

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(1)300/12-13  
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by the Administration)

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**Panel on Environmental Affairs**

**Minutes of meeting**  
**held on Monday, 22 October 2012, at 2:30 pm**  
**in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex**

**Members present** : Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan (Chairman)  
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun,  
BBS, MH, JP (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon Vincent FANG Kang, SBS, JP  
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, JP  
Hon CHAN Kin-por, BBS, JP  
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip  
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin  
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH  
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai  
Hon Charles Peter MOK  
Hon CHAN Han-pan  
Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok  
Hon KWOK Wai-keung  
Hon Dennis KWOK  
Hon SIN Chung-kai, SBS, JP  
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan  
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP  
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, BBS, MH, JP  
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen

**Members attending** : Hon James TO Kun-sun  
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming  
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP

**Member absent** : Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan

**Public Officers attending** : **For item III**

Mr WONG Kam-sing  
Secretary for the Environment

Ms Christine LOH  
Under Secretary for the Environment

Ms Anissa WONG, JP  
Permanent Secretary for the Environment/  
Director of Environmental Protection

Miss Vivian LAU, JP  
Deputy Secretary for the Environment

Mr TSE Chin-wan, JP  
Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (1)

Mr Albert LAM, JP  
Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (2)

Mr Andrew LAI, JP  
Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (3)

**For Item IV**

Ms Christine LOH  
Under Secretary for the Environment

Mr Andrew LAI, JP  
Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (3)

Mr MOK Wai-chuen  
Assistant Director (Air Policy)  
Environmental Protection Department

Mr PANG Sik-wing  
Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Air Policy)  
Environmental Protection Department

**Clerk in attendance :** Ms Miranda HON  
Chief Council Secretary (1)1

**Staff in attendance :** Mrs Mary TANG  
Senior Council Secretary (1)1

Miss Lilian MOK  
Council Secretary (1)1

Miss Mandy POON  
Legislative Assistant (1)1

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**I. Information paper issued since last meeting**

Members noted the submissions from Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace, which were tabled at the meeting, on the monitoring of electricity market, requesting respectively for invitation of views and setting up of a subcommittee on the subject. As the subject fell within the purview of the Panel on Economic Development ("EDEV Panel"), members agreed to refer the submissions to EDEV Panel for consideration and follow-up.

**II. Items for discussion at the next meeting**

(LC Paper No. CB(1) 58/12-13(01) — List of outstanding items for discussion)

2. Members agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting scheduled for Monday, 26 November 2012, at 2:30 pm -

- (a) Sewerage at Clear Water Bay Road, Pik Shui Sun Tsuen and west of Sai Kung town;
- (b) Extension of the Cleaner Production Partnership Programme; and
- (c) Ecological impact arising from construction works as in the case of the Tai Po Lung Mei Beach project.

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*(Post-meeting note: At the Administration's request, the item "Ecological impact arising from construction works as in the case of the Tai Po Lung Mei Beach project" was subsequently replaced by "Sustainable eco-tourism". A joint meeting with the Panel on Home Affairs was scheduled for Friday, 30 November 2012, at 9:00 am to discuss the item "Provision of a public beach at Lung Mei, Tai Po".)*

**III. Briefing by Secretary for the Environment on the key environmental initiatives**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)58/12-13(02) — Secretary for the Environment's speaking note (Chinese version only))

3. The Secretary for the Environment ("SEN") briefed members on the key environmental initiatives.

4. With reference to the Legislative Programme 2012-2013, the Chairman informed members that the following bills would be introduced by the Environment Bureau in the 2012-2013 legislative session –

- (a) Air Pollution Control (Amendment) Bill - to provide statutory effect to a set of new Air Quality Objectives ("AQOs"), hence tightening the air quality standards against which the environmental impact of works and other processes would be assessed under the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (Cap. 311) ("APCO") and the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499);
- (b) Product Eco-responsibility (Plastic Shopping Bags) (Amendment) Bill - to implement the second phase of the Environmental Levy Scheme on Plastic Shopping Bags by extending its coverage to all retailers; and
- (c) Waste Disposal (Amendment) Bill - to enhance control on the depositing of construction waste on private land.

