

# Air Quality Objectives Review

## Public Consultation

### Overview

We welcome the review. We hope that a far-reaching programme of transport measures can be agreed for implementation to improve our roadside air quality.

### Institutional Arrangements

**We welcome** the Chief Executive's announcement in his policy address that the Chief Secretary for Administration will coordinate the relevant work.

### Who pays?

We generally support the principle that the users should pay for additional costs of improved standards. **We propose** that the government consider granting direct subsidies where necessary to secure early improvements.

### Promote electric and other alternative cleaner fuels

The new Euro technology is complex, expensive and may not be as efficient as the older technology. For this reason, **we propose** that Government explore alternative clean/cleaner solutions. More economical alternatives would give the trades concerned more incentive to improve.

### We further propose:

- **More electrification**
  - **Modernise the tramway**, to attract more passengers back to this clean (at the roadside) mode, and reduce demand for parallel diesel bus services
  - **Implement pilot electric trolley bus operations**, and if successful extend such operations into the crowded urban areas (Citybus tested a trolleybus in its Wong Chuk Hang depot in about 2002)
  - **Implement trial hybrid double-deck bus schemes**, to test efficiency savings and clean operation in crowded urban areas
  - **Implement trial electric vehicle schemes for taxis, light buses, and commercial vehicles** as appropriate vehicles become available
- **Alternative, cleaner and more economical fuels**
  - **Extend the use of LPG to light goods vehicles** on a voluntary basis initially, thereby removing diesel from such operations
  - **Implement trial schemes to use CNG or LNG** on commercial vehicles, including non-franchised buses
  - Consider for implementation other trial schemes as may be proposed from time to time



### Address congestion

The time has come to reduce pollution-causing congestion on our most congested roads. **We propose** that a high level Working Group on Congestion be established, with members from government and private sector, and with a broad remit to implement solutions to the problem (e.g. off-road PT (rail, light rail, moving walkways etc), park and ride), as well as further investigating how an ERP scheme might be developed. **We propose** that work on the above be brought forward to Phase I, including electronic road pricing.

### Introduce electronic toll charging technology

Traffic stopping and starting to make cash payments at toll plazas pollutes the air, and is energy and space inefficient. **We propose** that compulsory electronic charging should be implemented at toll plazas as a phase I measure. Once implemented, this would reduce the implementation time for ERP, if decided, by 2-3 years, and would reduce the risks associated with introducing the technology and ERP schemes at the same time.

### Phase I Measures

- **Emission Control Measures**

**We propose** that Government should subsidise the bus companies, like other commercial vehicle owners, to complete the replacement of Euro I vehicles within, say, three years (by which time pre-Euro vehicles should have been replaced anyway under the ongoing bus replacement programme).

**We propose** that solutions for the non-franchised bus fleet, which also operate in heavily populated areas, should also be given special focus.

- **Transport management**

**Pedestrianisation** is foundering because of inadequate accountability, fragmented responsibilities and a failure to address various vested interests. **We propose** that a holistic approach be adopted to **develop world-class pedestrian schemes**. To this end, **we propose** designating a **Policy Secretary** to be accountable for pedestrianisation, including ensuring that all concerned Bureaux and Departments share a common vision, work to the same programme and allocate sufficient resources (additional or by redeployment) to this end.

**Bus route rationalisation:** we support the proposals. However **we propose** that they be developed with care, so as not to reduce the attractiveness of public transport and so as to ensure that any road space freed up is not taken over by private cars or other vehicles.

**Cycling network:** we support these proposals. A start may be made in New Towns such as Tin Shui Wai, where reasonable cycling infrastructure already exists, and where many find the cost of internal public transport too high. **We propose** that a holistic approach will be taken, designating a **Policy Secretary** to oversee the concerned departments to develop a programme to improve cycling arrangements in the New Towns.

24<sup>th</sup> November 2009

