



**The views of the Association of Engineering Professionals in Society (AES)
on "The Proposal to Ban Idling Vehicles with Running Engines"**

1. Banning idling engines will help reduce vehicle emissions at the roadside. The proposal is in line with the sustainability principles of avoiding environmental problems for present and future generations, seeking to find opportunities to enhance environmental quality, and providing a living environment which promotes and protects the physical health of the people of Hong Kong.

General Issues

2. To help the community develop responsibility towards environment, we agree that a statutory ban to require switching off the engines of idling vehicles should be introduced in principle.

3. For fairness and sharing of the responsibility to reduce emission, we agree that the ban, if introduced, should also cover petrol and LPG vehicles, in addition to diesel vehicles.

4. We agree that certain types of vehicles be exempted from the ban for operational reasons. These vehicles may include ambulances, vehicles of disciplinary forces, other emergency vehicles and vehicles which have their engines idling for genuine operational needs would be the more obvious candidates.

5. We accept the principle that vehicle emissions should be reduced to a minimum and that zero emission is obviously better than some emissions for the overall benefit of Hong Kong. We agree that the ban should be made territory-wide and 24 hours.

6. We accept no grace period for drivers to leave their engines idle for a while after stopping.

The Proposed Control Framework

7. We agree in principle the Proposed Control Framework in the Consultation Paper.

8. To cater for the unique requirements of a local community, we agree that on the advice of the Secretary for the Environment, the Government may exempt, by publishing a notice in the Gazette, a particular area or a particular period of time (including months or days or hours) from the statutory ban. In deciding on the exemption, the Government will consider the views of the relevant District Councils.

9. We agree that violation should not be based on how long an idling vehicle has kept its engine running as this will create an intractable enforcement problem and could lead to dispute between the law enforcement officers and the drivers. No exemption will be given in summer for vehicles idling to keep their air-conditioning running, or else the ban will be nullified.

Enforcement and Penalty

10. In view of its relatively less serious consequence and enforcement efficiency, we accept that the violation be made a contravention (a minor infraction, with a fixed penalty of \$320 as a way of punishment), the ban be implemented by fixed penalty system rather than summon.

11. To help drivers and the transport trade to get used to the new statutory requirement, we agree that the ban takes effect three months after the enactment of the relevant legislation.