

# Government to further reduce emission allowances of power plants

The Government published today (May 30) in the Gazette the Tenth Technical Memorandum for Allocation of Emission Allowances in Respect of Specified Licences (the Tenth TM), which aims to further reduce the emission allowances of air pollutants for power plants from 2030 onwards, thereby improving the air quality in Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta (PRD) region.

The Tenth TM, which is issued under the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (the Ordinance), reduces the annual emission allowances of sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) and respirable suspended particulates (RSPs) from the electricity sector from 2030 onwards at 2 302 tonnes, 8 350 tonnes and 317 tonnes respectively. This represents further tightening by 19 per cent, 25 per cent and 14 per cent respectively when compared with the emission allowances for the electricity sector for 2026 set under the Ninth TM.

A spokesperson for the Environment and Ecology Bureau (EEB) said, "In setting the new emission allowances, we have taken into account factors such as local electricity demand, the gas-fired electricity generation of the two power companies (including the progress of constructing new gas-fired units for replacement of coal-fired units), the emission performance of existing generating units, the estimated import of nuclear power and clean energy, and the projected electricity intake from renewable energy sources. The Government has also been requiring the two power companies to adopt the best practicable means in their plants' design and operational management to minimise emissions of air pollutants."

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The Hongkong Electric Company Limited is building a new gas-fired generating unit for operation in 2029, while an existing coal-fired generating unit will be decommissioned correspondingly by then. As for CLP Power Hong Kong Limited (CLP), driven by major infrastructure developments (such as the Northern Metropolis), the electricity demand in 2030-2031 is forecasted to be about 9 per cent higher than the forecast made in the Ninth TM. CLP plans to increase the output of its existing gas-fired generating units to meet the additional electricity demand, and will import more zero-carbon energy from the Mainland. These measures can further reduce the two power companies' reliance on coal-fired power generation, thereby reducing pollutant emissions.

ã€€ã€€The spokesperson added, "Hong Kong's air quality has been improving continuously in recent years. The ambient concentrations of SO<sub>2</sub>, nitrogen dioxide and RSPs recorded in 2024 had been reduced by 45 per cent to 88 per cent when compared with that in 2004. The number of hours of reduced visibility observed had also been greatly reduced by 82 per cent from its peak in 2004. The significant improvement is also attributable to the

Government's efforts in implementing measures to reduce air pollutant emissions from power plants. As emissions from the electricity sector accounted for 61 per cent, 27 per cent and 13 per cent of the territory-wide emissions of SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub> and RSPs respectively in 2022, the tightened emission allowances for power plants will help further improve the air quality in Hong Kong and the PRD region.

“In case of new electricity works, we will allocate emission allowances based on the emission performance of a new gas-fired generating unit adopting the latest technology. The EEB will review the TM again not later than 2027 to ensure timely revision of the emission allowances.”

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The Tenth TM will be tabled at the Legislative Council on June 4 for commencement by the end of 2025. In accordance with the Ordinance, the new set of emission allowances will come into effect on January 1, 2030.