

# REPORT BY THE MALAY PROGRAMME ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2006/2008

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## SECTION 1 : INTRODUCTION

1 The Advisory Committee on Malay Television and Radio Programmes (MPAC) was set up in August 1995 to evaluate the content and quality of Malay TV and Radio programmes and their impact on the Malay community in Singapore, as well as make recommendations for their improvement.

2 The current Committee was appointed by the Minister for Information, Communication and the Arts (MICA) for a two-year term with effect from August 2006. There are 12 members in the Committee which is chaired by Mr Zainudin Nordin, Mayor, Central Singapore Community Development Council and Member of Parliament for Bishan-Toa Payoh GRC. (Please refer to *Annex A* for the list of MPAC members)

### **The Committee's Work**

3 During the current term, the Committee held a total of 9 meetings. In the course of these meetings, the Committee also took the opportunity to meet with the programming staff of the TV channels, Suria and Sensasi, as well as the radio stations, Warna and Ria to gain a better understanding of the programming challenges faced by the broadcasters while they strive to remain relevant to the community. Ad hoc dialogue sessions with the broadcasters, were also held with the aim of updating and exchanging views on improvements to television and radio programmes. Hence MPAC undertook the following:

- Provided advice and shared feedback on the range and quality of broadcast programmes on Suria, Sensasi, Warna and Ria as well as made recommendations for their improvement;
- Provided advice and shared feedback on broadcasters' exercise of standards in programmes and advertisements;
- Gave advice to the Media Development Authority (MDA) on the merits of public complaints on programming;
- Reviewed and provided inputs on censorship issues to MDA for the drawing up of guidelines for TV and radio content.

4 In representing the views of the public, the Committee focused their advice and inputs on the suitability of programmes and advertisements for telecast and programming interests to meet the needs of the Malay Singaporeans. Consultations and discussions through email beyond the scheduled meetings were also conducted to provide MDA with timely feedback on various issues.

5 This report which covers the period of the Committee's term from 1 August 2006 to 31 July 2008 is a compilation of members' concerns and recommendations towards further improving the quality and range of the programmes on the local Malay TV channels and radio stations. For completeness, the relevant responses from the broadcasters are included in Annex B for reference.

## SECTION 2 : SUMMARY OF KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

6 The MPAC has been monitoring the developments of Malay programmes in terms of range and quality, both on TV as well as Radio. Throughout their term, members have made several recommendations and raised concerns on selected programmes and genres. While broadcasters have taken note of the feedback given and have also followed up on some of the suggestions made, others raised by the Committee have yet to be fully addressed and these remain areas which broadcasters could improve upon. The following are the key recommendations made by the MPAC.

### Proper Usage of Malay Language

7 The Committee stresses the importance of ensuring proper usage of the language especially by TV and radio presenters as they represent the image and reflect the competency of their stations. Hence broadcasters should remain vigilant to the overuse of poor language and continuously take steps to enhance the language proficiency standards of their presenters.

### More Community Based Programmes

8 It was observed that as there is a lack of community-based events in programming, Suria could offer more of such programmes. They would in turn help to promote the local Arts scene. Suggestions include having programmes showcasing events conducted by Malay organisations and university students as well as Arts shows held at the Esplanade.

### Better promotion of Current Affairs programmes

9 The Committee recognised that while Current Affairs programmes would not be able to garner the same level of viewer interest as entertainment or information programmes, they are nevertheless an important means in which important messages are conveyed to the community. Suria therefore has a social responsibility to ensure that Current Affairs programmes are made as appealing and accessible as possible, in order to attract more and retain existing viewers. The MPAC suggests that Suria raise the profile, branding and status of these programmes by re-marketing and re-launching them on Suria. The promotion of Current Affairs programmes should be given equal priority as that of Drama and Variety.

### Programmes for Elderly

10 While the Committee recognises the broadcaster's effort in reaching out to younger audiences by offering concepts that are more appealing to them, Suria should not neglect the needs of older generation. The Committee suggests that the channel consider programmes showcasing traditional music such as *keroncong* and *asli*.

