

Hong Kong people are kept well informed by a vigorous media. They have a vast appetite for news and this demand has given rise to a healthy and outward-looking press, radio and television industry that enjoys complete freedom of expression.

As at November 30, 2019, there were 82 daily newspapers and 531 periodicals (including a number of electronic newspapers), three domestic free television programme service licensees, two domestic pay television programme service licensees, 12 non-domestic television programme service licensees, one government-funded public service broadcaster, and two sound broadcasting licensees.

The availability of the latest telecommunications technology and keen interest in Hong Kong's affairs have attracted many international news agencies, newspapers with international readership and overseas broadcasting corporations to establish regional headquarters or representative offices in Hong Kong. The successful regional publications produced underline its important position as a financial, industrial, trading and communications centre.

Press: The Hong Kong newspapers registered as at November 30, 2019 included 53 Chinese-language dailies, 12 English-language dailies (including one in Braille), 13 bilingual dailies and 4 Japanese dailies. Among the Chinese-language dailies, 46 cover mainly local and overseas general news, and the remaining ones specialise in other subjects such as finance. The larger papers include overseas Chinese communities in their distribution networks, and some have editions printed outside Hong Kong, in particular in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia. One of the English dailies publishes a daily Braille edition, in conjunction with the Hong Kong Society for the Blind.

Hong Kong is a major international media centre in Asia and the regional base for a number of media groups including the *Financial Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times International*, *TIME Asia*, Agence-France Presse, Bloomberg and CNNI.

Broadcasting: Hong Kong has a vibrant broadcasting sector offering a wide range of services to local viewers and listeners. Hong Kong viewers and listeners have access to over 800 local and overseas television channels in various languages through free-to-air terrestrial and satellite reception or pay television services, and 13 analogue radio channels provided by two commercial broadcasters and Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK), the public service broadcaster.

At the same time, it is a regional broadcasting hub with 12 licensees uplinking over 220 satellite television channels for the regional market. The domestic free television programme service licensees launched digital terrestrial television service on December 31, 2007. Three licensees are currently providing three television channels in analogue format and nine television channels (including simulcasting

the three analogue channels) in digital format, all of which are free. Terrestrial television broadcasters are migrating to digital broadcasting and the Government is updating the regulatory regime in the light of technological and market convergence.

The broadcasting policy objectives are to promote programme choice and diversity through competition to facilitate introduction of new, innovative broadcasting services, and to enhance Hong Kong's position as a regional broadcasting hub.

Communications Authority (CA): The CA is an independent statutory body established under the Communications Authority Ordinance (Cap.616) (CAO) to regulate the broadcasting and telecommunications industries in Hong Kong. It comprises 10 non-official members from various sectors of the community and two public officers. As a unified regulator, the CA's functions are:

- to regulate the broadcasting and telecommunications sectors by performing the functions conferred on it by the Telecommunications Ordinance (Cap.106), Broadcasting Ordinance (Cap.562), Broadcasting (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance (Cap.391) and the Unsolicited Electronic Messages Ordinance (Cap.593);
- to tender advice to the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development on any legislation, legislative proposals and regulatory policies relating to telecommunications, broadcasting, anti-spamming or activities connected with the telecommunications or broadcasting sectors; and
- to enforce the fair trading sections of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (Cap.362) and the Competition Ordinance (Cap.619) in the broadcasting and telecommunications sectors.

Information Policy: The Secretary for Home Affairs oversees the policy on dissemination of government information, while the Director of Information Services advises the Government on the presentation of its policies, and on public relations matters generally, in Hong Kong and overseas.

Information Services Department: The Information Services Department (ISD) serves as the Government's public relations and advertising agency, publisher and news organisation, media adviser and research unit.

The department comprises four divisions: Local Public Relations, Publicity and Promotions, Public Relations Outside Hong Kong, and Administration.

Local Public Relations Division: The division oversees the work of the Information Grade officers who serve as Press Secretaries to Principal Officials or work in the 38 information and public relations units in bureaux and departments. They

help formulate and implement public relations and publicity strategies, advise their bureau or department heads on public relations matters, answer media enquiries, prepare press releases, and organise press conferences, interviews and special promotional activities.

