

(Translation)

**Motion on  
“Improving air quality”  
moved by KAM Nai-wai  
at the Legislative Council meeting  
of Wednesday, 5 May 2010**

**Motion as amended by Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee and Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan**

That, as air quality in Hong Kong is deteriorating by the day, particularly regarding the emission of sulphur dioxide and fine suspended particulates, posing a serious threat to public health, and during the onslaught of ‘sandstorm’ earlier, many districts recorded an Air Pollution Index (‘API’) reading at the ‘severe’ level of 500; the ‘sandstorm’ has not only exposed the ‘belated awareness’ of the Administration, but also highlighted the shortcomings in its early warning mechanism; quite a number of local and overseas studies have pointed out the close relationship between the severity of air pollution and the mortality rate; in this connection, this Council requests the Administration to make protection of public health its primary policy objective in tackling the problem of air pollution, and urges it to:

- (a) immediately conduct a review on its sluggish response in this ‘sandstorm’ incident, and improve the early warning mechanism and warning signals, so as to enable members of the public to be aware of the warning messages about air quality as early as possible;
- (b) in respect of the situations where API reaches ‘extremely severe’ and ‘severe’ levels, formulate specific guidelines, including implementation of measures to suspend schools and arrange for workers who need to work outdoors for long hours to suspend work, etc. so as to protect the health of school children and the underprivileged, such as people with chronic illness, the elderly and workers working outdoors, in situations where the pollution is serious;
- (c) designate ‘low emission zones’ in areas with serious air pollution and restrict the entry of heavy diesel vehicles with high emissions into such zones, so as to improve air quality at the street level;
- (d) provide funding support for the franchised bus companies to scrap and replace earlier their franchised buses with high emissions, such as buses which are Euro II or below, so as to improve roadside air quality;
- (e) adopt the most stringent standards of the World Health Organization’s air quality guidelines as Hong Kong’s air quality objectives, and undertake to conduct regular review of the objectives in the future;

- (f) improve the ‘To Replace Pre-Euro and Euro I Diesel Commercial Vehicles by New Commercial Vehicles - Incentive Scheme’ and the scheme for the replacement of Euro II diesel commercial vehicles mentioned in the Budget of this year, including allowing those vehicle owners who just write off their vehicles to receive subsidies under the schemes;
- (g) strengthen the co-operation and co-ordination with Guangdong Province on the improvement of air quality, including improving mutual notification and early warning mechanisms;
- (h) in areas other than the Kai Tak Development Area, widely promote the use of district cooling system to enhance energy efficiency and achieve emission reduction; and
- (i) improve town planning and urban design to improve air ventilation and reduce the accumulation of air pollutants in urban areas, such as expediting the review of the Outline Zoning Plans of various districts to revise the planning parameters, formulating ‘air ventilation objectives’, studying making ‘air ventilation assessment’ and ‘air ventilation guidelines’ statutory requirements, so as to strengthen the regulation of the impact of private developments on the surrounding environment; and
- (j) in respect of the situations where API reaches the ‘severe’ level, establish an inter-departmental mechanism to co-ordinate the work of government departments responsible for health care and social welfare etc., so as to cope with the possible additional demand for medical consultation, emergency medical treatment and primary community services, etc.