

EPD announces 2020 air quality monitoring results

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) announced today (January 8) an overview of Hong Kong's air quality in 2020. The annual average concentrations of five major air pollutants, namely respirable suspended particulates (PM10), fine suspended particulates (PM2.5), nitrogen dioxide (NO2), sulphur dioxide (SO2) and ozone (O3) in 2020 are listed in Annex 1.

With the continuous implementation of emission reduction measures and collaboration with Guangdong Province to improve air quality in the Pearl River Delta (PRD) Region over the years, the overall air quality in Hong Kong has shown a discernible improvement. From 1999 to 2020, the ambient concentrations of PM10, PM2.5, NO2 and SO2 have been reduced by 43 per cent to 80 per cent from their highest levels. In 2020, the overall ambient annual average concentrations of these pollutants in the territory are 27 micrograms per cubic metre ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$), 15 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, 33 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ and 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ respectively, meeting the Air Quality Objectives (AQOs) limits. Their concentrations at the roadside have been reduced by 43 per cent to 82 per cent from their highest levels as well in the same period (as detailed in Annex 2). As for smog, the number of hours of reduced visibility in Hong Kong has been greatly reduced by 78 per cent from its peak. Furthermore, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao PRD Regional Air Quality Monitoring Network recorded a continuous reduction in regional PM2.5, which has reflected evident improvement in regional air quality in recent years. The analysis of satellite data conducted by the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology also shows that the PM2.5 level in the PRD Region has improved significantly (as detailed in Annex 3).

Although roadside NO2 shows a significant declining trend, it is still at a high level. Its annual average concentration in 2020 was 70 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, exceeding the AQOs limit (40 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$). Although commercial vehicles (including trucks, buses, light buses and taxis) account for only about 20 per cent of the total number of vehicles, they are the main source of nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions at the roadside, accounting for more than 90 per cent of the total NOx emissions of all vehicles in Hong Kong. Therefore, commercial vehicles will remain the focus of the Government's efforts to improve roadside air quality.

Meanwhile, ambient O3 is still on a long-term upward trend. An EPD spokesman said, "O3 is a complicated air pollution issue as well as a regional issue. It is not directly emitted from pollution sources but formed by photochemical reactions between NOx and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) under sunlight. The rise in our O3 in recent years could be attributed to high regional background O3 and reduction in NOx emissions from local vehicles, which will also indirectly lead to an increase in roadside and urban O3 levels (with less nitric oxide to react with and titrate O3, resulting in more O3 remaining in the ambient air). Nevertheless, reducing NOx emissions can reduce NO2 levels, and the sustained regional efforts to

reduce NO_x and VOCs will help reduce the overall O₃ level and its exceedances in the region and Hong Kong in the long run. We will step up control on VOCs, enhance regional collaboration and conduct scientific studies to deal with the O₃ problem."

Based on the experience in improving air pollution in Europe and the United States, a lag effect is often encountered in the improvement of O₃ concentration. Owing to the complicated photochemical reactions involved, at the early stage of smog problem improvement and NO_x reduction, there is usually an increase in O₃ levels. The O₃ concentrations do not start declining until the emission reduction work has taken place continuously for a certain period. Regional collaboration is the key to O₃ reduction. The Hong Kong and Guangdong governments have commenced a study on post-2020 regional air pollutant emission reduction targets and concentration levels, with a view to formulating emission reduction targets to 2030. To combat the regional O₃ problem, the governments of Hong Kong, Guangdong and Macao will launch a three-year joint study on "Characterization of photochemical ozone formation, regional and super-regional transportation in the Greater Bay Area" this year, in order to better understand the origins of O₃ precursors, its formation mechanism and regional as well as super-regional transportation characteristics in the Greater Bay Area. In addition, the Hong Kong and Guangdong governments are introducing VOCs real-time monitoring in the regional air quality monitoring network by stages. The Hong Kong SAR Government is installing a Light Detection and Ranging system to measure real-time vertical and three-dimensional distribution of the concentrations of O₃ and particulates, as well as meteorological data at higher altitudes for tracking transportation of pollutants over Hong Kong, with a view to formulating policies to reduce O₃ pollution.