5. The Chairman noted that a Policy Group, chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration, had been set up to coordinate policies on sustainable development, the environment and energy. She enquired about the membership of the subcommittee and whether public health costs would be taken into account in formulating those policies. She also enquired if the Environment Bureau would be prepared to provide funding for conducting consultancy studies on issues relating to protection of the environment, which might include

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studies on air, noise and light pollution as well as their impact on public health.

6. SEN agreed that more studies should be conducted on the social and public health costs of pollution problems so as to obtain a more comprehensive view of their impact and the relevant public expenditure. He advised that the new Policy Group chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration comprised representatives from the Environment Bureau, Development Bureau, Transport and Housing Bureau and Food and Health Bureau. Representatives from other bureaux would be invited to participate in the discussions as and when necessary. He further said that joint studies with local universities had been conducted on the impact of air quality on public health, so as to facilitate the formulation of the proposed new AQOs for Hong Kong and assessment of the associated public health costs.

Waste management

7. Mr CHAN Hak-kan said that apart from the introduction of the environmental levy on plastic shopping bags, the Administration had not achieved much in terms of waste management and more efforts were needed to reduce waste at source. As the amount of domestic waste was decreasing while that of commercial and industrial ("C&I") waste was increasing over the years, he enquired whether the planned waste charging scheme would be targeted at domestic waste only or include C&I waste as well. Referring to the funding proposals on landfill extensions and the development of the Integrated Waste Management Facilities, which were bundled as a package for members' approval by the last term of Government, he enquired if consideration could be given to prioritizing those proposals so that the less controversial ones would be proceeded with first. SEN replied that source separation of waste was the main theme of waste management of the new term of Government. As food waste accounted for 30% to 40% of the waste disposed of at landfills, there was a need to focus on the reduction of food waste. A programme on the reduction of food waste in both residential and commercial premises would be launched.

8. Dr Elizabeth QUAT enquired whether separate charging schemes would be devised for domestic and C&I waste. SEN said that the Administration was open to suggestions on the coverage of the waste charging scheme, and would be working out the details in consultation with Panel members and the public.

9. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok enquired about the Administration's plan on the mandatory Producer Responsibility Scheme ("PRS") for waste electrical and electronic equipment ("WEEE"). The Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (2) ("DDEP(2)") said that public consultation had been conducted on PRS on WEEE and discussions had been held with stakeholders on the scheme's mode of operation, in particular, the fee collection and mechanism on sharing of eco-responsibility. The Administration would be working on the draft

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legislation on the implementation of PRS on WEEE and funding would be sought for constructing a new WEEE treatment plant.

10. Mr KWOK Wai-keung enquired about the effectiveness of the three-coloured waste separation bins ("WSBs"). He said that, according to the feedback from districts, WSBs were not only ineffective in facilitating source separation of waste, but had also resulted in disorderly disposal of waste on streets. He asked about the amount of waste that had been collected by WSBs and transported to waste recyclers for proper recycling. He further said that the Administration should provide assistance to recycling operators in collecting recyclable materials and in abating the environmental nuisances associated with their operation. Consideration should also be given to providing assistance for transporting recyclables to waste recyclers direct.

11. SEN responded that publicity and public education on the use of three-coloured WSBs would be stepped up to facilitate source separation of waste. There had been exchanges with recycling operators on the need for the development of a circular economy to promote waste recycling. The Administration would consider developing facilities in local districts to facilitate waste separation. DDEP(2) added that up to 2011, waste separation facilities had been installed in over 80% of the residential developments in Hong Kong and the facilities would be further extended, including the rural areas.