The News Sub-division operates a 24-hour press enquiry service. During typhoons and other emergencies, the ISD's Combined Information Centre co-ordinates responses to media enquiries and disseminates information and public announcements.

The Government News and Media Information System (GNMIS) gives journalists online access to press releases, photographs and video clips through a single interface. All press releases are available on the internet, while major government press conferences and events, including the Chief Executive's annual Policy Address and the Financial Secretary's Budget Speech, are webcast live.

The news.gov.hk website publishes government news and information daily in a dynamic multimedia fashion. Over 6 400 news and feature stories and some 1 550 video highlights were posted in 2018. News items and messages are also disseminated through smartphones, mobile devices and social media, including Facebook, Instagram, WeChat, Twitter and YouTube. More than 308 million page views were recorded in 2018.

The Media Research Sub-division keeps the Government informed of public opinion expressed in the news media. It produces daily media summaries reflecting public views and editorial comments in the Chinese and English newspapers as well as special reports on subjects of interest to the Government.

Publicity and Promotions Division: It helps bureaux and departments mount publicity campaigns and promotion drives and is responsible for advertising, creative design, photography, videography and the production of a range of government publications. Major local campaigns conducted or supported by the division in 2018 included the HKSAR Government's Celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the Reform and Opening Up of the Country, Promotion of Reading, Next Generation Smart Identity Card System project and the territory-wide identity card replacement exercise, voter registration, anti-drug efforts, environmental protection, road safety and the fight against crime.

The division also helps organise major promotional activities such as exhibitions, cultural performances, film festivals and media partnerships overseas and in the Mainland. In 2018, the division was actively involved in the preparation and operation of the Hong Kong Exhibition Area in the China Pavilion of the first China International Import Expo in Shanghai in November.

The division handles around 2,700 titles and produces a wide variety of government publications, including Hong Kong yearbook and its internet and tablet versions. Each year, the division distributes a large number of free publications, including fact sheets, brochures and posters. The division sells photographs at the Photo Library and via an online photo sales system which gives the public easy access to the department's substantial archive of historical and topical photos. Through its sales outlet and online bookstore, over 51 300 government books and miscellaneous printed items were sold in 2018.

Public Relations Outside Hong Kong Division: It helps develop and implement the government's public relations and communications strategy outside Hong Kong, working closely with the government's offices overseas, in the Mainland and in Taiwan. Its Overseas Public Relations Sub-division promotes and monitors Hong Kong's image overseas and liaises closely with some 80 foreign media organizations based in Hong Kong, handling press enquiries, disseminating news and arranging briefings and interviews. It also runs a programme for visiting journalists, produces summaries of overseas reports on Hong Kong. To tie in with the outbound visits of senior officials, it coordinates and implements overseas publicity projects. The sub-division partners with internationally renowned media organisations to produce multimedia publicity materials to promote Hong Kong's strengths and advantages.

The Brand Hong Kong Management Unit handles the Brand Hong Kong programme which promoting Hong Kong as Asia's world city locally and around the world. To ensure the brand's consistent application, the unit develops advertising campaigns and publicity material in print and electronic formats to support the government's Economic and Trade Offices' activities, senior officials' visits and major promotional programmes outside Hong Kong. The unit also seeks opportunities to highlight the brand and collaborates with organisers of major events of international significance in Hong Kong to bolster the city's image. Hong Kong's strengths and advantages are also promoted through social media platforms.

The Visits and International Conferences Sub-division oversees the ISD's Sponsored Visitors Programme for government and political leaders, academics and think-tank members, as well as leading figures in the business and financial sectors to visit Hong Kong to enhance their understanding of the city. The sub-division also helps line up meetings for influential visitors on trips to Hong Kong. In addition, it provides assistance in the outbound visits of senior government officials to other economies.

Government Home Pages on the Internet: GovHK (www.gov.hk) is the one-stop portal providing citizens with the most sought-after government services and information relevant to their everyday life. Users can also create their own MyGovHK accounts to enjoy a vast array of personalised services, such as accessing multiple government services via one single account, viewing online service messages and receiving updates on their interested topics.

All press releases and selected news on GovHK are also made accessible via hyperlinks to news.gov.hk.