

Do you have an old diesel vehicle? Hong Kong government may pay you to take it off the road in bid to reduce roadside pollution

[scmp.com/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/2167887/do-you-have-old-diesel-vehicle-hong-kong](https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/2167887/do-you-have-old-diesel-vehicle-hong-kong)

October 10, 2018



About 40,000 old, polluting diesel vehicles used by the commercial sector will be taken off the streets in five years as part of the Hong Kong government's long fight against roadside air pollution.

Hong Kong News

Get updates direct to your inbox

By registering you agree to our [T&Cs](#) & [Privacy Policy](#)

The plans include ex gratia payments to incentivise 40,000 owners of "Euro IV" diesel commercial vehicles to replace their vehicles with cleaner "Euro VI" ones by 2023, and to study the feasibility of eliminating all new private diesel cars.

The measures were announced on Wednesday in Chief Executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor's second policy address, and ahead of anticipated results from the government's five-yearly review of Air Quality Objectives (AQO) later this year.



“Improving roadside air quality to better protect public health has always been a key environmental priority of the government,” Lam said. “Over the past five years, roadside concentrations of key air pollutants, namely respirable suspended particulates and nitrogen dioxide, have been reduced by around 30 per cent.”

One major policy move to achieve such a reduction was a similar scheme launched in 2013 to progressively retire 82,000 commercial diesel vehicles graded Euro III or lower. The last of these will be phased out by next year, and green groups have repeatedly asked “what next”.

Hong Kong follows the European Union’s emissions standards grading scheme. The newest and cleanest vehicles around the world are at Euro VI, but pre- Euro and Euro I one vehicles were still plying the city’s streets as recently as 2016.

Hong Kong government to miss roadside pollution targets

The differences in emissions are stark. “A Euro VI vehicle belches out 90 per cent less nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) than a Euro IV vehicle,” a government source said. “By 2024, about 1,300 tonnes of NO₂ can be offset [from this policy move].”

Meanwhile, Lam said the Environmental Protection Department would consult stakeholders and commission a study on the feasibility of halting all new registrations of diesel private cars. These vehicles make up roughly a fifth of the private car fleet.

Other measures include tightening emissions standards for 50,000 motorbikes, a major source of volatile organic compound emissions. The pollutant is a major precursor for ozone pollution.

Authorities will also subsidise trials for franchised bus companies to retrofit some of their fleet with better catalytic converters, devices that clean up vehicle exhaust.

The Clean Air Network, a non-profit organisation, welcomed the Euro IV phase-out but called for more drastic action such as setting targets to electrify the commercial and bus fleets, establish more lower emissions zones, and speed up the implementation of electronic road pricing.

“The government should electrify the entire bus fleet by no later than 2036,” the group said.