Air quality

12. Mr Dennis KWOK enquired if the new set of AQOs could be introduced by amending section 7(1) of APCO and if so, whether the technical memorandum under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499) would likewise be amended to tighten the air quality standards against which the environmental impact of works and other processes would be assessed. He also enquired if the Guangdong Provincial Government ("GPG") was successful in meeting the 2010 emission reduction targets. SEN replied that GPG was assessing the attainment of the 2010 emission reduction targets and was discussing with the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("HKSAR") on the post-2010 arrangements for emission reduction in the Pearl River Delta ("PRD") Region as soon as possible. He also said that legislative amendment to APCO would be introduced to provide for a new set of AQOs.

*(Post-meeting note: The post-2010 emission reduction targets were conveyed to the Legislative Council by way of the LegCo Brief issued on 23 November 2012.)*

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13. Dr Helena WONG welcomed the introduction of a new set of AQOs which would aim at meeting the World Health Organization's Air Quality Guidelines ("WHO AQGs"). She enquired whether the new AQOs to be introduced would meet the interim or ultimate targets of WHO AQGs, and whether it was the Administration's intention to meet the ultimate targets of WHO AQGs by 2015. Given the need to protect public health, particularly against lung diseases, she enquired if the new AQOs would stipulate the concentration limit for particulate matters with a diameter of 2.5 microns (PM2.5) or less.

14. SEN said that it was the Administration's long-term objective to introduce a new set of AQOs which would meet WHO AQGs. A package of measures to reduce emissions would need to be implemented in order to attain the new AQOs. The concentration limit of PM2.5 would be stipulated in the new AQOs to be introduced. Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (3) ("DDEP(3)") added that the new AQOs would set out the concentration limits for seven air pollutants, three of which would be meeting the ultimate targets of WHO AQGs while the remaining four would be meeting the interim targets of WHO AQGs. Due to the stringency of WHO AQGs, at present no country had fully adopted the ultimate targets of WHO as their statutory AQOs. It was WHO's advice that Governments should consider their own local circumstances carefully before adopting the new AQGs as statutory standards. The Administration expected that the new AQOs would take effect in early 2014, and was committed to reviewing them at a frequency of no less than once every five years.

15. Dr Kenneth CHAN enquired whether there had been any changes to the Administration's policy on the use of nuclear energy for power generation following the Fukushima incident. He also enquired about the progress of the discussions on the post-2010 arrangements for emission reduction in the PRD Region as this might affect the introduction of the new AQOs for Hong Kong. SEN said that the HKSAR Government and GPG were finalizing their discussions on the post-2010 arrangements for emission reduction in the PRD Region and the outcome would be announced as soon as practicable. As for the choice of fuel for power generation, he said that safety, reliability, cleanliness and cost would need to be considered. The Administration would be prepared to review the energy policy taking into account the latest developments. Discussion forums on energy conservation and the fuel mix for power generation would be held to solicit the views of experts and stakeholders.

16. Mr Frankie YICK declared interest as the Director of the Star Ferry Company Limited and the Hong Kong Air Cargo Terminal Limited. He said that the transport trades had all along been supportive of measures to improve air quality and the major ship liners in Hong Kong had signed up to the voluntary Fair Winds Charter in their commitment to switch to low sulphur fuel

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as far as possible when at berth in Hong Kong waters. He supported that more incentive schemes on reducing emissions should be introduced by the Government to encourage participation by the trades. Any legislative control on marine emissions should be introduced in tandem with the PRD Region as otherwise, Hong Kong's shipping and logistics trades would lose out to their counterparts in the neighboring cities.

17. As for land transport, Mr YICK stated that the cargo trades were concerned that they were being targeted at in the implementation of environmental policies. Unlike franchised bus companies and power companies, the cargo trades did not have guaranteed returns on their capital investments. They were operating under great financial hardship given the rising fuel cost and insurance fees. They were opposed to the Administration's recent proposal on the non-renewal of licences for diesel commercial vehicles aged 15 years or over and considered that with proper repair and maintenance, aged diesel vehicles which met the emission requirements should be allowed to renew their licences. Mr YICK further pointed out that the participation rate of the two replacement schemes for diesel commercial vehicles was low because they were not attractive enough to encourage replacement. SEN responded that the Administration would discuss with the trades the plan to retire aged diesel commercial vehicles. He stressed that both the Administration and the trades would have to shoulder responsibilities for improving the environment.

