



2020 First Quarter (January – March)

The NCC Report on Broadcasting Supervision

The National Communications Commission (NCC) is the independent authority that supervises broadcasting media, one of its primary responsibilities. This report is not only an analysis of public complaints about broadcasting content and business operations, but is also a record of violations against broadcasting regulations. The aim of this report is to deepen public understanding of the status of broadcasting supervision, as well as allow participation in the supervision of radio and television media.

The NCC regulates broadcasting media according to the Radio and Television Act, the Satellite Broadcasting Act, as well as other related regulations. Although there is currently no specific agency responsible for the supervision of internet content, in accordance with Article 46 of the Protection of Children and Youths Welfare and Rights Act, the NCC coordinated with responsible competent authorities to commission civil associations to establish a platform for the public to complain/report about internet-related problems. Consequently, the iWIN website (<https://i.win.org.tw/iWIN/>) was launched on Aug. 1st, 2013. The public may file a complaint with respect to online content to iWIN; reports are then published monthly on the website to enable the public to track how complaints are being processed. Therefore, complaints pertaining to online content have been excluded from this report.

Meanwhile, in order to create a policy-governing environment that holds the media active, self-regulatory, and accountable, the NCC enhanced the mechanism for broadcasting complaints and revolutionized the complaints processing procedure. Since Dec. 11th, 2017, certain cases have been transferred to the operators for processing. By doing so, the NCC expects the complaints website to become a platform that facilitates communication between citizens and media.

This report shows only a statistical summary of complaints regarding radio and TV media. It does not necessarily mean that the related programs or broadcasting businesses mentioned in this report violated relevant regulations. Detailed below are complaints concerning radio and TV media in the first quarter of 2020 (January – March). The report is divided into two sections: complaints overview, major TV complaints.

◆ Broadcasting Complaints Overview

According to the data on audience complaints about television and radio compiled by the NCC during the first quarter of 2020 (January to March), 1436 complaints¹ were made in total: 1410 against television (98.19%), and 26 against radio (1.81%). Please see Figure 1.

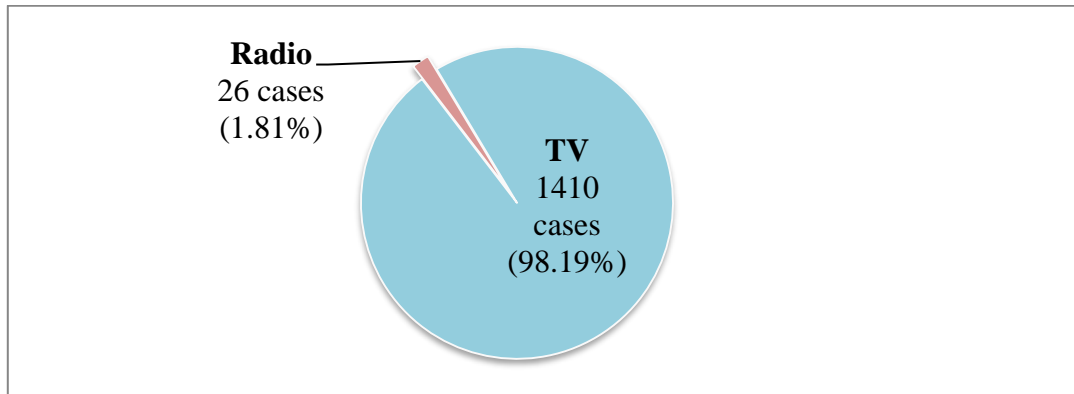


Figure 1: Public complaints by media type (Q1 2020)

Table 1 shows that of the total 1436 complaints, 437 cases (30.43%) and 637 cases (44.36%) were submitted by males and females respectively; another 362 cases (25.21%) were made by people either not specifying or unwilling to disclose their gender.

	Male	Female	Unspecified	Total
TV	425	635	350	1410
Radio	12	2	12	26
Total	437	637	362	1436
Percentage	30.43%	44.36%	25.21%	100.00%

Figure 2 shows that 1295 complaints (90.18%) were made through the NCC’s Broadcasting Content Complaints website, while 141 cases (9.82%) were made through other means, such as telephone, email, and cases forwarded from other agencies.