"The Environment Bureau released in 2013 'A Clean Air Plan for Hong Kong' and has been implementing a wide range of emission reduction measures targeting local emission sources such as land transport, sea transport, power plants and so on. The measures include completing the phasing out of some 80,000 pre-Euro IV diesel commercial vehicles last year, strengthening the control of emissions of petrol and liquefied petroleum gas vehicles, tightening vehicle emission standards, progressively tightening the emissions of power plants and requiring vessels to use cleaner fuel, etc. Further control measures were rolled out, such as a new scheme to progressively phase out about 40,000 Euro IV diesel commercial vehicles and the introduction of a \$2 billion EV-charging at Home Subsidy Scheme to promote installation of electric vehicle charging-enabling infrastructure in car parks of existing private residential buildings, with both being launched in October 2020," the spokesman said. The details of the emission reduction measures are set out in Annex 4.

Regarding the review of the AQOs, taking into account various factors and views gathered, the Government recommends tightening three AQOs, namely the 24-hour AQO of SO₂, the annual AQO and 24-hour AQO of PM_{2.5}. The Government plans to introduce an amendment bill to the Legislative Council for promulgating the new AQOs as soon as possible. In the first quarter of 2021, the Government will launch Hong Kong's first roadmap on the

popularisation of electric vehicles. The Government will also later update the "Clean Air Plan for Hong Kong", with a view to formulating long-term plans to further improve Hong Kong's air quality.

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 9am today (January 8), 49 COVID-19 confirmed patients were discharged from hospital in the last 24 hours. So far, a total of 8 307 patients with confirmed or probable infection have been discharged.

At present, there are 688 negative pressure rooms in public hospitals with 1 253 negative pressure beds activated. A total of 615 confirmed patients are currently hospitalised in 23 public hospitals and a community treatment facility, among which 42 patients are in critical condition, 46 are in serious condition and the remaining 527 patients are in stable condition.

Furthermore, an 89-year-old male COVID-19 confirmed patient (case number: 7725) passed away today. The patient, with chronic illness, was admitted to United Christian Hospital on December 15, 2020, due to fever, cough and shortness of breath and tested positive for COVID-19 on the same day. His condition continued to deteriorate and he eventually succumbed at 12.36pm today. Including the above patient, 152 COVID-19 patients have passed away in public hospitals so far.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

Details of the above-mentioned patients are as follows:

Patient condition	Case numbers
Discharged	7584, 7710, 7931, 7988, 8095, 8102, 8131, 8158, 8159, 8184, 8218, 8248, 8257, 8267, 8325, 8326, 8361, 8414, 8438, 8442, 8469, 8478, 8485, 8506, 8519, 8529, 8565, 8573, 8579, 8591, 8598, 8641, 8684, 8700, 8708, 8715, 8791, 8803, 8826, 8848, 8865, 8895, 8929, 8969, 8992, 9002, 9051, 9087, 9107

Critical	1989, 3496, 5409, 5511, 5735, 5754, 6125, 6232, 6255, 6386, 6444, 6547, 6607, 6754, 6794, 6824, 6913, 6920, 7021, 7123, 7259, 7323, 7424, 7680, 8018, 8055, 8069, 8078, 8126, 8195, 8323, 8384, 8449, 8452, 8564, 8636, 8820, 8900, 8937, 9049, 9060, 9081
Serious	5739, 5745, 5990, 6258, 6543, 6681, 6850, 6921, 7076, 7127, 7208, 7301, 7305, 7468, 7580, 7632, 7635, 7653, 7824, 7882, 7964, 7986, 8187, 8221, 8235, 8245, 8371, 8443, 8446, 8477, 8544, 8558, 8587, 8603, 8610, 8611, 8738, 8753, 8819, 8832, 8866, 8931, 9015, 9033, 9040, 9045

