



Brian Kwok
<briancwkwok@yahoo.com.hk>
<k>

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Urgent

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To: kevinchoi@citb.gov.hk

cc: pi@legco.gov.hk, cksin@sinchungkai.org.hk,
complaint@albertcheng.hk

bcc:

Subject: Consultation on the establishment of the Communications Authority (CA)

To: CTB

Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting
c/o Mr Sin Chung Kai and Mr Albert Cheng

The establishment of CA is not necessary as:

1. under the CA, the broadcasting and telecommunications sectors are still managed under different divisions, say broadcasting and telecommunications as in the ways they are being managed currently by BA and OFTA;
2. the CA still under the Government direction like the current situation, i.e. under the policy direction of CITB. The formation of CA is the adding another layer to the existing structure, which is meaningless;
3. the urgent duty is not the establishment of the CA in the convergent environment but the formulation of directions, regulations or guides in the convergent environment that has been changed and will be changed drastically. For example, with the CA, there is still no rules or guides on the monitoring of new media like the proposed portable TV broadcasting or broadcasting of movies or sports events in digital cinema as that will be done in broadcasting of the coming World Cup in digital cinema in Europe, or any definite or clear demarcation by the Government regarding Internet broadcasting, portable TV, broadcasting in digital cinema (e.g. the transmissions of movies or events to digital cinemas without using films)
4. the Government and existing regulators should focus on the devices of new directions, rules or regulations or guidelines in safeguarding the public interests in such a convergent environment instead of devoting too much time and efforts in building up a CA to symbolize an advanced Hong Kong society that is modelled on overseas regulators. Frankly speaking, the proposed establishment of such kind of symbolic institution is a kind of kow-tau or blind worship to overseas regulators, in particular UK and Australia, but not to absorb overseas insight. Has the authority considered the cases in those technology advanced countries like Korea and economically well-done country like Singapore? - on how they tackle the convergent environment; and
5. it is not wise to ignore the infusion of the film censorship system or press media into the new giant, if the Government insists to do so. It is because, the convergence in communications technologies is not limited to broadcasting and telecommunications, but to film censorship (see the coming broadcasting of World Cup in June 2006 in digital cinema in European countries) and other media like press media which has been or will be carried on portable MP3, portable mobile phones, palm devices or portable TV.

The above are just a few pieces of views I think of and hope that they could refresh your mind to centre your work to concept and guidelines building instead of dwelling on the structure building.

Don't waste time to set up a CA and put your every tiny brain cell to the development of new media guidelines, rules, regulations and etc. In the past few years, the Government has done nothing in such a right direction, i.e. to examine and establish such kind of rules/guidelines.

Brian

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