

**For information**

(Ref: ETWB(E)55/01/156)

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
PANEL ON ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

**Proposed Amendments to  
Air Pollution Control (Vehicle Design Standards)(Emission)  
Regulations (Cap 311 sub. leg. J)**

**Emission Standards for Newly Registered  
Liquefied Petroleum Gas Light Buses,  
Diesel Light Buses and Liquefied Petroleum Gas Taxis**

**INTRODUCTION**

Last year, we informed Members of the Panels on Environmental Affairs and Transport vide Paper No. CB(1) 2194/01-02 of our plan to upgrade the emission standards for newly registered liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and diesel light buses to Euro III or equivalent. This paper now informs Members of the proposed amendments to the Air Pollution Control (Vehicle Design Standards) (Emission) Regulations (hereunder referred to as "the Regulations"). As the vehicles covered by the proposed amendments are already meeting the new requirements, the amendments are merely for formalizing an existing position through including the new requirements in the Regulations.

**BACKGROUND**

2. Motor vehicles are the major source of roadside air pollution in

Hong Kong. To reduce vehicle emissions, one of the Administration's policies is to require newly registered vehicles to meet the most stringent emission standards where the technology is practicable and commercially available. With the approval of the Legislative Council, we have been progressively tightening up the emission standards for newly registered vehicles by amending the Regulations. For example, Euro II and equivalent emission standards were introduced in 1997; Euro III and equivalent emission standards were introduced for certain classes of vehicles in 2001; and on-board diagnostic (OBD) system has become a requirement for newly registered petrol vehicles since 2001.

### LPG light Buses

3. LPG light buses have been introduced into Hong Kong since the trial in 2000. In August 2002, the Government launched an incentive scheme to encourage the early replacement of diesel light buses with LPG or electric light buses. Since LPG light buses are new to Hong Kong, there is not yet a set of emission standards applicable to them in the Regulations. LPG light buses are equipped with positive ignition engines, but the current Regulations require all vehicles equipped with these engines to use unleaded petrol except for taxis, which can use either unleaded petrol or LPG. As an interim arrangement, we have been granting newly registered LPG buses exemption from the Regulations. Now that more and more LPG light buses are imported to Hong Kong, we propose to formalize the administrative exemption arrangement by amending the Regulations to formally allow light buses equipped with positive ignition engines, as in the case of taxis, to use either LPG or unleaded petrol, as well as to add to the Regulations a set of Euro III or equivalent emission standards for LPG light buses.

4. The current Regulations also require every motor vehicle equipped with a positive-ignition engine, except for LPG taxis, to be

fitted with an OBD system. The OBD system is a technology mainly designed for petrol vehicles. The European Union does not require LPG vehicles to be equipped with OBD systems. Therefore, we propose to amend the Regulations to exempt also LPG light buses from the OBD requirement as in line with the European Union's arrangement.

### Diesel Light Buses

5. When we introduced Euro III emission standards for diesel vehicles over 3.5 tonnes in 2001, diesel light buses were deliberately excluded as we were then developing the alternative-fuel light bus programme. Now that the incentive scheme to encourage the early replacement of diesel light buses with LPG or electric ones is up and running, we propose to extend the Euro III emission requirement to newly registered diesel light buses. This is merely for formalizing an existing position, as all diesel light buses being imported to Hong Kong are already meeting the Euro III emission standards.

### LPG Taxis, Petrol Vehicles over 3.5 tonnes

6. The Japanese Government has introduced a new set of emission standards for newly registered LPG taxis and petrol vehicles of a design weight over 3.5 tonnes since 1 September 2002. To tie in with that, we propose to tighten the corresponding emission requirements in the Regulations to the same stringency. Again, as the vehicles concerned being imported to Hong Kong are already meeting the new standards, the amendment will merely formalize an existing position.

## **THE PROPOSAL**

7. We propose to amend the Regulations, with effect from August

2003, to:

- (a) allow light buses equipped with a positive-ignition engine to run on unleaded petrol or LPG, introduce Euro III or equivalent emission standards for newly registered LPG light buses, and exempt LPG light buses from the OBD system requirement;
- (b) tighten the emission standards for newly registered diesel light buses to Euro III or equivalent standards; and
- (c) tighten the emission standards for newly registered LPG taxis and petrol vehicles over 3.5 tonnes to the latest standards adopted in Japan.

## **LEGISLATIVE TIMETABLE**

8. We plan to table the Amendment Regulation at the Legislative Council for negative vetting in May 2003. Subject to the negative vetting by the Legislative Council, the new requirement will take effect in August 2003.

## **CONSULTATION**

9. We consulted the light bus trade and the Motor Traders Association in August 2001. We also informed relevant sectors of the transport trade of the proposed amendments in April 2003. They raised no objection to the proposal.

10. We consulted the Advisory Council on the Environment on 10 March 2003. Members supported the proposal.

## **ENFORCEMENT AND STAFF**

11. The proposed amendments will be enforced through the existing vehicle registration arrangement. Additional staff are not required.

## **PUBLIC REACTION**

12. As the vehicle models concerned are already meeting the new emission standards, the proposal will merely formalize an existing position and will not cause disruption to the transport trade. In addition, the proposal helps to improve Hong Kong's air quality. Therefore, we expect no adverse reaction from the general public and the transport trade.

## **FURTHER QUERIES**

13. If Members have queries, we would be glad to provide further information or discuss the proposal.

**Environment, Transport and Works Bureau**

**April 2003**