18. Mr SIN Chung-kai was concerned about the emissions from aged and polluting buses and enquired if consideration would be given to buying out such buses. He also enquired if there was any plan to introduce Low Emission Zones ("LEZs") at busy commercial districts such as Causeway Bay and Mong Kok with a view to improving the roadside air quality of those districts. SEN replied that there were plans to designate pilot LEZs in the busy corridors of Causeway Bay, Central and Mong Kok. To achieve the purpose, franchised bus companies had been requested to increase the ratio of low-emission buses in such zones as far as possible and to deploy only low-emission buses in these zones by 2015.

19. DDEP(3) added that funding would be sought from LegCo early next year for the capital cost of retrofitting some 3 000 Euro II and III franchised buses with selective catalytic reduction devices if the trial scheme was successful. This would upgrade their emission performance to Euro IV and V respectively. In addition, the Administration would be funding the purchase of 36 electric buses for trial by franchised bus companies to test their performance and collect operational data. Both Environmental Protection Department ("EPD") and Transport Department had been liaising with franchised bus companies on the increase in the ratio of low-emission buses deployed to LEZs. They would also closely monitor the replacement programme for franchised buses.



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20. Mr WU Chi-wai enquired about the policy on cycling in Hong Kong given that bicycle was a low-carbon mode of transport. He also enquired about the progress of the rationalization of bus routes. SEN said that cooperation would be sought from other government bureaux and departments for reducing vehicular emissions. The rationalization of bus routes would be worked out in line with the latest developments in transport infrastructure.

21. Mr Steven HO said that the fishing trade was concerned about the proposed designation of more marine parks as this would be tantamount to extending the ban on commercial fishing. Referring to the public consultation on tightening the fuel sulphur content of the light diesel used by local ferries, he sought clarification on the types of vessels to be included and whether studies would be conducted on the fuel efficiency of ultra low sulphur diesel ("ULSD"). He pointed out that the fishing trade was most concerned about the proposal due to the lower fuel efficiency and higher cost of ULSD. He further said that in the absence of consensus with the fishing trade, the Administration should not set a timetable for switching to ULSD. He also enquired if there would be any incentive schemes to encourage the switch to cleaner vessel fuels or replacement with cleaner vessels, similar to that for vehicles.

22. SEN responded that the Administration would introduce measures to improve air quality by reducing emissions from power generation as well as land and marine transport. Communication with the fishing trade would be stepped up with a view to identifying effective measures to reduce emissions. DDEP(3) added that the diesel used by local vessels contained 0.5% of sulphur and the Administration intended to switch to the use of diesel with 0.05% of sulphur subject to the confirmation of technical compatibility and further discussions with the local marine sector.

Energy conservation

23. Mr CHAN Kin-por stated that despite the passage of the motion on "Government-led promotion of a territory-wide energy conservation campaign" at the Council meeting on 15 February 2012, there had not been any proactive measures adopted by the Administration to conserve energy. He pointed out that in Taiwan, following the introduction of concessions for using less electricity, there was a significant reduction in energy consumption. Financial incentives on energy conservation had also been introduced in Singapore with positive results. He enquired if the Administration had any plans to launch a territory-wide energy conservation campaign, given that energy conservation was the most cost-effective means to combat climate change.

24. SEN agreed with the need for energy conservation. He said that the Administration had made reference to the experience of Taiwan and Singapore. A forum would be held in late October 2012 with academics and stakeholders

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on energy-related matters including energy conservation. Consideration would also be given to working out a mechanism to encourage energy conservation upon the review of electricity tariff later in the year. As buildings accounted for approximately 90% of the total electricity consumption in Hong Kong, there was a need to encourage energy conservation in both residential and commercial buildings. Building owners would be encouraged to carry out energy-cum-carbon audits to review the use of energy and identify means of enhancing energy efficiency. With the full implementation of the Buildings Energy Efficiency Ordinance in September 2012, it was expected that the energy efficiency of buildings could be further improved.

