina KWAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

What are the production budgets of Radio Television Hong Kong for programmes on promotion of “patriotic education” and “Basic Law” in 2026? What are the changes when compared with last year?

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

As a government department and the public service broadcaster, Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) firmly fulfills the public purposes and mission in the Charter of RTHK. Amongst all, RTHK's Production Programme Goal 2 is to “promote understanding of the concept of “One Country, Two Systems” and engender a sense of citizenship and national identity”, which covers programmes on promotion of “patriotic education” and “Basic Law”. RTHK estimates to broadcast a total of 4 260 hours of radio and TV programmes on engendering a sense of citizenship and national identity in 2026-27, which is similar to that in 2025-26. RTHK does not maintain breakdown of the estimates for the different categories of programmes.

To raise public awareness of “One Country, Two Systems”, for radio programmes, in 2026-27, RTHK will launch a series of new programmes including the interpretation of the National 15th Five-Year Plan, “APEC 2026”, etc.; and continue to produce “One Belt One Road Music Journey” series, “The 18th Hong Kong Cup Diplomatic Knowledge Contest”, “Solar Project”, “50 Years After”, “China's Revival and New Trends”, the “Greater China: Technology Enterprises 30” series, “Charming China”, “Inter-Tertiary Putonghua Debate Competition”, etc. For TV programmes, RTHK will launch a new programme “Chronicle of Notable Chinese” in 2026-27 and continue to produce “GBA Lifestyle”, “Love Our Home, Treasure Our Country”, “Master of Chinese Knowledge – Season 2”, “Learning Basic Law with Good Neighbours – Campus Edition”, “Basic Law Quiz”, “15th National Marine Knowledge Competition – Hong Kong Contest Final cum Prize Presentation Ceremony”, “Journey to Greater Bay Area”, etc.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

CEDB208

(Question Serial No. 0618)

Head: (160) Radio Television Hong Kong

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (-) -

Controlling Officer: Director of Broadcasting (Angelina KWAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

Given the change of media ecology, are the establishment and production cost ratio of Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) in recent years still competitive? Will the Financial Secretary please provide the percentage of RTHK's provisions for thematic programmes on promoting national security education and Chinese culture? With the sustained high level of expenditure on public service broadcasting, has the Government assessed the possibility of outsourcing some non-core production (such as entertainment and sports live streaming) to local private media for optimising resource allocation?

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

Under the overarching principle of continued implementation of the reinforced fiscal consolidation programme announced in the Budget, Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) will utilise existing resources fully and make good use of technologies to enhance production efficiency and ensure the quality of public service can be maintained, so as to fulfill the public purposes and mission in the Charter of RTHK (the Charter).

In terms of staffing, the establishment of RTHK will be reduced from 762 posts in 2024-25 to 743 posts in 2026-27, representing a cumulative reduction of 19 civil service posts. RTHK will continue to utilise manpower resources effectively through internal redeployment, streamlining procedures and leveraging technologies. In terms of expenditure, as the 15th National Games, the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th National Special Olympic Games were concluded successfully at the end of 2025, and in line with the overarching principle of continued implementation of the reinforced fiscal consolidation programme announced in the Budget, the financial provision for RTHK will be reduced from \$1,260.3 million (actual expenditure) in 2024-25 to \$1,123.9 million in 2026-27 estimate.

As a government department and the public service broadcaster, RTHK firmly fulfills the public purposes and mission in the Charter. Various categories of RTHK programmes, such as news and current affairs, arts and culture, and education information, etc., include content in promoting national security education and Chinese culture. These programmes fall under the Programme Production Goals 1, 2, 6, 7 and 8. RTHK will allocate provision flexibly in response to programme production needs. RTHK does not have estimate on the proportion of provision allocated to programmes involving promotion of national security education and Chinese culture.

