

For information on
12 February 2009

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
PANEL ON ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON IMPROVING AIR QUALITY

The Review of Hong Kong's Air Quality Objectives
The Objectives and Scope of the Review

PURPOSE

In response to Members' request at the meeting of the Subcommittee on 13 January 2009, this paper provides information on the objectives and scope of work of the review of the Hong Kong Air Quality Objectives (AQOs).

OBJECTIVES

2. The objective of the Review is to assess the need for, and implications of, revising Hong Kong's existing AQOs. It also seeks to identify options and a long-term strategy on air quality management needed for achieving the revised AQOs.

SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

3. The scope of the review covers the following areas—
- (a) review and characterize the current state of air quality in Hong Kong, including the prevailing exposure levels, developing trend, major pollution sources and origins, the impacts of external and

non-anthropogenic sources on Hong Kong's air quality, as well as policies, programmes and legislation in place for controlling air pollution and the costs and implications due to air pollution;

- (b) examine and make reference to the different reasoning of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the US EPA in devising their respective air quality guidelines or standards, including concrete research results on long-term and short-term health impacts;
- (c) use methods including air modelling to assess air quality under different scenarios and with mitigation measures adopted; to recommend specific measures required and options available to achieve interim targets and the standards if the new WHO Air Quality Guidelines (AQGs) are to be adopted; to examine in depth the need for co-operation with neighbouring cities and provinces;
- (d) assess the implications of implementing the measures identified under different options, including economic and social costs, the time required for introducing the measures, the need to work with the Mainland and other air quality management authorities outside Hong Kong as well as impacts on other policy areas such as energy, transportation, industrial development, urban planning and conservation;
- (e) derive practicable options to revise Hong Kong's AQOs, including whether it is necessary to have different targets for roadside air quality, and to identify strategies and measures required in the form of action plan to achieve the revised AQOs, with implications identified for each option, so as to facilitate public participation and comments; and

- (f) review the need and means to harmonize air quality monitoring data and air pollution indices with other economically advanced cities to facilitate fair comparison.

4. Members may make reference to the Administration's previous submission on the progress of the Review [paper CB(1)531/08-09(03)] for the meeting on 13 January 2009.

Environmental Protection Department
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