25. Dr Elizabeth QUAT enquired about the progress of implementation of energy conservation measures in public rental housing ("PRH") estates and government buildings. SEN said that there had been positive progress in the implementation of energy conservation measures in PRH estates and more efforts would be made to further conserve energy. The Deputy Secretary for the Environment supplemented that in the next three years, energy-cum-carbon audits would be performed in over 120 government buildings with high energy consumption.

Noise

26. Dr Elizabeth QUAT enquired about the measures to abate traffic noise, apart from installation of noise barriers. SEN replied that there would be better road planning in an attempt to reduce the impact of traffic noise on the neighborhood. New traffic noise abatement measures would also be worked out to address the traffic noise problem of existing roads.

Merging of the Environment Bureau and the Environment Protection Department

27. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok asked about the rationale for merging EPD with the Environment Bureau. He said that there was concern about the conflict of roles of the Permanent Secretary for the Environment ("PS for Env"), who was also the Director of Environmental Protection ("DEP"), given the dual roles of formulation and execution of policies. SEN responded that there were different views on the appointment of PS for Env as DEP. While the existing arrangement had been working well with checks and balances in place, there would be room for improvement and review. The Chairman said that the post of DEP used to be taken up by a professional staff but with the latter's retirement, the post had since been filled by Administrative Officers. She also said that environmental groups supported that the post of DEP should be filled by professional staff to ensure impartiality in the environmental impact assessment process.

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**IV. Update on incentive scheme on the use of cleaner fuel by ocean going vessels at berth**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)50/12-13(01) — Administration's paper on "Update on incentive scheme on the use of cleaner fuel by ocean going vessels at berth"

LC Paper No. CB(1)58/12-13(03) — Background brief on "Incentive scheme to encourage ocean going vessels to switch to cleaner fuels while at berth in Hong Kong waters" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat)

28. The Under Secretary for the Environment ("USEN") referred members to the Administration's paper on "Update on incentive scheme on the use of cleaner fuel by ocean going vessels ("OGVs") at berth".

Control of emissions from OGVs

29. Dr Helena WONG was concerned whether the incentives under the voluntary scheme were attractive enough to encourage the use of cleaner fuels by OGVs at berth. She also enquired if there were other more effective measures to reduce emissions, for example, by reducing the vessel speed when entering Hong Kong waters. She opined that if the incentives under the voluntary scheme were ineffective, there might be a need to introduce legislation to mandate the switch to cleaner fuels and to impose a speed limit on OGVs entering Hong Kong waters.

30. USEN affirmed that vessels travelling at a lower speed would have less emission. She also said that EPD had been discussing with the Marine Department the impact of vessel speed on emissions. The Administration would make reference to overseas experience in mandating the switch to cleaner fuels by OGVs at berth, which had been implemented in some ports in North America and the European Union. With the signing of the Fair Winds Charter in 2011 by 17 ship liners in Hong Kong, their commitment to switch to low sulphur fuel voluntarily when at berth in Hong Kong waters had resulted a 6% reduction in sulphur dioxide emissions. Discussions were being held with GPG to explore the feasibility of mandating fuel switch at berth in PRD ports to ensure a level playing field amongst the ports in PRD area.

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31. Dr Kenneth CHAN shared the concern about the effectiveness of the incentive measures under a voluntary scheme to encourage fuel switch and enquired if there were any means to assess the effectiveness of the scheme, failing which a mandatory scheme would be considered. He also enquired if there was a timetable for mandating the fuel switch for OGVs at berth in PRD waters. USEN responded that the Administration was committed to improving air quality in Hong Kong and emission reduction measures would be targeted at vehicles and vessels in Hong Kong. Regional cooperation would be sought from Mainland authorities for reducing emissions from across the border and establishing an emission control area in PRD waters in the long run.