#### More local content on Sensasi

11 The Committee notes that acquired programmes is predominant on the Cable TV channel, including some that may depict lifestyles and values which are different from that of the local Malay viewers. The Committee hopes that Sensasi will increase its local content programming over time, and place less emphasis on acquired programmes.

#### More Programmes on Parenting on Ria

12 While there is a fair mix of info-educational and entertainment programmes on Warna, there is a lack of info-educational content and Children's programmes on Ria. Considering that such programmes might affect Ria's overall branding as a youth-oriented radio station, members suggest that Ria also consider programmes which target young parents instead. Such programmes could explore topics such as parenting which would be of interest to this group of listeners.

### SECTION 3 : RANGE AND QUALITY OF BROADCAST PROGRAMMES AND MPAC'S RECOMMENDATIONS

#### a) General Issues

##### (I) Language

13 The usage of proper Malay language in programmes on the Malay TV channels and radio stations has been a concern of previous committees and continues to be so during this term. The Committee stresses the importance of

**“While the Committee acknowledges that there is difficulty in getting guest experts and panelists with a strong command of the Malay language, broadcasters should remain vigilant to the overuse of poor language.”**

ensuring proper usage of the language especially by TV and radio presenters as they are in the frontline. While the Committee acknowledges that there is difficulty in getting guest experts and panelists with a strong command of the Malay language, broadcasters should

remain vigilant to the overuse of poor language in the programmes. Broadcasters are urged to continuously take steps to enhance the language proficiency standards of the presenters, especially on their articulation and syntax, as ultimately they represent the image and reflect the competency of the broadcasters.

14 At the same time, the Committee is pleased with an initiative by Suria and KGMS (Singapore Malay Teachers' Union) in offering *Potret Bahasa (Language Snippets)*, a series of interstitials on the correct usage of the Malay language which appeared before the News bulletins. *Potret Bahasa* was well received by the parents, students and schools. It is noted that some schools have incorporated this programme as part of their learning tool. To make it even more appealing to younger viewers, it is hoped that the producers consider experimenting with other creative methods besides the text-based presentation used. The Committee also commends the programme *Tahu Nahu (Know Your Grammar)* for its efforts in promoting proper usage of the language. This programme, which made its debut in December 2007, is a thematic project by MDA and Suria with the help of KGMS and is a good example of the broadcaster working with relevant organisations for a common good.

15 A programme that has made a conscious effort to use good Malay is the weekly talkshow on Suria called *Cakap Sini Habis Sini* (literal translation - Talk Here, Ends



*Here*), which proves that a lively and entertaining approach does not necessarily inhibit the proper usage of the language. Issues such as the increasing trend of men and women refusing to marry, and the extreme measures people would take to enhance their image and marketability, were among the topics discussed.

16 While the Committee acknowledges that the inclusion of Malay and English in some programmes reflects current situations and realism, there should be a fine balance in doing so and that the use of English (or any other language) should be justified in context and kept to the minimum since Suria is essentially a Malay channel catering to this particular community. MPAC members were concerned with the impact of an overuse of mixed languages and have observed similar traits on this in acquired programmes such as *Goal & Gincu* (*Goal & Lipstick*) and on some local programmes.

17 While the MPAC supports the provision of English subtitles in local Malay programmes to cater to non-Malay speaking viewers, members note the poor quality of subtitling in some programmes, which can range from bad grammar to even inaccurate translation. This can have a negative effect on the credibility of the channel. Members urge that quality checks be conducted on the subtitles before programmes go on-air.

## **(II) Advertisements and Promotional Trailers**

18 The MPAC also advises that broadcasters should exercise greater discretion on the types of commercials that are aired on Malay channels like Suria. Advertising messages should not be misleading and must be mindful of public sensitivities. Serious societal concerns should not be exploited, for example, an advertisement by a property agency which capitalised on marital problems. The appropriateness of a hair product advertisement where a man continuously pulls a thread from a lady's dress close to her chest, in response to her seduction, was also questionable.

