

LCQ17: Handling of waste vehicle tyres

Following is a question by the Hon Frankie Yick and a written reply by the Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Mr Tse Chin-wan, in the Legislative Council today (March 19):

Question:

According to the paper submitted by the Environment and Ecology Bureau to the Panel on Environmental Affairs of this Council in November 2023 (the paper), nearly 30 000 tonnes of waste vehicle tyres were generated in Hong Kong in 2021, of which 70 per cent were generally first cut and disposed of at landfills, and only some 20 per cent were retreaded and reused or recycled. It has been learnt that although waste vehicle tyres disposed of at landfills will be cut first, it still takes a long time for them to decompose, which also leads to the problem of landfills being exhausted. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the total weight of waste vehicle tyres generated in Hong Kong in each of the past three years, with a breakdown by the following methods for their disposal: (i) recovered and recycled locally, (ii) recovered and exported after treatment, and (iii) disposed of at landfills;

(2) of the weight of landfilled waste vehicle tyres that were handled by the Government in the past three years, and its percentage in the weight of all waste vehicle tyres disposed of at landfills; the reasons for not recovering and recycling such waste vehicle tyres;

(3) Whether the Government has compiled statistics on the maximum handling capacity, actual handling capacity and remaining handling capacity of waste vehicle tyre recyclers in the market at present; if so, of the details; if not, whether it will compile such statistics;

(4) Given that it has been learnt that in order to promote the local recycling industry, the Government had allocated 20 sites for lease to the industry by January 2024, of the details of such sites, including their location and size, the recycling projects involved, and the number of such sites used for handling waste vehicle tyres; and

(5) Given that the paper proposes that landfills no longer accept and handle the disposal of waste vehicle tyres, when the proposal is expected to be formally implemented?

Reply:

President,

About 20 000 tonnes of vehicle tyre waste are generated in Hong Kong every year, of which some are retreaded for reuse or recycled. Vehicle tyre

waste can be processed to recover metals, cut and shredded into crumb rubber as raw materials for other products, or utilised as alternative fuel as a means of converting waste to energy.

The reply to the question raised by the Hon Frankie Yick is as follows:

(1) Statistics on vehicle tyre waste generation by weight and handling method each year from 2021 to 2023 are tabulated below. The figures show that the proportion of vehicle tyre waste being recycled and retreaded for reuse is increasing year by year. Statistics for 2024 are still under compilation.

Year	Quantity recycled locally (tonnes)	Quantity exported for recycling (tonnes)	Quantity disposed of at landfills (Note 1) (tonnes)	Total quantity of vehicle tyre waste (Noted 1, Note 2) (tonnes)
2021	7 600	40	19 900	27 500
2022	10 200	0	16 200	26 500
2023	13 900	20	14 300	28 300

Note 1: The quantity includes a small quantity of other tyres which cannot be classified.

Note 2: The sum of individual items may not equal to total due to rounding.

(2) and (5) At present, tyres replaced during vehicle maintenance services undertaken by government departments are usually sent to contractors for retreading and reuse, or to recyclers for shredding and recycling. Vehicle tyre waste collected in public places by government departments and their outsourced service contractors is currently delivered to landfills for disposal. The relevant figures from 2021 to 2023 are tabulated below. Statistics of 2024 are still under compilation.

Year	Quantity of landfilled vehicle tyre waste collected by government departments (tonnes)	Percentage to vehicle tyre waste disposed of at landfills (Per cent)
2021	2 160	11
2022	2 570	16
2023	2 530	18

The Government has been maintaining regular meetings with the tyre trade and disseminating information on recycling of vehicle tyre waste (such as contact information of collectors and recyclers) through relevant trade associations, tyre dealers, retailers as well as vehicle repair workshops, with a view to facilitating their recycling arrangement.

Meanwhile the Government plans to introduce an amendment bill to the Legislative Council in the first half of 2025 to establish a common

legislative framework for the producer responsibility schemes (PRSs). Upon the passage of the amendment bill by the Legislative Council, we will progressively cover more products under the PRSs, including vehicle tyres, in the light of prevailing circumstances. The Government shall implement the PRSs based on a market-led approach by which recycling service will be provided by the market, allowing the relevant stakeholders to jointly share the eco-responsibility. We will also set statutory recovery targets in order to ensure vehicle tyre waste are properly collected and treated, for the sake of enhancing the recycling rate of vehicle tyre waste as well as promoting the development of local circular economy.

In addition, the amendment bill will amend the scope of waste control to accommodate the subsequent implementation of various PRSs. Upon the implementation of the PRS for vehicle tyres in future, designated waste disposal facilities (including landfills) will no longer accept and handle vehicle tyre waste, for the purpose of diverting them to recycling facilities for recycling.

(3) Based on the Waste Recovery Survey conducted by the Environmental Protection Department, the maximum recycling capacity for vehicle tyre waste was around 25 000 tonnes while the actual recycling quantity was around 14 000 tonnes in 2023.

(4) As of January 31, 2025, among the 20 short-term tenancy (STT) sites for exclusive bidding and use by the recycling industry, one of them is being used for the processing of tyre waste. Information on the 20 STT sites is set out at Annex.