

香港特別行政區政府
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

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30 April 2005

Clerk, Public Accounts Committee
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central
Hong Kong
(Attn: Mr Colin Chui)
(Fax: 2537 1204)

Dear Mr Chui,

**The Directors Audit's Report on the
Results of Value for Money Audits (Report No. 44)**

Chapter 2: Diesel Vehicle Emission Controls

I refer to your letter of 25 April, 2005 and would like to provide you with the following information:

- (a) *the original and target levels of the respirable suspended particulates (RSPs) and nitrogen oxides in respect of the emission reduction programme mentioned in the 1999 policy address.*

The targets of the comprehensive programme as stated in the 1999 Policy Address were "to reduce the total emissions of respirable particulates emitted from vehicles by 60% by end 2003, and 80% by end 2005, by which time nitrogen oxide emissions should also be reduced by 30%". Please note that emission levels are not equal to measured air pollution levels reported as Air Pollution Index (API).

(b) whether the target levels have been achieved; if so, of the reasons for the excessive roadside RSPs and nitrogen oxides in 2004; if not, the reasons for that.

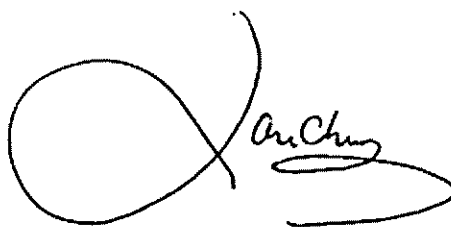
The Administration has exceeded the emission reduction target for RSPs set for end-2003. In fact, by end-2003, the vehicle emissions of RSPs in the urban area were reduced by 72%. As at end-2004, the vehicle emissions of RSP and NO_x in the urban area were further reduced to 76% and 39% respectively. With continuous implementation of the emission reduction measures, we are confident that the reduction targets will be fully accomplished by end-2005.

Analyses done by the Environmental Protection Department have confirmed that the above reductions in vehicle emissions have resulted in measurable results. Diesel vehicles are a major source of elemental carbon in the atmosphere. The measured roadside levels of elemental carbon decreased by 46% between 2000 and 2004. The measured roadside levels of nitrogen oxides also decreased by 24% between 1999 and 2004.

However, while the emissions from motor vehicles are being substantially reduced, the air quality of Hong Kong is increasingly affected by the rising trend in regional air pollution. Data collected at the general monitoring stations showed an increase of RSPs by 15% and ozone by 26% between 1999 and 2004. RSPs are major constituents of smog. Ozone oxidises nitric oxide to nitrogen dioxide and causes photochemical reactions among different air pollutants to form RSPs. Hence, between 1999 and 2004, the roadside levels of RSPs decreased only by 9% and nitrogen dioxide maintained at similar levels, despite of the substantial reduction in vehicle emissions. Even with the decrease, the annual averages still exceed the AQO.

While the Administration will keep up our momentum to further reduce the emissions from motor vehicles, we are also making efforts to work with Guangdong to improve the regional air quality through implementing a Regional Air Quality Management Plan.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Raistlin Lau', with a large, stylized loop on the left side.

(Raistlin Lau)

for Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

c.c. Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
Commissioner for Transport
Director of Environmental Protection
Director of Audit