

Hong Kong citizens are kept well-informed by a vigorous media. Their vast appetite and demand for news gave rise to an outward-looking press, radio and television industry that enjoys complete freedom of expression.

As at December 31, 2023, there were 90 daily newspapers and 376 periodicals (including numerous electronic newspapers), three domestic free television programme service licensees, one domestic pay television programme service licensee, nine non-domestic television programme service licensees, one public service broadcaster, and two sound broadcasting licensees.

The availability of the latest telecommunications technology attracted many international news agencies, newspapers with international readership and overseas broadcasting corporations to establish regional headquarters or representative offices in Hong Kong.

Press: The newspapers registered in Hong Kong, as at December 31, 2023 included 61 Chinese-language dailies, 11 English-language dailies, 14 bilingual dailies and three Japanese dailies. Among the Chinese-language dailies, 43 cover mainly local and overseas general news, while the remaining ones focus on other subjects, such as finance. One of the English dailies co-publishes a daily Braille edition with the Hong Kong Society for the Blind.

International media including *The Economist*, *The Financial Times*, *The New York Times*, *The Nikkei*, *The Wall Street Journal*, Agence France-Presse, Associated Press, Bloomberg and Thomson Reuters have a presence in Hong Kong. International broadcasters with operations in Hong Kong include the BBC, CNBC, CNN International, CNA and NHK.

Broadcasting: The broadcasting sector offers diversified services to local viewers and listeners. Hong Kong audiences have access to over 700 local and overseas television channels in various languages through free-to-air terrestrial and satellite reception or pay television services, and 14 analogue radio channels provided by two commercial broadcasters and Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK), the public service broadcaster.

At the same time, Hong Kong is a regional broadcasting hub with 9 licensees uplinking around 150 satellite television channels for the regional market. Full digital television broadcast was implemented in Hong Kong on December 1, 2020. Three domestic free television programme service licensees and RTHK are currently providing 15 free digital television channels.

The broadcasting policy objectives are to broaden programme choice and types through competition to facilitate introduction of new, innovative broadcasting services.

Communications Authority (CA): The CA, comprises 10 non-official members from various sectors of the community and two public officers, is an independent statutory body established under the Communications Authority Ordinance (Cap.616) to regulate the broadcasting and telecommunications industries in Hong Kong. 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 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 information and public relations units in bureaus 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 5 500 news and feature stories and some 1 100 video highlights were posted in 2023, garnering more than 341 million page views. News items and messages are also disseminated through smartphones, mobile devices and social media, including Facebook, Instagram, WeChat, Weibo, X (Twitter) and YouTube.

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 local Chinese and English newspapers as well as special reports on subjects of interest to the Government.

Publicity and Promotions Division: The division 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. Among the major campaigns conducted in 2023 were 2023 District Council Ordinary Election, Happy Hong Kong, Night Vibes Hong Kong, the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands project and implementation of HKeToll. The division also helps organise major promotional activities outside Hong Kong.

The division handles and/or produces a wide variety of government publications, including *Hong Kong Yearbook* and its internet version. 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, government books and miscellaneous printed items were sold.

Public Relations Outside Hong Kong Division: It helps develop and implement the government's public relations strategy outside Hong Kong, working closely with the government's offices overseas and in the Mainland. Its Overseas Public Relations Sub-division promotes and monitors Hong Kong's image overseas and liaises closely with over 60 foreign media organisations 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. To further enhance Hong Kong's exposure to global audiences, it supports thematic events hosted by the international media in the city.

The Brand Hong Kong Management Unit handles the Brand Hong Kong programme which promotes Hong Kong as Asia's world city locally and internationally. The unit develops advertising campaigns and publicity material in print and electronic formats to support the government's Economic and Trade Offices' events, senior officials' visits and major promotional activities outside Hong Kong. The unit also seeks

opportunities and collaborates with organisers of major and international sports, cultural and entertainment events in Hong Kong. It runs a number of social media platforms and digital campaigns to promote Hong Kong's favourable image.

The Visits Sub-division runs 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 essential government services and information relevant to their everyday life. All press releases and highlighted news on 'GovHK' are also made accessible via hyperlinks to news.gov.hk.