

Government announces Green Transformation Roadmap of Public Buses and Taxis (with photos)

The Government today (December 10) announced the Green Transformation Roadmap of Public Buses and Taxis.

The Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Mr Tse Chin-wan, announced the Roadmap today and said, "Transportation contributes to about 20 per cent of total carbon emissions in Hong Kong. Promoting the electrification of vehicles is important for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to attain the target of carbon neutrality before 2050. Public buses and taxis generate over 1.4 million tonnes of carbon emissions each year, accounting for about 4 per cent of Hong Kong's total carbon emissions. The adoption of electric buses (e-buses) and electric taxis (e-taxis) will achieve not only a better score card in carbon reduction and air quality but also a better environment for the general public to live, work and enjoy."

The journey to full green transformation of public buses and taxis is still challenging. In addition to making good use of public money, it is also essential to avoid placing excessive burdens on the general public. The Government must, therefore, find cost-effective solutions to strike a balance. In promoting the green transformation of public buses and taxis, the Roadmap adopts three guiding principles, namely (i) primarily by "carrots but not sticks"; (ii) a gradual and orderly approach; and (iii) no additional costs to passengers as far as possible. Major measures include subsidising franchised bus operators to purchase about 600 e-buses and the taxi trades to purchase 3 000 e-taxis. The Government will issue letters to invite eligible taxi owners and the franchised bus companies to participate in the subsidy schemes within this month. In addition, the Government will continue to take a multipronged approach to encourage the industry to expand charging facilities. It is expected to provide at least 500 fast chargers throughout Hong Kong by end-2027 to cater for the expected growth in the number of electric vehicles (EVs).

In the future, the Government will also accelerate the participation of the private market in the construction of public charging facilities to fully utilise the power of the market and establish a business model applicable to the market. With rapid technological advancements and an increasing supply of EVs, the Government expects that the price differences between EVs and conventional vehicles will continue to narrow in the future, and EVs may even be cheaper than conventional vehicles, such that the Government's subsidy may no longer be needed.

Mr Tse continued, "Looking forward, new smarter technologies such as fast charging are emerging, with new models of EVs entering the market continuously. As the availability of e-buses and e-taxis continues to rise,

their prices are decreasing. We will lead the comprehensive green transformation of public buses and taxis in the most cost-effective manner, step by step, to achieve zero vehicular emissions and attain carbon neutrality before 2050."

With the concerted efforts of all sectors of society, the Government expressed confidence that Hong Kong will become greener and more beautiful in the future and move towards becoming a sustainable city where humanity and nature coexist harmoniously.

For details about the Roadmap, please visit the website of the Environment and Ecology Bureau (www.eeb.gov.hk/sites/default/files/pdf/Bus_Taxi_Roadmap_eng.pdf).