Unlike commercial broadcasters, the programmes produced and broadcast by RTHK serve the majority whilst catering for the minority. RTHK will, depending on circumstances, collaborate with different media organisations, including collaborating with other media to live broadcast some sports events (e.g. the Hong Kong Premier League), so as to utilise resources flexibly and achieve synergy. RTHK will continue to explore the feasibility of collaborating with different media to broaden its audience reach and utilise the resources more effectively.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

CEDB209

(Question Serial No. 0619)

Head: (160) Radio Television Hong Kong

Subhead (No. & title): (600) Works

Programme: (-) -

Controlling Officer: Director of Broadcasting (Angelina KWAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

The new Broadcasting House is under construction by Radio Television Hong Kong. In the current budget, what is the latest estimated cost of the project? In view of the "fiscal consolidation programme" proposed in the Budget, is there any room for reducing the cost of this infrastructure project?

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

The proposed new Broadcasting House for Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) is still at the planning stage with no project cost estimate so far. RTHK will plan the relevant project in accordance with the overarching principle of continued implementation of the reinforced fiscal consolidation programme announced in the Budget, in order to ensure public resources can be utilised more effectively.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0707)

Head: (160) Radio Television Hong Kong

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (3) New Media

Controlling Officer: Director of Broadcasting (Angelina KWAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

Regarding the work of Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) on the New Media, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) What are the detailed reasons for the increase in the estimated financial provision for the New Media by 168.1% in 2026-27 when compared with the original estimate of last year?
- (2) As there will be a net increase of 9 posts under the New Media in 2026-27, please provide the details of these new posts (including the post titles, duties and salaries), as well as the estimated annual expenditure involved.
- (3) As RTHK said that it would “continue to provide high-quality new media services with the application of new information technology and artificial intelligence technology” in 2026-27, please advise of the new information technology and artificial intelligence technology currently in use and the relevant information.
- (4) From 2 years ago up till now, what were the annual amount of content (such as videos, posts or resources) provided by RTHK on various social media platforms (including but not limited to YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Xiaohongshu and Bilibili) and the performance measures or key performance indicators respectively?
- (5) From 2 years ago up till now, what were the establishment and strength responsible for the new media services respectively?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

The estimated expenditure under Programme (3)(New Media) of Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) for 2026-27 will increase by 168.1% to \$134.6 million when compared with

the 2025-26 original estimate. This is mainly due to the consolidation of the estimates for personal emoluments, departmental expenses and capital expenditure relevant to new media content production, which were used to be covered under Programmes (1) and (2), into Programme (3) so as to more comprehensively reflect the resources devoted by RTHK into new media content production. The increase mainly covers the estimates for operating the video news platform, including the 9 posts responsible for video news production (i.e. 1 Principal Programme Officer, 1 Senior Programme Officer, 1 Programme Officer, and 6 Assistant Programme Officers); the expenses for cross-platform dissemination of new media content internally produced by Radio and Television Divisions; and the expenses for publicity used on third-party online platforms. In addition, RTHK is enhancing the website (rthk.hk) and consolidating mobile applications. The related additional expenditure is also included under Programme (3). The above expenditure will be met by internal redeployment of resources within RTHK. No additional manpower and resources are involved.

Under the overarching principle of continued implementation of the reinforced fiscal consolidation programme announced in the Budget, RTHK has strived to develop into smart broadcasting to provide high-quality new media services by applying new technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), the 5th generation mobile communications (5G) technology and cloud storage technology. Since 2024, RTHK has started to explore and test various AI technologies in media production and broadcasting, e.g. developing video and photo auto-tagging, AI-assisted subtitling and captioning; adopting various AI generative tools to enhance editing capabilities, restore old photos and footages; enriching design effects with AI drawings in producing social media short videos and posts for enhancing interactions; and enabling young students to understand the integration of AI into television and new media productions through visiting RTHK facilities. In addition, the AI Chatbot Assistant service was officially launched on RTHK's website in July 2025 to support programme enquiries and customer services by using the large language model and rule-based system. Moreover, a new generation outside broadcasting truck installed with 5G technology equipment was also put into service formally in July 2025 to achieve faster and more stable audio and video transmission. RTHK will continue to further explore the application of AI in broadcasting and new media, so as to enhance efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

As at March 2026, RTHK maintains official channels on different social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, as well as Xiaohongshu, Weibo and Bilibili which are popular in the Chinese Mainland. In 2024-25 and 2025-26, the numbers of posts/videos published on the major social media platforms by RTHK are as follows:

Social media platform	2024-25	2025-26 (As at end of February 2026)
Facebook	5 110	3 668
Instagram	4 993	4 742
YouTube	8 954	6 186
LinkedIn	100	55
Xiaohongshu (Account created in April 2025)	-	751
Weibo	805	768
Bilibili	662	778

Note: The above statistics do not include the posts/videos published on video news platform and the accounts established under the names of individual RTHK channels or programmes.

