

Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs

Proposal to Stop Importation of Diesel Taxis from 1 August 2001

Purpose

This paper seeks Members' advice on the proposal to amend the Air Pollution Control (Vehicle Design Standards) (Emission) Regulations (hereafter referred to as "the Regulations") to stop importation of diesel taxis from 1 August 2001.

Background

2. To encourage early replacement of the existing diesel taxis, the Chief Executive announced in his 1999 Policy Address a programme to provide owners of diesel taxis with a one-off grant to encourage them to replace their vehicles with LPG ones. Since the disbursement of grant in August 2000, over 7,500 diesel taxis (over 40% of the total fleet) have been replaced by LPG ones. No diesel taxis have actually been imported to Hong Kong since March 2000.

3. The current Regulations do not allow the registration of LPG taxis. Exemption from the Regulations is being granted to LPG taxis by the Environmental Protection Department as a temporary administrative arrangement so that they could be registered by the Transport Department.

The Proposal

4. We propose that the current situation be formalised so that LPG taxis could be registered by the Transport Department without the need for exemption granted by the Environmental Protection Department and such that no diesel taxis could be imported to Hong Kong from 1 August 2001.

5. We also propose to add the emission standards for LPG taxis to the Regulations.

6. The proposed changes to the Regulations will not disrupt the operation of the taxi trade because effectively no diesel taxis have been imported to Hong Kong since March 2000. Moreover, the existing LPG taxi models already conform to the proposed emission standards. The proposed amendments only serve to formalize the current situation.

7. Subject to Members' view, we intend to table the proposed amendments at the Legislative Council on the 6 June 2001 sitting.

Consultation

8. We have consulted the taxi trade on the proposal and the timing of implementation. They have expressed no comment.

Advice Sought

9. Members are requested to advise on the proposed changes described in paragraphs 4 and 5 above.

Environment and Food Bureau
May 2001