

Scrap 4 OCT 85

## 20 put broadcast views

By DANIEL CHUNG

The Government has received about 20 written submissions from the public on the report of the Broadcasting Review Board.

Most of the submissions were presented by individuals, but some came from pressure groups and the tobacco industry, the Assistant Secretary (Broadcasting), Mr John Clarke, said yesterday.

Speaking after attending a Yuen Long District Board discussion on the report's findings and recommendations, Mr Clarke said the Government was expected to come up with a decision on the proposals by the end of next year.

Since the licences of the two television stations will expire by 1988, the Government will have to announce in the middle of 1987 whether it will renew the licences.

Mr Clarke said a three-month consultation period on the report will officially start from the end of this month or early next month after the whole report had been translated into Chinese.

At present, the Chinese

version only covers a summary of findings and recommendations of the report.

Mr Clarke said district boards were welcome to discuss the report and forward their views to the Government for consideration.

He stressed that the proposals in the report were the Broadcasting Review Board's views and not the Government's.

The Government, he said, had an open mind for public views on the issue.

After full consultations, the Government would compile a report before reaching its decision, he said.

Yuen Long District Board was the first board to discuss the report.

Some members were critical of the proposal to turn over some of the prime time of the two television stations to Radio Television Hong-kong.

Dr Tang Siu-tong said the measure would be unfair to the two television stations, and would amount to interference in free competition in the trade.

Mr Peter Wong said the move would apparently in-

fringe on the public's freedom in choosing television programmes.

He was also against the proposal that royalty payments should be based on gross receipts instead of the net profit as is the case now.

Mr Tang Yun-lim endorsed the proposal requiring the stations to unload subsidiary companies.

He said the measure would ensure the independence of the stations.

Mr Lee Kae-bun said some of the proposed measures, including a ban on cigarette advertising, would no doubt reduce the revenue of the two stations.

He expressed the fear that this might cause the stations to produce fewer high-quality TV programmes.

In his reply, Mr Clarke said the Broadcasting Review Board had studied the situation in other countries and found that revenue lost from cigarette advertising would be readily replaced up by other advertisements.

He said it was felt that this would also apply in Hong-kong.