

PRESS RELEASE

Zero Emissions Mobility Consortium Calls for Collaboration with Government on Decarbonisation of Hong Kong's Public Road Transport

HONG KONG, 26 July 2022 – All franchised bus operators, power companies, and a variety of academic, research, and non-profit organisations, have come together and made an unprecedented alliance, named the Zero Emissions Mobility Consortium (“ZEMC”), to urge the HKSAR Government to consider our recommendations to collaborate closely with ZEMC to realise the zero emission goal for Hong Kong and create a time-specific road transport decarbonisation roadmap.

In the 14th Five-Year Plan, the Central Government has enacted regulations, incentivising policies, infrastructure support, and innovation policies in order to achieve carbon neutrality within respective transportation sectors.

“Consortium members have demonstrated that industries can move faster, more ambitiously and collectively,” said Evan Auyang, Civic Exchange board chair. “Over the past year, there has been a divergence of expectations, tensions and arguments, but all parties have shared common visions and goals. Today, the common goal of zero-emission mobility has overcome corporate or individual interests” he added.

The ZEMC believes that for Hong Kong to meet its carbon neutrality goals, a policy package is needed to address the city's unique operating challenges, including i) limited zero emission makes-and-model availability for franchised buses, ii) vehicle driving range(s) insufficient for Hong Kong's intensive bus operation, iii) high capital investment costs for zero-emission buses operation including the high prices of buses and infrastructure installation, and iv) passenger capacity losses.

To address these challenges and create favourable conditions for the franchised bus zero-emission transition, the ZEMC proposes a full decarbonisation pathway comprising approaches in vehicle technology, refuelling infrastructure, vehicle regulatory framework, and funding model. With a white paper endorsed by its members, the ZEMC aims to provide concrete recommendations to the Administration as well as Legislators, assisting them in bringing about the desired policy changes.

ZEMC recommends SIX key action points for Government to accelerate decarbonisation

1. Provide a time-specific zero-emission roadmap for the Franchised Bus, having regard to our understanding that the registration of new buses fitted with internal combustion engine vehicles may be banned by as early as Year 2032.
2. Expedite and enlarge scale of trials for both battery electric buses and hydrogen fuel cell buses with the franchised bus operators by testing out operating performance under fleet level scale and identifying viable technology.
3. Amend the regulations to facilitate for technology development and adoption of BEBs and hydrogen fuel cell buses.
4. Conduct cross-bureau policy coordination for the relevant transport standards and infrastructure development and development of standards.
5. Define an appropriate franchised bus public transportation operating model for commercial operators to support the transition.
6. Make significant investments in achieving a quantified modal shift target to public transport, while making its path towards zero emissions.

“Last November, we have conducted a public opinion survey, which found that 72% of Hong Kong citizens support switching all franchised buses to zero-emission. Public support is evident,” said Patrick Fung, CEO of Clean Air Network. “A successful transition to a zero-emission bus fleet will set a role model for other industries to follow and consequently enhance public health and general well-being of the city.”

In the pathway towards net zero, all facets of society will need to internalise the externality costs of carbon emissions, with the operators being incentivised by Government to ensure alignment in achieving the common decarbonisation objectives. With oil prices remaining at elevated levels, the need to decarbonise Hong Kong’s public transportation system is further intensifying.

The ZEMC hopes to collaborate with the Government and take these recommendations into consideration and work together to resolve both technical and non-technical issues while propelling Hong Kong’s decarbonisation strategy for the road transport sector.

About the ZEMC

The Zero Emissions Mobility Consortium was formed in July 2021 with the objective to build knowledge, engage stakeholders, and advise on public policy on decarbonising the transport sector. The Consortium comprises major franchised bus operators, power companies, and a variety of academic, research, and non-profit organisations.

Members attended nine meetings which took place from July 2021 to June 2022. All such meetings were hosted in a manner of transparency, proportionality, and non-discrimination, where Members drove discussions and the floor was open to all. As a result, Members reached a consensus on recommendations informed by facts and research, leading to the creation of the white paper, which has been vetted and jointly produced by all Members.

Members of the ZEMC (listed by category, in alphabetical order)

Company/Institution/Organisation/ Academics	Category
Citybus Limited	Franchised bus operators
Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited	
New Lantao Bus Company (1973) Limited	
CLP Power Hong Kong Limited	Power companies
The Hong Kong and China Gas Company Limited (Towngas)	
Power Assets Holdings Limited	
Prof HUNG Wing-tat (The Hong Kong Polytechnic University)	Academics
Prof Hong Kam LO (The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology)	
Civic Exchange	Research and non-profit organisations
Clean Air Network	

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