[Import of poultry meat and products from Senegal and areas in Poland and Netherlands suspended](#)

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (January 8) that in view of a notification from the General Veterinary Inspectorate of Poland about outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza in Radzynski District of Lubelskie Region in Poland, and notifications from the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) about outbreaks of highly pathogenic H5N8 avian influenza in the Province of Noord Brabant in the Netherlands and highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza in Senegal, the CFS has instructed the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products (including poultry eggs) from the above-mentioned areas with immediate effect to protect public health in Hong Kong.

A CFS spokesman said that since Hong Kong has not established any protocol with Senegal for the import of poultry meat and eggs, there is no import of such commodities from the country. According to the Census and Statistics Department, in the first nine months of last year, Hong Kong imported about 9 900 tonnes of frozen poultry meat and about 21.32 million poultry eggs from Poland, and about 4 600 tonnes of frozen poultry meat from the Netherlands.

"The CFS has contacted the Polish, Dutch and Senegalese authorities over the issues and will closely monitor information issued by the OIE and the relevant authorities on the avian influenza outbreaks. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation," the spokesman said.

Government to sell site in Kai Tak by public tender

The Lands Department (LandsD) announced today (January 8) that a site, New Kowloon Inland Lot No. 6604 at Kai Tak Area 4E Site 2, Kai Tak, Kowloon, in the 2020-21 Land Sale Programme, will be disposed of by public tender. The tender invitation for the lot will commence on January 15 and close on February 11.

New Kowloon Inland Lot No. 6604 has a site area of about 10,948 square metres and is designated for non-industrial (excluding office, godown, hotel and petrol filling station) purposes. The minimum gross floor area is 36,129 sq m and the maximum gross floor area that may be attained is 60,214 sq m.

Land sale documents including the Form of Tender, the Tender Notice, the Conditions of Sale and the sale plan of the lot will be available for downloading from the LandsD website (www.landsd.gov.hk), and the sale plan will be available for distribution and inspection by the public from January 15, when the particulars of the tender will also be gazetted.

Upgraded LegCo App brings new features

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council Secretariat (the Secretariat) released an upgraded version (version 5.0) of the mobile application for the Legislative Council (LegCo App) today (January 8).

The Secretariat launched the LegCo App as a tool to facilitate users to access the latest information about LegCo business on mobile devices. In version 5.0, the contents of "What's New" are enhanced to provide more information, including "What's on", "Invitation for Submission", "Research Publications" and "Latest Publications".

The enhanced "What's New" contents are as follows:

What's on

Users can receive updates on the latest activities of LegCo and its committees and Members through "What's on".

Invitation for Submission

Users can view LegCo committees' invitations to the public for making written submissions or oral representations at the committee meetings through "Invitation for Submission".

Research Publications

Users can read the latest research publications prepared by the Research Office of the Secretariat through "Research Publications".

Latest Publications

Users can find the latest LegCo reports and publications reporting on the operation and work of the Council and its committees through "Latest Publications".

Apart from the aforementioned four newly added categories of information, users can continue to view the latest press releases issued by the Secretariat through "Press Release" on the home page of the LegCo App. In addition, Members' Biographies and Contact Directory, Calendar, Webcast, Rules and Practices and Photo Gallery along with functions of Social Media Sharing and Push Notification are also available on the LegCo App.

Members of the public are welcome to download the upgraded LegCo App (version 5.0) or perform upgrade for free from Apple App Store or Google Play, as appropriate, for their mobile devices to keep themselves abreast of the LegCo business. The LegCo App is also available for download from the LegCo Website at www.legco.gov.hk/english/mobile-app.html. It supports devices running on Apple iOS (version 10.0 or above) and Android (version 6.0 or above).