32. Mr CHAN Kin-por was pleased to note that the Administration had been joining hands with GPG to explore mandating the fuel switch for OGVs so as to attain greater environmental benefits and ensure a level playing field amongst the ports in the PRD area. In response to Mr CHAN's questions about the progress of the discussions with GPG, USEN said that HKSAR Government had been liaising with the Mainland authorities on the feasibility of mandating fuel switch at berth and establishing an emission control area within PRD waters. In order to improve the emission performance of vessels, there was a need for operators of OGVs and river-trade vessels to reduce the sulphur content of their fuels to 0.5% and 0.05% respectively. Corresponding measures would be taken by the Guangdong side to encourage the fuel switch.

33. Mr Christopher CHUNG enquired about the number of ports which had implemented mandatory switch to cleaner fuels by OGVs at berth and whether there was any timetable for mandating the switch in Hong Kong. USEN said that most of the ports in the European Union as well as United States and Canada had implemented the mandatory switch. OGVs entering those ports would need to comply with the relevant regulations to switch to cleaner fuels upon berthing. The uniformity of regulations in those ports had ensured a level playing field within the emission control areas. However, there was no such emission control area in Asia. Hong Kong and Singapore had taken a step further by providing incentives for switching to cleaner fuels at berth by way of a voluntary scheme.

34. Mr Frankie YICK declared interest as one of the directors of the Modern Terminal Limited. He stressed that mandatory fuel switch at berth, if implemented, should be on a regional basis and be applicable to all other ports within PRD as otherwise the competitiveness of the local logistics industry would be undermined. He shared the Chairman's views on the need to take into account social and health costs when investing in measures to improve air quality. USEN agreed that social and health costs should be taken into consideration and more resources and manpower should be allocated for the purpose.

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35. The Chairman stated that there was a need for regional cooperation in the switch to cleaner fuels and that any mandatory fuel switch should be implemented in other ports within PRD concurrently lest Hong Kong would lose out to neighboring ports. She enquired if there was a timetable for imposing legislative control on the switch to cleaner fuels within the PRD area as well as other areas in the Mainland. USEN replied that time was needed for studying the way forward on the mandatory fuel switch in Hong Kong and other parts of the Mainland as no emission control area had been set up in any part of Asia. The Mainland authorities were well aware of the need to switch to cleaner fuels as OGVs were required to switch fuel when berthing at ports in European countries and the United States. Studies on the impact of maritime emissions on public health had been conducted by non-government organizations in Hong Kong and the findings had been shared with the Mainland authorities.

Application status

36. Noting that 474 OGVs were registered under the incentive scheme as at 15 October 2012, Mr CHAN Kin-por enquired about the percentage of visiting OGVs registered so far. DDEP(3) said that the application for reduction in port facilities and light dues for port calls had started on 26 September 2012. Since then, 474 OGVs were registered while 129 applications had been received and 97 applications had been approved as at 15 October 2012. The number of applications received and the number of OGVs registered under the scheme were relatively low as compared to the number of OGV trips to Hong Kong, which were about 30,000 in 2011. As the scheme had only been implemented for three weeks, the Administration would step up the publicity efforts.

37. Mr WU Chi-wai enquired about the number of OGVs owned by the 17 major ship liners which had signed up to the voluntary Fair Winds Charter. It appeared to him that OGVs were not keen to participate in the incentive scheme as only a few hundred OGVs had been registered. He also enquired about the number of OGVs qualified to register under the scheme. The Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Air Policy) ("ADEP(AP)") said that about 14% of OGVs visiting Hong Kong had applied for incentives under the scheme since its launch. More effort would be made to encourage OGVs to apply for incentives under the scheme to switch to cleaner fuels when at berth in Hong Kong waters. Based on the data gathered at the Kwai Chung air quality monitoring station, sulphur dioxide emissions had reduced by 6% following the signing of the Fair Winds Charter in 2011.

38. The Chairman enquired about the reasons why only 97 out of the 129 applications for incentives under the scheme had been approved. USEN explained that some of the applications were still under process. So far, there was only one application which had been rejected due to the shipmaster's refusal to abide by the conditions for approval.

