



# The Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce

香 港 總 商 會

20 October 1995  
Our Ref: YSC:345

Mr Tony Cooper  
Deputy Secretary  
Planning, Environment & Lands Branch  
Murray Building  
Garden Road  
Hong Kong

Dear Mr Cooper

With reference to the Government's Consultation Paper on Reducing Emissions from Diesel Vehicles, the Chamber considered very carefully the proposals and reached its own conclusions as stated in the enclosed Chamber position paper.

We anticipate your suggestions on how to tie in the publicity of our position with the upcoming Legco debate on the issue, if appropriate.

The Chamber is very keen to have a cleaner Hong Kong and will do everything it possibly can to help pushing through the emissions reduction proposals.

Yours sincerely

Y S Cheung  
Assistant Director  
Industrial and Corporate Affairs

cc: Mr Paul Cheng - Chamber Legco Representative  
Ms Catherine Bacon - Chairman, Chamber Environment Committee  
Mr Guy Clayton - Chamber ACE Representative

bcc: D/AMI

Encl  
YSC:lw

## **Chamber Position**

### **Vehicle Emissions**

- The Chamber has been long concerned with air pollution in urban Hong Kong, which is caused mainly by vehicle emissions. Indeed, the Chamber took a proactive approach to tackle the problem by forming a working group on vehicle emissions some two years ago, to discuss and recommend to Government ways to reduce air pollution.
- The Chamber's preferred solution would be for the Government to set stringent emission standards and to enhance enforcement. This would allow the operators to choose the appropriate types of vehicles and fuels to meet these requirements.
- However, the Chamber acknowledges the difficulties explained by the Government of enforcement of engine maintenance by taxi and public light bus operators, which would make our preferred solution impracticable in Hong Kong.
- For these reasons, the Chamber strongly supports the Government's consultation paper, "Further Proposals to Reduce Emissions from Diesel Vehicles", in which a package is offered to switch from diesel to unleaded petrol, over a 5-year period, for all light-duty vehicles of four tonnes and below.
- The Chamber recognizes this is the right first step to reduce vehicle emissions and considers the financial concessions offered by Government are reasonable and fair. Of course, there is a price to be paid by light-duty vehicle operators for switching from diesel to petrol. This will have to be shared by end users. However, the gain in health and air quality far outweighs the small cumulative fare increase (over the base year), for instance of approximately 1 to 2% per annum only.
- The Chamber notes that success of the proposal requires that petrol engines and emission control equipment including catalytic converters are well maintained and replacements made when due. Therefore an effective system of inspection and enforcement will be needed.
- Whilst we endorse the Government proposals very firmly, we urge Government to have an open mind on the emission issue and to revisit the topic from time to time to take into account advances in technology for fuel and engines. In particular, the possibility of using electric vehicles, natural gas fuel and cleaner diesel engines in Hong Kong should not be shelved as a consequence of the current proposals.