The key performance measures in respect of new media and RTHK's performance are set out in the Controlling Officer's Report. RTHK will continue to closely monitor the usage of various social media platforms, and make adjustments as and when necessary, in order to reach different listeners and viewers more effectively in its provision of services to the public.

In 2024-25 and 2025-26, the establishment and strength of the Digital Media Delivery Section are as follows:

	2024-25	2025-26 (As at end of February 2026)
Establishment	23	23
Strength	20	22

- End -

CEDB211

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 3226)

Head: (160) Radio Television Hong Kong

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (1) Radio, (2) Public Affairs and General Television Programme

Controlling Officer: Director of Broadcasting (Angelina KWAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) currently operates 8 AM/FM radio channels and 5 Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) channels. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) What were the actual listening ratings and viewership of the 8 radio channels and 5 DTT channels respectively over the past 3 years?
- 2) Has RTHK set target listening ratings and viewership for various radio channels and DTT channels? If so, have the targets been met? If not, is there any plan to set performance indicators?
- 3) With the prevalence of the Internet and the flow of information, many forms of entertainment are available online, resulting in the decreasing number of people listening to radio programmes. Does the Administration have any plan to explore the merging of the 8 radio channels to reduce expenditure?
- 4) The 5 DTT channels are: RTHK TV 31 which provides general programming; RTHK TV 32 which covers live events including local, the Mainland and international news, press conferences and Legislative Council meetings; RTHK TV 33 to 35 which relay Mainland television (TV) programmes. Among these 5 channels, only RTHK TV 31 has some in-house produced programmes, while RTHK TV 32 to 35 mostly broadcast relayed programmes. In this connection, does the Administration have any plan to explore the merging of the 5 TV channels to reduce expenditure?
- 5) There are views that RTHK TV channels have lower viewership than other free TV channels. What are the plans and budgets of the Administration for enhancing the public reach of various TV channels? Is there any plan for reorganising the production directions?

Asked by: Hon LAU Ip-keung, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

As a public service broadcaster, Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK)'s programme production has to cater for the needs of different groups in the society, including the mass audience as well as the minority groups such as ethnic minorities and non-Chinese speaking group. Besides, programmes produced by RTHK cover various aspects including news, current affairs, government information, national education, sports, culture, lifestyle and education programmes, etc. As such, viewership and listening ratings are not appropriate reference indicators for evaluating RTHK's performance in providing public broadcasting services.

The performance of RTHK is evaluated under 8 Programme Production Goals (PPGs), which are drawn up based on the public purposes, mission and programming objectives stipulated in the Charter of RTHK. RTHK's performance under respective PPGs is set out in the Controlling Officer's Report. RTHK will review and adjust the service performance criteria on an annual basis to assess the effectiveness.

To provide diversified programmes to the public, the 8 radio channels and 5 TV channels of RTHK have different positioning. For Radio, Channel 1 mainly provides news, information and general programmes; Channel 2 provides entertainment and popular music programmes, and promotes youth, family and community projects; Channel 3 provides news, information and entertainment programmes in English; Channel 4 is the only channel providing classical music and fine arts programmes in Hong Kong; Channel 5 mainly targets the elderly and provides cultural and education programmes; the Putonghua channel mainly broadcasts in Putonghua to provide general, news and finance programmes, as well as the broadcast of Community Involvement Broadcasting Service programmes. To enhance the sense of citizenship and national identity, Channel 6 and Channel 8 relay China National Radio Hong Kong Edition, and Radio the Greater Bay of the China Media Group respectively.

For TV, RTHK TV 31 provides general programmes on current affairs, information, education, culture, arts and entertainment, etc. Since April 2025, RTHK has provided different time slots, some of which are specially designated for children, intellectual content, dramas, lifestyle, animations and comics, etc. to cater for the diversified interests and needs of more audience.

