

Three more trial projects on hydrogen fuel technology given agreement-in-principle by Inter-departmental Working Group on Using Hydrogen as Fuel

A spokesman for the Environment and Ecology Bureau (EEB) today (June 8) said that the Inter-departmental Working Group on Using Hydrogen as Fuel (the Working Group) led by the EEB has given agreement-in-principle to three more applications of trial projects on hydrogen fuel technology at its meeting on June 7.

The three projects given agreement-in-principle this time concern one application submitted by Sinopec (Hong Kong) Limited to try out a hydrogen refuelling station at Au Tau, Yuen Long, one application submitted by MTR Corporation Limited to conduct a test run with a hydrogen fuelled light rail vehicle (LRV) in Tuen Mun not involved in carrying passengers, and one application submitted by Linde HKO Limited to try out the use of a hydrogen tube trailer to deliver hydrogen to a hydrogen fuelled LRV.

A spokesman of the EEB said, "The Working Group received the above three applications of trial projects between September and November last year, and has subsequently examined these applications and provided advice to the applicants. Following the applicants' enhancement on the designs and technical details to ensure that the trial projects can be carried out smoothly and safely, the Working Group has given agreement-in-principle to the three applications at its meeting on June 7 this year. Amongst them, for the hydrogen fuelling station at Au Tau, Yuen Long, planning permission in relation to such use has to be sought from the Town Planning Board separately. According to the targets of the applicants, the trial project on the hydrogen refuelling station at Au Tau, Yuen Long, and the two trial projects related to a hydrogen fuelled LRV will commence in mid-2024 and the second half of 2024 respectively."

Together with the first batch of three applications given agreement-in-principle on March 28 this year, the Working Group has examined and given agreement-in-principle to a total of six trial projects. The Working Group will closely monitor the progress of the various projects, continue to examine other applications and require the applicants to incorporate the Working Group's comments for enhancing their trial projects. Through the use of applicable interim standards as well as data and experiences collected from various trial projects on hydrogen fuel technology, the Government endeavours to get prepared as early as possible for the local application and provision of supporting facilities in future.

The spokesman supplemented, "The Working Group has also examined the government departments' plans to commence trials of hydrogen fuel cell heavy vehicles for street cleaning via a contractor engaged by them. We expect to commence the trials by next year. In addition, the Government's target is to complete within this year the ongoing consultancy studies on formulation of technical guidelines pertinent to a hydrogen fuel system, a hydrogen refuelling station and quantitative risk assessment. The Government also plans to engage a consultant in the third quarter of this year to study the details amending the Gas Safety Ordinance (Cap. 51) to cover hydrogen fuel and conduct the business impact assessment.

"We will also closely monitor the development of other new energy transport technologies, and keep pace with the global development, with a view to working out a practicable strategy for Hong Kong to promote carbon emission reduction through green transport. Our targets by 2025 are to announce a roadmap for the promotion of electric public transport and commercial vehicles, as well as formulating the long-term strategies for the application of hydrogen energy in land transport, in order to help guide Hong Kong towards zero vehicular emissions before 2050."

The Working Group is formed by the EEB, the Transport and Logistics Bureau, the Development Bureau, the Security Bureau, the Environmental Protection Department, the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, the Fire Services Department, the Transport Department, the Marine Department, the Planning Department, the Lands Department, the Buildings Department and the Architectural Services Department.