19 The Committee supports the broadcaster's effort to reach out to more viewers through cross-promotion. However this should not be at the expense of standards of decency expected by the Malay viewers and listeners. The explicit nature of the trailers for the series *Desperate Housewives* trailer and the timing of trailers for the reality show *The Dance Floor* trailer during the earlier hours of the evening are two examples where broadcasters should exercise greater caution.

## **(III) Repeats**

20 While the MPAC acknowledges that some programmes are worth repeating e.g. *Juang Anak Watan* and *Tabah*, the high number of repeat programmes in Suria's programming line-up especially during the weekend is a concern. The Committee feels that the situation needs to be improved and is of the view that Suria should not start from the premise that there are fewer people watching TV on weekends as compared to weekday nights.

b) Children's programmes

21 In its review of programmes for the young, the MPAC notes that it is important for Suria to continue providing quality educational programmes, even if the ratings for this genre are not as good as other genres. The Committee acknowledges Suria's dilemma in the scheduling of Children's programmes during prime time slots but this should not deter it from promoting good quality ones relevant to local context, such as *Tahu Nahu* and *Cili Padi*.

22 The Committee does commend Suria for its success in attracting a popular following for some of their locally produced Children's programmes, like *Krayon* (Crayon) which emulated the concept of the popular Australian pre-school programme, *Hi-Five*. The Committee is pleased that *Krayon* is now in its fifth season and welcomes its collaboration with Radio Television Malaysia (RTM).<sup>1</sup>

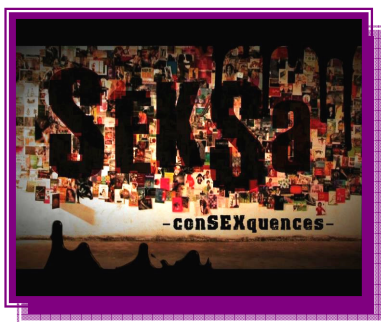


c) Dramas

**(i) Local**

23 MPAC members were generally pleased with the quality of local dramas like *Tetangga 2* (*Neighbours 2*) and *Rahsia Perkahwinan 2* (*Secrets of Marriage 2*) as these programmes effectively delivered their intended community and social messaging in an entertaining and engaging way. Suria's multi-racial drama *Tetangga 2* reflected the harmonious co-existence among Singapore's different communities and *Rahsia Perkahwinan* portrayed marital issues faced by different families and how each family dealt with them. Another commendable drama which promotes various health messages to the community in a light-hearted manner is *Erlin Montel* which highlights the importance of eating right, ways to stay smoke-free and how regular physical activity can help one keep fit and prevent ill-health.

24 It is observed that the community is now more accepting of the portrayal of certain negative behaviour on television, provided that these are not gratuitous and the intended messages are delivered clearly. Following the success of *Hanyut* (*Adrift*), the docu-drama *SekSa* (*Torture*) was designed to encourage youths to learn how to make their own decisions, and to consider the consequences of their decisions. Although some may feel that the visuals used in *SekSa* can be somewhat graphic, these would be acceptable if they are relevant to the storyline and message. The Committee



<sup>1</sup> *Krayon* is another one of Suria's co-production with RTM following the variety shows *Muzika Ekstravaganza* and *Sinar Lebaran*. With two Malaysian artistes hosting the show alongside two Singaporean artistes, the series was also shown on RTM1.

encourages the need for a follow-up to the programme to maximise the lasting and meaningful impact on both the young and old. Generally, the MPAC feels that *SekSa* is a good step in helping youngsters and parents discuss relationship and growing-up issues.

25 Another commendable drama is *MANDai United*. Set in the late 70's, it has a good storyline and provides an interesting insight on life in Singapore back then through the interweaving of football matches with historical information. This could be emulated for future programmes. While the treatment of the drama is impressive, the Committee notes with some concern, a tendency to show overly graphic beating scenes.

26 On the whole, MPAC observed that while there were some good dramas, there are others which were not up to standard. For example *Satu Jam (One Hour)* which showcased different scenarios and what took place within one real-time hour was found to be too laborious and lacked credibility.

