

**For discussion on
24 November 2011**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
PANEL ON ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON IMPROVING AIR QUALITY**

A Proposal to Expand the LPG Filling Network

PURPOSE

This paper briefs Members on our proposal to further expand the LPG filling network, including the findings of our latest search for additional sites suitable for providing LPG refilling services.

BACKGROUND

2. To improve roadside air quality, Government announced in 1999 an incentive scheme to encourage taxi operators to replace their diesel taxis with LPG ones. Pivotal to the success of the replacement is the early availability of LPG refilling service. To kick start the formation of an LPG filling network with a reasonable geographical coverage, Government decided to set up dedicated LPG filling stations (which operate on sites free of land premium but have their LPG retail prices capped by a pricing formula in the Design-Build-Operate contract signed between the respective operators and Government) at strategic locations, while encouraging oil companies to set up at their existing/new petrol filling stations LPG filling facilities (i.e. non-dedicated LPG filling stations).

3. It has been Government's policy to rely on non-dedicated LPG filling stations operating on full commercial principles to further expand the LPG filling network for better convenience to drivers of LPG vehicles. This can also avoid the problem of traffic congestion caused by LPG vehicles converging to dedicated LPG filling stations for refilling, particularly during the shift-changing hours of taxis and public light buses

(“PLB”). Therefore, Government has since June 2000 required suitable new petrol filling stations on the land sales programme to provide LPG filling facilities, subject to safety requirements being met.

4. As a result, there are now a total of 62 LPG filling stations, including 12 dedicated stations and 50 non-dedicated stations. Together they provide a total of 444 LPG filling nozzles. The policy has been successful in expanding the LPG filling network by about threefold as compared to 2000 and with a wide geographical coverage.

CURRENT SITUATION

5. It is a common practice for taxi drivers and PLB drivers to refill their vehicles at the time of shift-changing. For some dedicated LPG filling stations at popular locations (i.e. those close to the key operational areas of taxis and PLBs), there are about 30 to 40 taxis and PLBs queuing up for refilling during peak hours. However, for dedicated LPG filling stations further away from the key taxi and PLB operational areas, such as in Chai Wan, taxis and PLBs could get their refilling usually in much shorter time. Outside peak hours, taxis and PLBs do not normally require much waiting for refilling even at dedicated LPG filling stations. If the taxi and PLB trades can stagger their refilling hours, it will go a long way towards resolving the queuing problem at peak hours. We will continue to encourage the taxi and PLB trades to do so. In parallel, we have completed a review of how best the existing LPG refilling network could be further expanded. Our proposal is outlined below.

THE PROPOSAL

Strengthening Existing Policy

6. It has been Government’s standing policy since 2000 that petrol filling stations on the land sale programme will have to provide LPG refilling services, taking into account the safety and technical feasibility of individual sites concerned. LPG filling nozzles currently account for about 17% of the total number of filling nozzles in all petrol-cum-LPG

stations.

7. To make a better use of available sites for providing LPG filling services, it is recommended that the existing policy be strengthened by stipulating in the tender conditions of petrol-cum-LPG filling stations, both in respect of new sites and old sites upon expiry of their current land leases, a minimum requirement for LPG filling facilities at 25% of the nozzles, subject to fulfillment of the necessary safety requirements. We believe this new requirement should help improve the overall provision of LPG filling facilities while not causing any major adverse impact on the filling services for petrol and diesel vehicles.

8. We briefed the oil companies on the proposed minimum requirement on the LPG filling facilities in November 2011. On the whole, the oil companies do not object to the proposal but have requested Government to be mindful of the potential impact of the proposal on the provision of filling services to petrol and diesel users. We will further discuss with oil companies on the implementation details.

Additional Sites for Petrol-cum-LPG Filling Stations

9. Together with EMSD, Transport Department, Lands Department and Planning Department, we have conducted a search for additional suitable sites to provide LPG-cum-petrol refilling services.

10. Two potential sites on Hong Kong Island have been identified, subject to resolution of some outstanding issues. In Kowloon, no new site has come to light. In the New Territories, we are searching for suitable sites in Tai Po area. Details of these potential sites are set out below.

Fung Mat Road, Western District

11. One of the potential sites on Hong Kong Island is located at Fung Mat Road in the Western District (location shaded in red at **Annex A**), which is currently used as a temporary fee-paying carpark for commercial

vehicles (including goods vehicles and coaches) under a short-term tenancy (STT) arrangement. The site is zoned “Government, Institution or Community” on the Sai Ying Pun and Sheung Wan Outline Zoning Plan and planning permission from the Town Planning Board for petrol filling station use will have to be sought. A suitable replacement site in the same district for relocating the carpark has to be identified if this site is to be released for use as a petrol-cum-LPG filling station. A vacant site underneath Connaught Road West flyover at Eastern Street could be considered as a possible replacement site. Furthermore, as the replacement site at Eastern Street has to be completed to make way for the conversion of the Fung Mat Road site into petrol-cum-LPG filling station and the two sites are located close to the harbourfront area, although it is not directly facing the harbourfront, we will consult the Harbourfront Commission’s Task Force on Harbourfront Developments on Hong Kong Island (HKTF) and the Central and Western District Council (DC) on these two activities together.

12. We plan to consult the HKTF and Central and Western DC in early 2012. We will then work with Transport Department to relocate the Fung Mat Road temporary fee-paying car park to the replacement site at Eastern Street and consult the transport trade when appropriate.

Tin Wan, Southern District

13. Another potential site is in Tin Wan (location shaded in red at **Annex B**). The site is currently used as a temporary works area for the Harbour Area Treatment Scheme Stage 2A – Sewage Conveyance System, and cannot be released until the project is completed. Furthermore, site formation works have to be carried out to widen the site to provide adequate manoeuvring space for the turning of petrol trucks and to improve the condition of the entrance/exit of the site in order to develop the site as a petrol-cum-LPG filling station. The site is zoned “Government, Institution or Community” on the Aberdeen and Ap Lei Chau Outline Zoning Plan and planning permission from the Town Planning Board for petrol filling station use will have to be sought.

14. To take forward the proposal for setting up a petrol-cum-LPG filling station at the Tin Wan site, we will consult the Southern DC and

the taxi trade in early 2012.

Tai Po

15. Some Members of the Legislative Council and taxi trade have also suggested Government to find a suitable site for setting up a new LPG filling station near to the Tai Po Industrial Estate. Since the Tai Po Towngas Plant, which is a potentially hazardous installation, is located in the area, we would need some more time to assess the risk implications of the proposal.

16. We would continue to look into the feasibility of setting up a new LPG filling station in Tai Po. Should a site satisfying the relevant risk requirements be identified, we will consult the Tai Po DC accordingly.

ADVICE SOUGHT

17. Members are invited to advise on our proposal for expanding the LPG filling network.

Environmental Protection Department
November 2011



主題地點
SUBJECT SITE



