

**Legislative Council
Panels on Environmental Affairs and Transport**

**Proposed Amendments to
Air Pollution Control (Vehicle Design Standards) (Emission) Regulation
and
Air Pollution Control (Motor Vehicle Fuel) Regulation
(Cap. 311, sub. leg.)**

**Euro III Emission Standards for New Motor Vehicles
and
Associated Motor Fuel Requirements**

Purpose

The Secretary for the Environment and Food proposes to amend the Air Pollution Control (Vehicle Design Standards) (Emission) Regulation and the Air Pollution Control (Motor Vehicle Fuel) Regulation, under Section 43 of the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (Chapter 311), to tighten the emission standards for some classes of vehicles and the requirements for unleaded petrol and motor vehicle diesel. Specifically, the proposed amendments are to:

- (a) tighten the emission standards for newly registered motor vehicles of design weight not more than 3.5 tonnes to Euro III level at the same time as the European Union;
- (b) tighten the emission standards for newly registered diesel private cars to the latest Californian emission requirements; and
- (c) tighten the specifications of unleaded petrol and motor vehicle diesel to support the introduction of Euro III standards.

Background

2. Motor vehicles are the major source of air pollution in Hong Kong. To control the air pollution caused by them, we have established a policy to adopt the most stringent requirements for the emissions of newly registered motor vehicles and the quality of motor vehicle fuels when they can be made available to Hong Kong. With the approval of the Legislative Council, we have implemented the Euro II emission standards since 1997.

3. The European Union will start introducing its Euro III emission standards to newly registered motor vehicle of design weight not more than 3.5 tonnes, which include private cars, light vans and some light buses, from 1 January 2001. A Euro III standard vehicle will emit about 38% less particulates and 20% less hydrocarbon and nitrogen oxides than a Euro II vehicle, if combined with the use of better quality motor vehicle fuel. We propose to introduce these more stringent vehicle emission standards and motor fuel requirements from 1 January 2001.

4. As part of the strategy to reduce reliance on diesel vehicles, we introduced in 1998 the Californian emission standards for newly registered diesel private cars. The emission standards were so stringent that very few models of diesel private cars could meet them. California has now tightened the emission standards further for newly registered diesel private cars. We propose to do likewise for the same purpose.

Proposed Amendments

5. The Air Pollution Control (Vehicle Design Standards)(Emission) Regulations stipulate the emission standards for different classes of vehicles. We propose to tighten the emission standards for motor vehicles of design weight not more than 3.5 tonnes to the Euro III level. Emission standards from countries such as Japan and the United States will be accepted whenever they are compatible with the Euro III requirements. We also propose to tighten the emission standards for diesel private cars to the latest Californian requirements.

6. The proposals will not be applied to diesel taxis as we are working separately to require all new taxis to use LPG by 1 January 2001.

7. The requirements for motor fuel are stipulated in the Air Pollution Control (Motor Vehicle Fuel) Regulation. We propose to upgrade the specifications of the unleaded petrol and motor diesel in the Regulation to those currently adopted by the European Union to support the introduction of Euro III emission standards. The major changes to the fuel specifications will include the introduction of limits of vapour pressure and some fuel components for unleaded petrol and the lowering of sulphur content for motor vehicle diesel from 0.05% to 0.035% by weight.

8. The proposed Amendment Regulations will be provided in a Legislative Council Brief later for Members' reference.

Legislative and Implementation Schedules

9. We plan to table the proposed amendment regulations at the Legislative Council for negative vetting on 24 May 2000. Subject to approval by the Legislative Council, the new requirements will take effect commencing 1 January 2001.

Financial and Staff Implication

10. Implementation of the proposed amendments to the Air Pollution Control (Vehicle Design Standards) (Emission) Regulation and the Air Pollution Control (Motor Vehicle Fuel) Regulation will not require any additional financial commitment from the government. Additional staff are not required.

Economic Implications

11. The Motor Traders Association has advised that the increase in vehicle cost due to the proposal will be insignificant. According to the oil companies, the proposed tightening of fuel specifications may increase the price of motor fuels by about 3 to 5%.

Consultation

12. The Motor Traders Association supports the proposed upgrade to Euro III standard for vehicles not more than 3.5 tonnes. They have confirmed that vehicles meeting the proposed emission standards would be available by 1 January 2001. The oil companies have also confirmed that unleaded petrol and motor diesel that comply with the proposed specifications will be available by 1 January 2001.

Public Reaction

13. The public will welcome the proposals as they will help clean up our air pollution by introducing less polluting motor vehicles and better motor fuels.

Environment and Food Bureau
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