## **(II) Acquired**

27 It is observed that there has been an increase in acquired drama series, especially Indonesian dramas. The better ones from Indonesia and Malaysia



include *Hantu Jatuh Cinta (Ghost Falling In Love)*, *Hikmah (Wisdom)*, *Puteri (Princess)*, *Impian Ilyana (Ilyana's Dream)* and *Gol & Gincu (Goal & Lipstick)*. While the community should be exposed to diverse cultures and values, the broadcaster should be discerning in its selection, bearing in mind that foreign programmes may carry differing lifestyles and values to the local Malay viewers.

### **d) Variety & Cultural Programmes**

28 The members commended the idea and concept of *Gemilang (Glorious)* but felt that the mix of items could be streamlined. More information could also have been incorporated, for instance, on the proper use and history of the *Kebaya (Malay traditional clothing)*.

29 The Committee notes the lack of community-based events in programming, and suggests that Suria offer more of such programmes, including those by Malay organisations, varsity students as well as Arts shows held at the Esplanade. This is one way Suria can help to promote the local Arts scene to the public. The Committee welcomes co-productions such as *Rapsodi Remix (Rhapsody Remix)*,

**“The Committee notes the lack of community-based events in programming, and suggests that Suria offer more of such programme...”**



which involved broadcasters and artistes from Singapore and Brunei, and *Muzika Ekstravaganza (Musical Extravaganza)*, which featured talents from Singapore and Malaysia. Programmes such as *Mega Perdana (Mega Premier)* are encouraged. The Committee would also like Suria to consider telecasting the yearly cultural event *Gentarasa*, which is a showcase of the year's best performances from among the various cultural groups of the People's Association.

30 The MPAC applauds the efforts of the variety show *Kpak Bing Bing*, a local programme supported by the Ministry for Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS), which focuses on strengthening marriages. Its refreshing and light-hearted approach and treatment of heavy topics on, among others, finance and communication was impactful.



31 Another variety show which the MPAC members found entertaining was *K-nite*, a game show where Karaoke enthusiasts prove that they are well versed in music and songs ranging from oldies, folk, foreign language and the latest pop. Its interesting concept tapped on the locals' favourite pastime activity, karaoke, which appeals to both the young and older viewers.

32 While Suria attempts to produce more edgy concepts for their variety programmes on its channel, broadcasters are reminded to be attuned to public sensitivities and to ensure that viewers are given the proper indication on the nature of programme to expect. The MTV-styled *Pesta Pesta Pesta* is a case in point. While some viewers welcomed the casual and informal format, others who expect award shows to be a prestigious event thought it was an inappropriate way of recognising talents. This could have been avoided if viewers were given a heads-up of what to expect. While the slapstick format was acceptable so long as it did not go overboard, the use of crude language, for example '*nak mampus*' should be avoided. The members also found that a love song item where children were featured as accompanying dancers to be inappropriate. Some viewers, mainly from the older generation, were uncomfortable with children emulating "sexy" stances or poses. Broadcasters should thus exercise more discretion on how children are portrayed in entertainment programmes, especially during Family Viewing Hours when all ages are tuned in.

33 Variety programmes catering to the younger generation seem to be the current trend on Suria and this can be seen from the expansion of talent shows such as *Anugerah*, *Anugerah Skrin* and *Anugerah Band*. While the Committee recognises the broadcaster's efforts in reaching out to the young audience by providing concepts that are more appealing to them, Suria should

**“Suria should not neglect the needs of older generation by having programmes showcasing traditional music such as keroncong and asli.”**

not neglect the needs of the older generation by having programmes showcasing traditional music such as *keroncong* and *asli*.

e) News, Current Affairs and Info-Educational Programmes

**(I) News**

34 While the delivery of accurate and timely information to the local Malays is a given, members felt that *Berita* should also have more coverage of community-based News, which will help it to stay relevant in this age where the audience has a much larger variety of media and TV channels to obtain News from.