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39. The Chairman sought clarification on whether the ship liners which had signed up to the Fair Winds Charter would be allocated better berthing spaces in Hong Kong. ADEP(AP) replied that no special privilege would be given to the ship liners which had signed the Fair Winds Charter.

Control of emissions from river-trade vessels and ferries

40. Mr SIN Chung-kai was concerned about the emissions from river-trade vessels and ferries plying within PRD waters. He enquired about the feasibility of specifying a time frame for upgrading the fuels used by river-trade vessels and ferries. USEN explained that the incentive scheme was targeted at OGVs rather than river-trade vessels and ferries as the former had a much higher emission of respirable suspended particulates than that of the latter. DDEP(3) added that the fuels used by OGVs contained as much as 2.8% of sulphur, which was 2 800 times that of vehicle fuels. Hence, there was a pressing need to encourage operators of OGVs to switch to cleaner fuels at berth.

41. DDEP(3) further said that river-trade vessels and local ferries used fuels with 0.5% sulphur content. The Administration had been conducting trials on the fuel efficiency of using fuels with 0.05% sulphur content as well as the mechanical feasibility of the switch. The cost of using cleaner fuels would be another consideration. As it was the intention of fuel suppliers, mostly from Singapore, to reduce the sulphur content of marine fuels from 0.5% to 0.05% in the near future, vessels and ferries would be driven by market forces to switch to cleaner fuels. The Administration would continue to discuss with the trades and suppliers on the use of cleaner fuels. ADEP(AP) added that as river-trade vessels would choose to have their tanks filled in Hong Kong due to the better price and quality of vessel fuels, efforts would be made to tighten the emission standards of vessel fuels sold in Hong Kong.

42. Mr Christopher CHUNG enquired whether subsidies could be provided to vessel operators for replacing their vessels with cleaner models in case there were mechanical problems in the fuel switch. ADEP(AP) said that trials would be conducted to ascertain the practicability of switching to cleaner fuels by different types of vessels. As there was not much difference in the lubricity of cleaner fuels, switching to cleaner fuels would unlikely give rise to mechanical problems.

**V. Any other business**

Setting up of a subcommittee on improving air quality

43. The Chairman said that the Subcommittee on Improving Air Quality was

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set up under the Panel in the last legislative term from 2008 to 2012 to enable more focused discussion on the Government's efforts in addressing air pollution, and to monitor and study policies as well as public concerns on improving air quality. She sought members' views on appointing a subcommittee to follow up the work of the Subcommittee of the last term, and extending the scope to cover noise and light pollution as well for better protection of public health.

44. Mr Charles Peter MOK said that he supported the proposal of setting up a subcommittee with an extended scope. Mr WU Chi-wai also expressed support for the setting up of a subcommittee which would allow for more focused discussion on issues relating to air, noise and light pollution for better protection of public health. Dr Helena WONG stated that light pollution associated with excessive glare from glass panels on the external walls of buildings should also be discussed by the subcommittee to be set up.

45. Mr Tony TSE said that he would support the setting up of a subcommittee to continue the work of improving air quality, taking into account the social and health costs. He enquired whether separate subcommittees should be set up on noise and light pollution respectively. Mr Christopher CHUNG considered that as the scope of the subcommittee would cover noise and light pollution which involved various bureaux and departments, there might be a need to set up separate subcommittees on air, noise and light pollution.

46. The Chairman pointed out that light pollution would involve policies on buildings which were under the purview of the Development Bureau, while noise pollution arising from traffic would involve policies on transport which were within the purview of the Transport and Housing Bureau. She said that as the maximum number of subcommittees that could be in operation at any one time was eight, it would be more preferable to set up one subcommittee with an extended scope rather than three separate subcommittees. She directed the Clerk to prepare a paper on the proposed terms of reference and work plan of the subcommittee for the Panel's consideration at the next meeting.

47. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:30 pm.