

(Translation)

(Letterhead of Urban Taxi Associations Joint Committee)

**2nd Submission to the Joint Meeting of
the Legco Panel on Transport and Legco Panel on Environmental Affairs**

26 November 1998

The taxi operators have shown their support for the Government's LPG taxi pilot scheme by allocating 30 taxis to participate in it. We did this without caring about what kind of costs we would have to bear. This fully shows the taxi industry's sincerity in supporting the efforts of improving the air quality and promoting the cause of environmental protection.

However, in the course of the pilot scheme, Hong Kong underwent an economic crisis, which led to a high unemployment rate and a major reduction in people's spending on consumer items. Many trades are badly affected, and the taxi industry is no exception. In spite of the poor business situation, many taxi operators are still required to make their substantial mortgage repayments. So, they are suffering from great financial hardship. Under such circumstances, if the Government really implements a full-scale conversion to LPG taxis with a specific effective date, then the taxi trade will have difficulties in observing this for both financial and operational reasons. Apart from the opinions expressed in our submission presented on 6th November 1998, we would like to add the three following points:

- 1) No specific date should be set for converting all taxis into LPG ones. The existing diesel taxis should be allowed to run on the road until they are no longer road-worthy. In time of financial difficulties, it is important for us to make the maximum use of the vehicles so as to achieve the best cost effectiveness.

- 2) If the Government insists on specifying a full conversion date, the Administration should provide assistance and incentive measures to the taxi trade, such as provision of interest-free loans or allocating LPG cars to taxi operators in order to assist them to convert to using LPG taxis.
- 3) During the process when the taxi trade is converting to using LPG vehicles, the Government should not increase the penalties for emission of excessive black smoke by diesel taxis. Otherwise, the Government will be seen as targeting on diesel taxis.

Urban Taxi Associations Joint Committee

(Signed by eight associations)

The Taxi Operators Association Ltd.

H.K. & Kln. Taxi Co. Assn. Ltd.

T.C. Taxis United Assn. Ltd.

CTOD Association Co. Ltd.

Wing Lee Radio Car Assn. Ltd.

Chuen Lee Radio Taxi Assn. Ltd.

Golden Link Taxi Owners & Drivers Assn. Ltd.

Yik Sun Radiocabs Operators Assn. Ltd.