**(II) Current Affairs**

35 The MPAC recognises that Current Affairs programmes are generally not as popular as info-entertainment ones. Nevertheless, the Committee feels that Suria has a social responsibility to ensure that its Current Affairs programmes and important messages are reached out to the community. With the emergence of advanced media technology, there is a need for Suria to address the increasing competition from the different media. One way is for Suria to relook their format and presentation, as a change may be necessary to attract more, and retain existing, viewers for Current Affairs programmes.



The Committee suggests that Suria raises the profile, branding and status of these programmes by re-marketing and re-launching them on the channel. The promotion of Current Affairs programmes should be given equal priority as that of Drama and Variety programmes.

36 In a discussion with editors and producers from MediaCorp News on improving the standards of Malay Current Affairs programmes especially the established ones, the Committee encouraged Suria to consider formats with more public participation, without trivialising the issues concerned.

**“The promotion of Current Affairs programmes  
should be given equal priority as that of Drama  
and Variety programmes.”**

37 At the same time, the Committee appreciates Suria’s efforts to provide more fresh choices of Current Affairs programmes for viewers. In this regard, it is pleased with the telecast of MediaCorp News’ documentary titled *Juang Anak Watan (Struggles of Young Malays)* on Suria which was in tune with what is relevant in the world today, that is, globalisation. The series portrayed the success of local Malay talents overseas and an image of

globalisation among the community by featuring ordinary people as new examples of role models in the community. The programme also highlighted those from the less traditional industries of aeronautical engineering, medical research and fashion.

### (III) Info-Educational

38 In the past, there were programmes such as *Bahas 4PM (4PM Debate)* which were very educational and beneficial to the youths. The MPAC, hence, encourages more of such programmes to be offered. Another such programme is *Pantas Pintas (Quick Glance)*, a quiz show cum info-ed programme targeted at teenagers and tests the contestants on areas like Mathematics, Science, general knowledge, current affairs and traditions. The Committee urges that Suria should continue to foster more creative formats for the youth.

39 While in their quest to showcase the various local cultures and religious practices in support of promoting racial and religious harmony, all broadcasters should remain alert to the possibilities of offending public sensitivities. In one episode of *Raikan Bersama Danielle*, which imparts very useful knowledge about the rituals and rites of various cultures and religions, a song with praises of a deity by some Malay teenagers, was inappropriate, especially given its telecast during the Muslim fasting month.



40 Besides info-educational programmes such as *Bongkar (Uncover)*, *Dinamika (Dynamism)*, *SML@Sihat (SML@Healthy)*, *Tabah (Resolute)* and *Perihal Generasi (About Generation)* which stood out in terms of quality, the standards of other Info-educational programmes on the Malay free-to-air channel have generally improved over the years. More of such content and quality should follow.

#### f) Sensasi Channel

41 To provide the community with wider choices of Malay language programmes, the first locally-packaged Malay subscription channel, Sensasi was launched in August 2007 by Starhub Cable Vision. Given that the channel

**“The Committee hopes that Sensasi will increase its local content over time and place less emphasis on acquired programmes on the channel.”**

is in its first year of service, the MPAC notes that the first locally-packaged Malay cable channel is continuously improving its programming mix and standards.

42 The Committee notes that foreign content is predominant on the channel,

including some that may portray lifestyles and values which are different from that of local Malay viewers. The Committee hopes that Sensasi will increase its local content over time and place less emphasis on acquired programmes on the channel. Sensasi also exudes an outdated feel in its overall presentation which may not appeal to youths but they have made efforts to improve. Members also recognise the broadcaster's approach of identifying flagship programmes such as *Manjalara* and *Cinta Fitri (Fitri's Love)* for their marketing strategy.