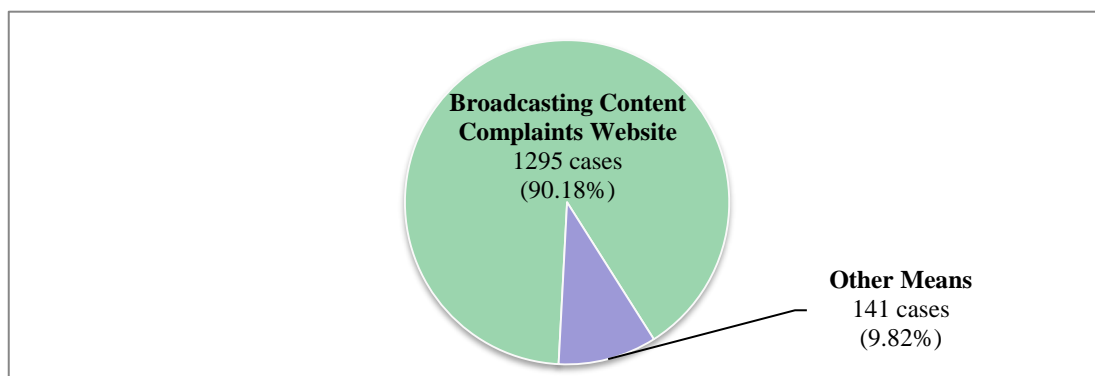


Figure 2: Public complaints filed by means of filing (Q1 2020)

¹ Excluding 108 cases unrelated to TV and radio.

Table 2 shows that 1387 (96.59%) of the 1436 complaints against TV and radio pertained to inappropriate content, while 49 (3.41%) were specific to business operations. Of the complaints pertaining to inappropriate content, the most frequent type of complaint was about “disrupting public order or adversely affecting good social customs” with 913 complaints (63.58%). There were also 140 complaints (9.75%) regarding “false or biased contents,” 122 (8.50%) about “contents harmful to the physical or psychological well-being of children and youths,” 82 (5.71%) about “contents or wording of certain channels (radio stations)/programs/commercials,” and 31(2.16%) regarding “commercial violations (time/length/content).” The total number of these five most common types of complaints amounted to 1288, accounting for 89.69% of all complaints. Please see Table 2 for the numbers and percentages of other complaint categories.

Category		Cases	Percentage
Contents	Disrupting public order or adversely affecting good social customs	913	63.58%
	False or biased contents	140	9.75%
	Contents harmful to the physical or psychological well-being of children and youths	122	8.50%
	Contents or wording of certain channels (radio stations), programs, or commercials	82	5.71%
	Commercial violations (time/length/content)	31	2.16%
	No clear distinction between programs and commercials	28	1.95%
	Suggestions on the NCC’s operations	22	1.53%
	Suggestions on the overall broadcasting environment, policies, regulations, and the NCC’s administration	16	1.11%
	Disregard for professional ethics of journalism	16	1.11%
	Others ²	17	1.18%
Subtotal		1387	96.59%
Operations	Issues of radio and TV operations management	27	1.88%
	Issues of programming/production/broadcasting	12	0.84%
	Suggestions on the NCC’s operations	5	0.35%
	Technical issues (signal/image quality/volume)	3	0.21%
	Inquiries on TV/radio station operations	2	0.14%
	Subtotal	49	3.41%
Total		1436	100%

Of the 1387 complaints about inappropriate radio and television content, 1371 complaints were made against television content. A further analysis of the program types revealed that the majority were against “variety programs” with 937 cases (68.34%),

² Others include regulations/information inquiries (8), inappropriate content ratings (4), excessive reruns (3), sexual discrimination (1), and illegal use of interstitial captions or text (1).

followed by “news reports” with 172 cases (12.55%), “political talk shows” with 116 cases (8.46%), “commercials” with 57 cases (4.16%), “dramas” with 37 cases (2.70%), “programs with unspecified genres” with 22 cases (1.60%), “general (non-political) talk shows” with 12 cases (0.88%), and “programs of other genres³” with 18 cases (1.31%). Please refer to Figure 3.

