

Hong Kong establishes new Communications Authority

The new *Communications Authority Ordinance (Cap. 616)* came into force on 1 April 2012. The Ordinance establishes a Communications Authority (the "**CA**") as a single regulator for both the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors in Hong Kong. The existing Broadcasting Authority has been dissolved and its functions, along with those of the Telecommunications Authority, have been transferred to the CA.

The establishment of the CA is motivated by the Government's view that increasing convergence of the telecommunications and broadcasting industries makes it no longer appropriate to maintain two separate regulatory authorities.

Mr Ambrose Ho, previous Chairperson of the Broadcasting Authority, has been appointed as the Chairperson for the new unified regulator. The Vice-chairperson of the CA is Ms Tse Man-yee, Elizabeth who is also the Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Technology). The Office of the Communications Authority ("OFCA") acts as the executive arm of the Authority, and is headed by the Director-General of Communications, Ms Eliza Lee. Below the Director-General of Communications, management of OFCA is broadly split between the Deputy Director-General (Telecommunications), Mr Y.K. Ha, and the Deputy Director-General (Broadcasting), Mr Vincent Liu.

As of yet, there are no substantive changes to the existing telecommunications and broadcasting regulatory regimes. However, the Government has previously indicated that once established OFCA would, in consultation with Government, review the existing rules, with the view to rationalising the regulatory and licensing regime.

Key Links:

Website of the Communications Authority: <http://www.coms-auth.hk/en/home/index.html>

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