Since January 2026, RTHK TV 32 has enhanced its news and current affairs content, so as to highlight RTHK's role as a government department and strengthen its function of disseminating government information. Apart from launching the live programme "In The Chamber" which focuses on the Legislative Council affairs, RTHK TV 32 has added a segment for news updates every half hour during the daytime, so as to provide the public with latest and accurate news information. RTHK will continue to enhance the programme content of RTHK TV 32, and produce more programmes on government policies, development of our Nation and international affairs to keep the public informed of the latest information. To enhance the sense of citizenship and national identity, RTHK will continue to relay programmes of China Central Television Channel 1, China Global Television Network (CGTN) Documentary and CGTN through RTHK TV 33, 34 and 35, enabling Hong Kong audience to have a better understanding of the Chinese Mainland.

As the radio and TV channels operated by RTHK include relay of Chinese Mainland radio and TV channels, there is very limited scope for RTHK to consolidate all radio and TV channels. Despite this, RTHK will continue to review and adjust the positioning of local radio and TV channels as well as its programming strategies to utilise resources more effectively so as to fulfill the public mission of RTHK.

With the prevalence of the Internet and social media, the video content of RTHK is also provided for viewing by audience through multimedia platforms. The average monthly click-through rate of RTHK's webpage reaches 18.43 million, while the number of subscribers for the YouTube platform is 1.17 million. RTHK will optimise its website to improve user experience, continue to enhance digital platform promotion and explore more new media content to broaden its audience base, including those outside Hong Kong.

- End -

CEDB212

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 3227)

Head: (160) Radio Television Hong Kong

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (3) New Media

Controlling Officer: Director of Broadcasting (Angelina KWAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

The New Media services of Radio Television Hong Kong currently provide different online platforms and content for audiences through the official website (i.e. "rthk.hk"), 5 mobile applications (including "RTHK on the Go", "RTHK TV", "RTHK Radio", "RTHK News", and "RTHK Audio Description"), and on social media (such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Xiaohongshu and Bilibili). In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) What were the numbers of downloads, average usage and operating expenditure involved for the 5 mobile applications in the past 3 years?
- 2) What is/are the reason(s) for the provision of online platforms and content through 5 applications? Has the Administration considered the merging of the 5 platforms into 2 to 3 to reduce expenditures?
- 3) What were the numbers of subscribers, average page views and operating expenditure involved for various social media platforms in the past 3 years?
- 4) Given the stringent control over the growth of operational expenses, and the requirement for every government department to consolidate resources, why is there an increase of \$77.0 million (up to 133.7%) for the estimated provision in 2026-27 against the revised estimate for 2025-26?
- 5) There will be a net increase of 9 posts under this Programme in 2026-27. What are the establishment and expenditure on the emoluments for these 9 posts respectively? Will the increase in manpower go against the target set by the Financial Secretary for reducing the civil service establishment by 2% in each of the coming 2 financial years?

Asked by: Hon LAU Ip-keung, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

The number of downloads and the annual average usage of the 5 mobile applications of Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) in the past 3 years is tabulated below:

Mobile Application	Accumulated Number of Downloads		
	2023	2024	2025
RTHK on the Go	2 530 000	2 572 000	2 615 000
RTHK TV	659 000	745 000	815 000
RTHK Radio	539 000	598 000	659 000
RTHK News	703 000	729 000	782 000
RTHK Audio Description ^{Note 1}	4 600	8 000	12 000

Mobile Application	Annual Average Usage ^{Note 2}
RTHK on the Go	1 308 000
RTHK TV	356 000
RTHK Radio	1 332 000
RTHK News	796 000
RTHK Audio Description	_ ^{Note 3}

Note 1: The mobile application “RTHK Audio Description” transmits the audio channel of the audio description television programmes broadcasting on RTHK TV 31 to mobile devices in real time. The application mainly serves the visually impaired.

Note 2: Rounded to the nearest thousand.

Note 3: As the mobile application is not equipped with usage trackers, there is no relevant data.

The total annual operating expenditure of the 5 mobile applications is about \$670,000. RTHK does not have a breakdown of the operating expenditure for individual mobile application.