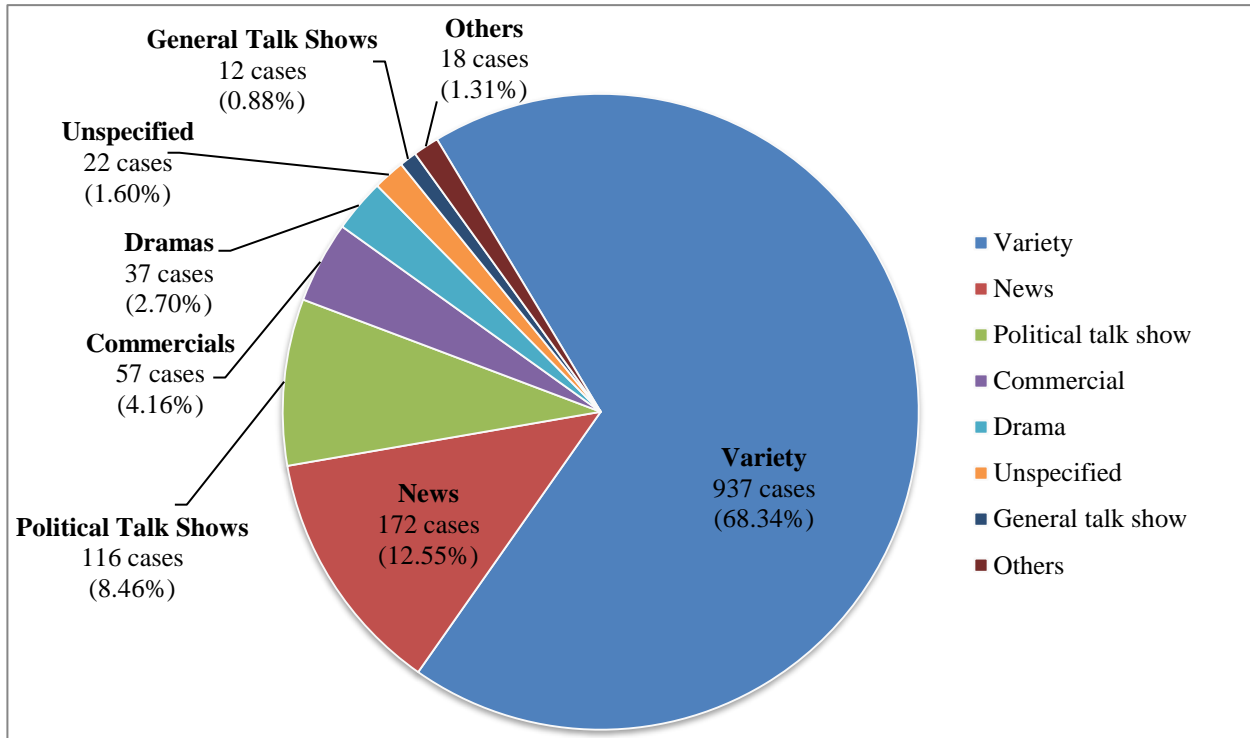


Figure 3: TV complaints by program types (Q1 2020)

Of the 16 complaints against radio, the majority were about “variety programs⁴” with 13 cases (81.25%). There were also 2 cases (12.50%) on “news reports and political talk shows” and 1 case (6.25%) on “other program types.” Please refer to Figure 4.

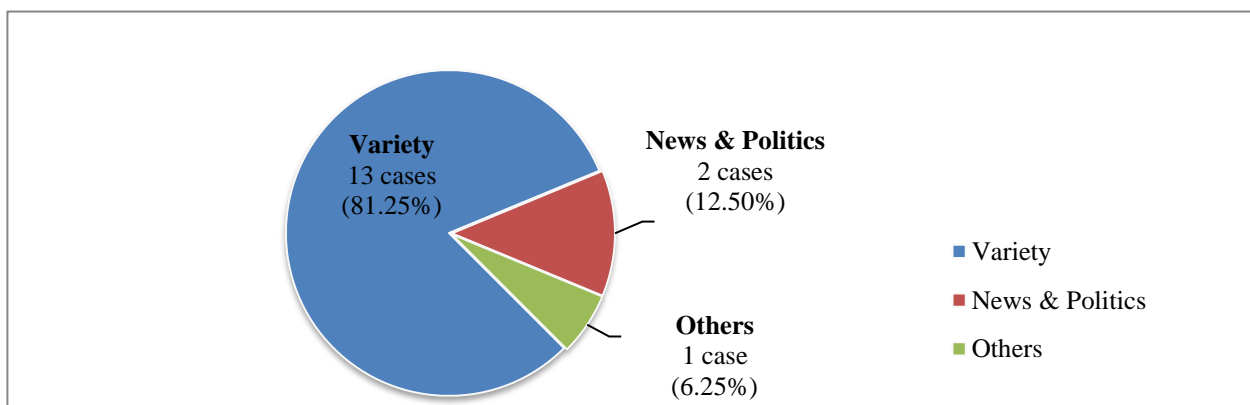


Figure 4: Radio complaints by program types (Q1 2020)

³ Other program types include infomercials (9), children’s programs (7), programs on finance, economics, and stock markets (1), and sports programs (1).