43 MPAC members felt that while Sensasi has positioned itself as targeting adult viewers aged 15 and above, the broadcaster should also ensure that proper advisories are included in programmes with unsuitable themes like horror and romance, notwithstanding the fact that it is the parents' responsibility to ensure that their children are not exposed to such programmes. It is also advised to be mindful of scenes in foreign-dubbed content that could be sensitive to Malay viewers, especially those containing religious scenes or practices.

g) Radio Programmes

44 Warna and Ria, the mainstream Malay radio stations have maintained their standing in the community and continue to reach out to more listeners, both young and old. With that in mind, the MPAC would like the Malay radio stations to be ambassadors of Malay language and to ensure proper usage of the Malay language by their presenters. Some members expressed concern that more English words seem to be creeping into the programmes and are often used by presenters. While members recognise that the Malay language like all other languages is constantly evolving, they would like to encourage presenters to use the equivalent Malay words whenever possible. Nevertheless, members also acknowledge that Ria DJs might need to include some English lingo in their presentation to reach out to the younger listeners. Special mention was made of the DJ, Adi Rahman, for his excellent use and command of the Malay language.



45 The Committee commented that some of Warna's programmes such as *Pentas Radio* have visual potential and the station could consider having them staged as "live" events, as well as leveraging on new media platforms to showcase their good programmes. Members also suggested that Warna consider having light-hearted issues other than only serious social issues as the radio drama's main plot.

46 The members also applauded the stations for their effort to make *Anugerah Planet Muzik (APM)* a regional brand name and that it was able to successfully reach out to a regional audience. It is also heartening to know that the event which was telecast live via Astro and Global TV received high viewership and was listed as one of the top programmes on those channels.

47 Members observed that there was an instance of Warna's DJs promoting websites with inappropriate names. Although this was a once-off incident, the Committee advises Malay radio DJs to exercise more caution with the phrases they use on-air, as listeners might find the highlighting of such websites inappropriate even if they did not exist

48 One show which the Committee would like to single out for mention is the "O" Show which is aired on weekdays on Ria. While the use of prank calls is common in many stations, members would like to remind the stations that their presenters still need to exercise discretion and sensitivity should they decide to make such calls. Members cite the example of a birthday segment in the programme where the DJ called up a male listener and impersonated as 'the other woman' knowing that his girlfriend was beside him while he attended to the call, which they found was not done in good taste. On another occasion, the personal accounts of adultery by a listener to the DJ led to the creating of an inappropriate platform for listeners to reveal their own accounts, as if they were trying to outdo each other. The reading out on air of inappropriate short messaging (sms) on this daytime programme also seems to ignore the fact that children and young listeners could also be tuned in. Topics with adult themes would be more suitable late at night.

49 DJs should also ensure that on-air comments are made with caution and are balanced. Negative behaviour or standards of behavioural values should not be accentuated unless supported with educational values. In addition, these comments should not come across as advice but personal opinions. DJs are encouraged to recommend that listeners seek guidance from suitably qualified persons should they be facing difficulties. Alternatively, the DJ could provide listeners with contact details of various self-help groups for further consultation.

50 While there is a fair mix of info-educational and entertainment programmes on Warna, Ria is lacking in info-educational content and Children's programmes. Considering that such programmes might affect Ria's overall branding as a youth-target radio station, MPAC members suggest that Ria consider having programmes on parenting which target young parents. Nevertheless, members applauded Ria's programme, *DJ Pelajar* where students with an interest in radio presenting are given the opportunity to experience being a radio DJ for the day.

**"While there is a fair mix of info-educational and entertainment programmes on Warna, Ria is lacking in info-educational elements and Children's programmes."**

51 It is observed that some presenters eagerly and enthusiastically promote certain health food products for the young. During these segments, callers are encouraged to share their experiences on using the products to the extent that they attributed their children's excellent results directly to the

consumption of these products. The Committee sees such promotional segments as exploitative and they can be misleading to the public. It also questions the validity of such testimonies.

52 Another area of concern relates to presenters who promote their own businesses, for example, those in the travel industry or the media entertainment. While the Committee recognises that the radio station would have taken the necessary precautions when promoting such businesses to avoid conflict of interest, they nonetheless expressed concern over whether listeners are able to decipher whether or not the DJ on the show has vested interest in the product being promoted on-air.

## SECTION 4 : CONCLUSION

53 In this report, the MPAC has made recommendations on the range and quality of Malay television and radio programmes. While the Committee recognises the need for broadcasters to competitively serve the Malay community's demand for more entertainment programmes, these recommendations aim to encourage the provision of a wider and more balance range of programming which is vital to the Malay community's development and progress.

