

Euro IV Emission Standards for New Light Duty Motor Vehicles

Purpose

This paper consults Members about tightening the emission standards of newly registered light duty vehicles (i.e. vehicles of weight up to 3.5 tonnes) in tandem with the European Union to further improve roadside air quality. Specifically, we propose to introduce the Euro IV emission standards for:

- (a) newly registered motor vehicles each of design weight up to 2.5 tonnes from 1 January 2006; and
- (b) newly registered motor vehicles each of design weight over 2.5 tonnes but not more than 3.5 tonnes from 1 January 2007.

We also propose to upgrade the emission standards for diesel private cars to the latest California emission standards on 1 January 2006.

Background

2. Motor vehicles are the major source of roadside air pollution in Hong Kong. To reduce vehicle emissions, we have a standing policy to introduce the most stringent motor vehicle fuel and emission standards when compliant fuels and vehicles can be made available to Hong Kong. With the endorsement of the Advisory Council on the Environment and the approval of the Legislative Council, we have been implementing the Euro III vehicle emission standards since January 2001. We have also been implementing the Euro IV standards for diesel since 1 April 2002 and for petrol since 1 January 2005.

3. From 1 January 2006, the European Union will start tightening in phases its vehicle emission standards for new light duty vehicles to the Euro IV level. For light petrol vehicles, a Euro IV model will emit about 45%, 50% and 55% less nitrogen oxides, hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide respectively than a Euro III model. For light diesel vehicles (other than diesel private cars), the emission reduction will be

about 50% for both nitrogen oxides and particulates. We propose to introduce these more stringent emission standards in parallel with the European Union to further reduce roadside air pollution. Japan and US standards will be accepted whenever they are of equivalent stringency.

4. As part of the strategy to reduce reliance on diesel vehicles, we have been requiring newly registered diesel private cars to comply with the California emission standards since 1998. These emission standards were so stringent that very few diesel private car models could meet them. California upgraded the emission standards for diesel private cars in 2004. We thus propose to do likewise for the same purpose.

5 The European Union is still finalizing the Euro IV emission standards for vehicles over 3.5 tonnes. We shall seek Members' views for tightening the emission standards for these vehicles later.

Trade Consultation

6. We have consulted the Hong Kong Motor Traders Association, which comprises local representatives of major motor vehicle manufacturers, and the Right Hand Drive Motor Association (Hong Kong) Limited, which comprises representatives of parallel importers. Both organisations have no objection to the proposal. The proposed tightening of vehicle emission standards is not expected to have significant effects on vehicle prices.

Other Implications

7. We expect that the public will support the proposal because it will help further reduce the emissions of motor vehicles.

8. Implementation of the proposal will not require additional staff.

Advice Sought

9. Members are requested to advise on the proposals set out in the opening paragraph.

Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
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