

## **Government must do more to reduce air pollution levels**

The Hong Kong government should replace the existing outdated air quality objectives without delay and adopt the highest updated international standards.

A well-defined timetable is needed to show our commitment to achieving interim and long-term targets. Engineers are keen to take an active role in implementing additional emission control measures and help accelerate the clean air programme.

New technology is the key to the success of emission controls. With stringent air quality objectives proposed, the government should actively support the environmental industry on business and technology development through tax concessions and other incentives.

On cost sharing by the community, the administration has downplayed the financial benefits of maintaining good air quality, such as reduced medical expenses, better working conditions, improving productivity and attracting foreign investment.

The government must reduce total expenditure and generate more income, thereby balancing out the cost of implementing the new emission control measures. The cost of putting in place the new measures should firstly be shared by the government and those enterprises producing emissions and lastly by the community.

An estimated 20 per cent increase in electricity tariffs and 15 per cent increase in bus fares upon implementation of emission control measures are too high and should be revised downward to affordable levels to gain community support.

The government should work with Guangdong province to review regional air quality objectives and to implement emission control measures. More scientific research on regional air pollution and climate change should be undertaken.

Many of the government's 19 proposed emission control measures are not new ideas.

Most of them require strategic planning, effective prioritisation and integrated co-ordination of policy areas under the jurisdiction of various bureaus.

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