⁴ Programs feature diverse contents that do not fit into any particular genre.

◆ Major Television Complaints

The majority of the TV (and TV commercial) content-related complaints in Q1 2020 were in the categories of “variety shows” and “news reports.” Among the 937 variety show-related complaints, the majority pertained to “disrupting public order or adversely affecting good social customs” with 824 cases (87.94%), followed by 93 (9.92%) regarding “contents harmful to the physical or psychological well-being of children and youths” and 10 (1.07%) pertaining to “contents or wording of certain channels/programs/commercials.” The total number of these three most common types of complaints concerning inappropriate content amounted to 927, accounting for 98.93% of all variety TV program-related complaints. Please see Table 3 for more details.

Genre	Inappropriate content category	Cases	Percentage
Variety	Disrupting public order or adversely affecting good social customs	824	87.94%
	Contents harmful to the physical or psychological well-being of children and youths	93	9.92%
	Contents or wording of certain channels/programs/commercials	10	1.07%
	Others ⁵	10	1.07%
Total		937	100%

An analysis of the 172 complaints pertaining to inappropriate content in news reports reveals that “false or biased contents” were the most common with 60 cases (34.88%), followed by 34 (19.77%) on “disrupting public order or adversely affecting good social customs” and 25 (14.53%) on “contents or wording of certain channels/programs/commercials.” The total number of these top three types of inappropriate content complaints amounted to 119, accounting for 69.19% of all complaints against TV news. See Table 4 for more details.

Genre	Inappropriate content category	Cases	Percentage
News	False or biased contents	60	34.88%
	Disrupting public order or adversely affecting good social customs	34	19.77%
	Contents or wording of certain channels/programs/commercials	25	14.53%
	Disregard for professional ethics of journalism	16	9.30%
	Lack of distinction between programs and commercials	13	7.56%
	Suggestions on NCC’s operations	11	6.40%
	Others ⁶	13	7.56%
Total		172	100%

⁵ Others include suggestions on the overall broadcasting environment, policies, regulations, and NCC’s administration (4), lack of distinction between programs and commercials (3), suggestions on NCC’s operations (2), and excessive reruns (1).

⁶ Others include contents harmful to the physical or psychological well-being of children and youths (7), regulations/information inquiries (3), suggestions on the overall broadcasting environment, policies, regulations, and NCC’s administration (2), and excessive reruns (1).

During the first quarter (January to March) of 2020, the following programs and commercials received more than 10 complaints: *Hot Door Night*, *The Sound of Happiness*, *Crucial Moment: This Is It.*, *Deep Throat News* (January 15th and 22nd), and *CTi News* (March 28th). Please see Table 5 for more information.

Table 5: Major complaints about programs, news reports, and commercials on terrestrial/satellite television (Q1 2020)			
Program/News Report/Commercial	Channel	Content Type	Cases
<i>Hot Door Night</i>	SET Metro SET Variety	Variety	929
<i>Crucial Moment: This Is It.</i>	EBC News	Political Talk Show	53
<i>Deep Throat News</i> (January 22 nd)	CTi News	Political Talk Show	27
<i>CTi News</i> (March 28 th)	CTi News	News	20
<i>The Sound of Happiness</i>	SET Taiwan SET Drama	Drama	19
<i>Deep Throat News</i> (January 15 th)	CTi News	Political Talk Show	13

1. The variety program *Hot Door Night* received 929 complaints.

Complaints: During the March 11th episode of *Hot Door Night* (airing on SET Metro and SET Variety), the host Mr. Jacky Wu said that depression is “caused by discontentment” and that depression patients are “ungrateful and unappreciative.” Complainants considered Wu’s comments to be discriminatory and misleading.

Actions by the NCC: The NCC closely monitors the impacts of television programs on society. We respect the media’s professional independence and the freedom of speech bestowed under the *Constitution*, but at the same time, we urge the media to fulfill their social responsibility. Contents constituting apparent unlawful acts shall be processed in accordance with the law. However, the NCC has no legal justification to regulate program contents and formats that comply with existing regulations. Regarding complaints on Wu’s inappropriate comments about depression made on SET Metro’s variety program *Hot Door Night*, the NCC considers it to be under the scope of the *Mental Health Act*. Therefore, on March 16th, 2020, we forwarded the relevant complaints along with a recording of the program in question to the competent authority, the Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW), for a professional opinion, which we received on March 20th, 2020, summarized as follows: “*Mr. Wu’s comments on depression in the program were his personal opinions on the disease and did not constitute a regulatory violation.... Concerns about stigmatization of mental illness, misleading information, or injury to depression patients shall be directed towards the television station or the entertainer himself. We encourage the media to be more careful in choosing their words to prevent leaving a bad impression on the general public and thus damaging their brand or personal image.*” The NCC has forwarded the MOWH’s

letter and the public's complaints to the television company for reference and improvement.