54 While there is immense competition from various forms of media, the MPAC reminds that there is a need for local broadcasters catering to the Malay audiences to embrace their social responsibility to the community. Broadcasters should ensure that there is equilibrium between staying commercially viable as well as fulfilling their social role.



## ANNEX A : COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### Chairman

**Mr Zainudin Nordin**

Mayor, Central Singapore CDC)  
MP, Bishan-Toa Payoh GRC

### Vice-Chairman

**Mr Ahmad Nizam Abbas**

Lawyer  
Straits Law Practice Llc.

### Members

**Mdm Aini Maarof**

Principal  
First Toa Payoh Secondary School

**Dr Abbas Bin Mohd Shariff**

Assistant Professor  
National Institute of Education  
Nanyang Technological University

**Mdm Siti Haslinda Putri  
Harun**

Director  
The Kids Dentist

**Mr M Ma'mun Bin H M F Suheimi**  
Retiree

**Dr Suzaina Kadir**

Assistant Professor  
Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy

**Mr Abdul Hamid Abdullah**

Audit Director  
Auditor-General's Office

**Mr Abdul Rohim Sarip**

Lawyer  
A Rohim Noor Lila & Partners

**Mr Mohd Ridzal Saat**

General Manager  
Singapore Rugby Union

**Mr Azmoon Ahmad**

Chief Operating Officer  
Siemens VDO Automotive Pte Ltd

**Mdm Hanim Mohd Saleh**

Correspondent & Head  
(Entertainment & Lifestyle)  
Singapore Press Holdings



## ANNEX B : BROADCASTERS' RESPONSE TO MPAC'S FEEDBACK

The following are the responses from the broadcasters to MPAC's feedback and recommendations given in this report:

### **MediaCorp TV12**

On the Committee's concern about the proper usage of the Malay language among presenters, Suria has continuously made positive efforts to ensure that the Malay language spoken by presenters and talents is of acceptable standard. The benchmark for high standards of the language used is through News and Current Affairs programmes. However, locally-produced dramas will continue to use conversational Malay in the right context.

Suria noted the Committee's observation on the quality and quantity of repeat programmes on the channel, Suria will plan to strategise and schedule to repeat good programmes on the weekends. This enables viewers who have missed the first run on the week days, to watch the repeats.

With regards to the comment on the drama *Satu Jam*, Suria will minimise the productions of experimental art house dramas and will continue to provide mainstream dramas for the masses.

Suria recognises the pull of good variety programmes. As such, programmes like *Pesta Pesta Pesta* will be reengineered and reformatted taking into consideration the viewers' feedbacks and comments, so that it is suitable for Family Viewing Hours.

On the programme *Raikan Bersama Danielle* where members found the episode with the Malay teenagers singing praises of a deity to be inappropriate, Suria said that they will continue to exercise greater sensitivity towards matters relating to culture and religion.

### **Starhub Cable Vision (SCV)**

"As a first point, we appreciate the support and feedback that MPAC has provided. We see the launch of Sensasi as a major development in the Malay language broadcasting market in Singapore.

In regard to the comment MPAC has made on the feel of the channel, we fully acknowledged that some viewers might have already seen some of Sensasi's earlier serials, either via DVD/VCD or via fortuitous reception of Malaysian free-to-air channels. However, we believe that it is important to show the serials from their first episodes, in order to give all of their customers the full story and plot-lines of these serials. If they had only watched the serials from the latest episodes, there would have been a significant number of viewers who would not have been able to follow the plotlines. However, as MPAC has noted, this issue is declining over time, as we acquire new content.

The issue of local production is an important one to Sensasi, given the need to create a distinctive identity for the channel, and to show themes that will appeal to local viewers. As MPAC will be aware, we have already commissioned some locally-produced programmes. Unfortunately, the cost of locally-produced programming is prohibitively expensive for Sensasi to fund by itself, and we are not the recipient of Public Service Broadcasting funding. Nevertheless, Starhub will constantly look out, on an ad hoc basis, for new and differentiated local content that will appeal to the local viewers. However, we will also continue to work with MDA, to see if some level of co-funding is possible for this locally-produced Malay-language content.