The number of subscribers for each social media platform in the past 3 years is tabulated below ^{Note 4}:

Social media platform	2023-24 (As at 31 March 2024)	2024-25 (As at 31 March 2025)	2025-26 (As at end of February 2026)
Facebook	301 000	322 000	338 000
Instagram	Not available ^{Note 5}	35 000	83 000
YouTube	1 027 000	1 150 000	1 177 000
Xiaohongshu (Account created in April 2025)	-	-	99 000
Bilibili	Not available ^{Note 5}	50 000	59 000

The annual average page views for each social media platform in the past 3 years are tabulated below ^{Note 4}:

Social media platform	Annual Average Page Views
Facebook	38 817 000
Instagram	30 322 000
YouTube	500 120 000
Xiaohongshu (Account created in April 2025)	7 095 000
Bilibili	758 000

Note 4: Rounded to the nearest thousand.

Note 5: The relevant platforms were on trial run during the said period and hence RTHK did not keep the relevant statistics.

The social media content is mainly produced by RTHK's in-house staff, and the relevant expenditure is included in the daily departmental operating expenditure. RTHK does not have a breakdown of the operating expenditure for the social media platforms.

The estimated expenditure under Programme (3)(New Media) for 2026-27 will increase by 133.7% to \$134.6 million when compared with the revised estimate for 2025-26. This is mainly due to the consolidation of the estimates for personal emoluments, departmental expenses and capital expenditure relevant to new media content production, which were used to be covered under Programmes (1) and (2), into Programme (3) so as to more comprehensively reflect the resources devoted by RTHK into new media content production. The increase mainly covers the estimates for operating the video news platform, including the 9 posts responsible for video news production; the expenses for cross-platform dissemination of new media content internally produced by Radio and Television Divisions; and the expenses for publicity used on third-party online platforms. In addition, under the overarching principle of continued implementation of the reinforced fiscal consolidation programme announced in the Budget, RTHK is enhancing the website (rthk.hk) and consolidating mobile applications. The related additional expenditure is also included under Programme (3). The above expenditure will be met by internal redeployment of resources within RTHK. No additional manpower and resources are involved. RTHK will continue to utilise new technology, develop into smart broadcasting and provide high-quality new media services.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2028)

Head: (160) Radio Television Hong Kong

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (-) -

Controlling Officer: Director of Broadcasting (Angelina KWAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

Regarding further enhancement of news and current affairs services by Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK), will the Administration inform this Committee:

1. of the major projects and amounts of expenditures involved in enhancing the online platforms, mobile applications and relevant digital services by RTHK in each of the past 3 years;
2. whether RTHK will explore the introduction of artificial intelligence retrieval platform or smart assistant, so as to enhance the experience of public retrieval and browsing of RTHK programmes and information; if yes, of the details such as the relevant plan, timetable and resource allocation; if not, the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

To enhance the quality of service and expand audience reach, Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) continues to enhance its online platforms, mobile applications and related digital services. In this regard, the projects involved over the past 3 years include 3-in-1 mobile application "RTHK on the Go" (by consolidating the mobile applications "RTHK TV", "RTHK Radio" and "RTHK on the Go"), provision of subtitles and multi sound track in live and re-run programmes, etc. so as to enhance user experience.

In addition, the AI Chatbot Assistant service was officially launched on RTHK's website in July 2025 to support programme enquiries and customer services by using the large language model and rule-based system. Moreover, since 2024, RTHK has started to explore and test various AI technologies in media production and broadcasting, e.g. developing video and photo auto-tagging, AI-assisted subtitling and captioning; adopting various AI generative tools to enhance editing capabilities, restore old photos and footages; and enriching design effects with AI drawings in producing social media short videos and posts for enhancing

interactions. RTHK is also enhancing the website (rthk.hk) and consolidating mobile applications, and will further explore the use of AI technology in further enhancing their functionality.

The above items are included in the operating expenses of RTHK with no breakdown of figures. Under the overarching principle of continued implementation of the reinforced fiscal consolidation programme announced in the Budget, RTHK will continue to utilise new technology, develop into smart broadcasting and provide high-quality new media services.

- End -