2. The program *Crucial Moment: This Is It* received 53 complaints.

Complaints: During the March 24th broadcast of the political talk show *Crucial Moment: This is It*. (EBC News), Mr. Zheng-Hao Li, a guest on the show, cited information from unsubstantiated online sources in his commentary on COVID-19 pandemic conditions in Southeast Asia. Wu's comments allegedly caused severe aggravation among medical and public health professionals in Malaysia and angered the entire country.

Actions by the NCC: Political talk show guests have the right of free speech but must also take responsibility for their own words. By the same token, media outlets should assume the responsibility of fact-checking guests' comments. The NCC has requested the company to review this matter at their internal ethics review board, and this case will be submitted to the Broadcasting Programs and Advertisements Consulting Meeting for further discussion.

3. The program *Deep Throat News* (January 22nd) received 27 complaints.

Complaints: Mr. Yucheng Wang, host of *Deep Throat News* (CTi News), made a comment on whether “wearing a mask was effective in combating the spread of the severe special infectious pneumonia (the Chinese Wuhan Pneumonia)” during the January 22nd broadcast of the program, which allegedly contained misleading information on disease control and prevention.

Actions by the NCC: Pursuant to the Central Epidemic Command Center directives, the NCC has instructed the media to reinforce self-regulation. An administrative guidance notice has been issued to CTi News, and the company replied that “correct disease prevention information will be promoted.” This case was reviewed at the NCC's 909th Broadcasting Programs and Advertisements Consulting Meeting (the second meeting in 2020) and the decision of “no action required” was made.

4. CTi News broadcast on March 28th received 20 complaints.

Complaints: During the March 28th broadcast of *0900 CTi News*, *1000 CTi News*, and *1100 CTi News*, an onscreen graphic read “Taiwan Goes Into Lockdown in 6 Days,” allegedly spreading false information during the pandemic.

Actions by the NCC: This case was considered a potential violation of the *Special Act for Prevention, Relief and Revitalization Measures for Severe Pneumonia with Novel Pathogens* and was forwarded to the competent authority (the MOHW) for processing. As for violation of the fact verification principle as stipulated in the *Satellite Broadcasting Act*, the NCC has requested that the case be reviewed at the company's internal ethics review board, and we will submit it to the Broadcasting Programs and

Advertisements Consulting Meeting for further discussion.

5. The program *Sound of Happiness* received 19 complaints.

Complaints: The drama *Sound of Happiness* (SET Taiwan/SET Drama) depicts a variety of acts detrimental to social order and values, including violence, incitement to hatred, poisoning, plotting an infanticide, gun violence, and the framing others. Complainants believe that the program should not be aired during a period that is for family viewing.

Actions by the NCC: This NCC respects the media’s professional independence and editorial freedom. However, apparent violations of the law will be processed accordingly. We have reviewed the plots and footages pertaining to violence, incitement to hatred, infanticides, and other murderous acts depicted in the program and came to the conclusion that, although these plotlines were used as a storytelling device and constituted no apparent regulatory violations, they nevertheless had a negative impact on society. Therefore, we have forwarded complainants’ opinions to the company as a reference for better editorial control to ensure that their programs comply with the *Television Programs Classification Handling Regulations* and to avoid fines.

6. The program *Deep Throat News* (January 15th) received 13 complaints.

Complaints: A discussion on the Facebook fan page “Helpless Individuals with Parents Who Are Han Kuo-yu Stans” on the January 15th episode of *Deep Throat News* (CTi News) allegedly violated the fact verification principle of media, leading to disruption of public order and good social values and intentionally creating tension between generations.

Actions by the NCC: The host and guests on the program were commenting on the contents published on the “Helpless Individuals with Parents Who Are Han Kuo-yu Stans” fan page, and they concluded that it was time to make amends, set differences aside, and stop propagating hate speech. Based on the information reviewed, the NCC did not find the case to be a violation of the fact checking principle or disruption of public order and good social values. However, we have requested that the company review this matter at its self-regulation committee, submit the records and results of such discussion to the NCC, and publish them on its website.