MPAC has also raised the issue of advisory notices for particular types of programming. We would like to highlight that the content on Sensasi has been structured into particular "themes" (such as Romance, Action, etc) to help our viewers decide whether they should let their children watch Sensasi on a particular evening. Nevertheless, we will continue to watch this area closely."

### **MediaCorp Radio**

Warna and Ria have always strived to maintain a good standard of Malay language on air. The presenters on Warna have a good command of the language and the station continues to emphasises the importance of the language through the following on-going programmes.

**(i) Permata Budi**

The programme talks about *Pantun* or Malay quatrains, the history behind it and the beauty of the language. The script is written by a Malay language & culture expert.

Days : Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays  
Timeslots : 8.53am/ repeats at 9.40pm

**(ii) Sembang Bahasa**

The programme talks about the correct use of the Malay language including grammar, pronunciation and semantics.

Days : Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays  
Timeslots : 8.53am/ repeats at 9.40pm

On the promotion of websites with inappropriate names, one instance was brought to the broadcaster's attention. This was a tongue in cheek attempt to inject some humour into the show.

At a MPAC meeting, MediaCorp Radio shared with members in greater details on the nature of Fiza O's programme *Girlfriends* and the 'O' segment. While there may be sensitive issues discussed, there have been many positive elements which should not be ignored. The programme is an excellent channel for teens who need a listening ear. There have also been

many instances when the programme helped to heal the rift between quarrelling couples, teenagers estranged from their parents and so forth.

MediaCorp Radio listed the following instances as examples:

- In conjunction with Mother's Day, the line was opened to girls who had not been in contact with their mothers for long periods of time over misunderstandings. Because of pride, one girl refused to talk to her mother for many years. When the presenter informed the mother that her daughter was on the other line and wanted to talk to her, it became very emotional when both broke down and cried. The relationship between mother and daughter improved after the phone call.
- Married couples who no longer thought that saying "I love you" were important. One call was from a man who had been married for 8 years. He could not even remember the last time he had expressed his love for his wife. The wife was so surprised and shocked at the call that she broke down and cried. The couple smsed their thanks after the show.
- Women who had not been able to conceive. The women shared on the problems they faced, on the criticisms from their mothers-in-law, family members and others. A male listener said he and his wife had been trying for years for a baby. There was pressure and arguments had ensued. After tuning in, he realised that he had to be more understanding. His feedback was that he now understood the tremendous pressure faced by the women and he respected them for being so strong.
- Why Do Men Stray? A listener shared that he had strayed while his wife was sick in hospital. He went on to advise men against infidelity and how important it was to talk through problems and spend time together.

On MPAC's comment that DJs should also ensure on-air comments be made with caution and are balanced, MediaCorp Radio said that presenters are always advised to present balanced views of each topic discussed. Counsellors and other qualified persons are often invited on to the shows to share their views. Help lines like NurTeens Hotline 97777687 and PPIS 67455923 are promoted so that listeners can call these hotlines for more information and consultation.

On the suggestion by the Committee to include parenting programmes on Ria, MediaCorp Radio said that Ria has many info-educational programmes and capsules targeted at the youth. Below are some examples of such programmes:

- |                    |                                       |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| a. Malay Made Easy | – Tips on learning the Malay language |
| b. Kool Tips       | – Study tips                          |
| c. Misi IT         | – Information Technology              |

- |    |              |                                       |
|----|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| d. | Relaks       | – Arts & Leisure                      |
| e. | Makmal Sains | – Interesting facts/trivia on Science |
| f. | Stylez       | – Fashion & Trends                    |
| g. | Report Kad   | – Youth Activities/Interests          |
| h. | Artis Kita   | – Local artistes                      |
| i. | RIA Chartz   | – Top hits of the week                |

Regarding MPAC's points that some presenters are promoting certain health food and their own businesses, MediaCorp Radio informed that the rules and regulations with regard to advertising are strictly adhered to.