



THE HONG KONG INSTITUTE OF
SURVEYORS

30 April 2010

By Post & Email

Environmental Protection Department
Waste Management Policy Group
Room 4522, 45th Floor
Revenue Tower
5 Gloucester Road
Hong Kong

Dear Sirs,

Consultation Document

Safe and Sustainable: A New Producer Responsibility Scheme for Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment

The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors supports in principle the implementation of the scheme. However, we have reservations on some of the proposals in the consultation document and would like to offer our comments for your consideration:

- 1) Interested investor(s) must be nurtured initially since the business will involve huge amounts of capital and operation expenses in the initial set-up. License to be issued should be more than one in order to avoid monopoly and for contingency in continual waste handling, just in case any one of them encounters problems. If possible, the Government may consider implementation of the scheme by means of public-private partnership to increase attraction of investment and also for security of operation continuity.
- 2) The possible effect of pollution in the region should not be undermined in the process of temporary storage and handling of waste. The location of treatment plant should be carefully selected, better at a remote area. Hong Kong is different from Japan or Taiwan, and people are disinclined to having a waste treatment plant being located at a residential or recreational area.

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- 3) Prior-sufficient-consultation must be conducted among district councils for avoidance of social disputes. Support from green organizations and biochemical professors may be necessary and useful in comforting citizens.
- 4) The lessons learnt from the undesirable example of Ecopark at Tuen Mun should not be repeated.
- 5) It is recommended that any charges shall be levied at the time of EE product selling, instead of at the time of disposal for avoidance of any illegal disposal and related arguments/disputes. The levy would be better in the form of a fixed percentage of selling price instead of a fixed lump sum based on the product's size, power, etc. for simpler and easier execution, just like sales tax. The levy may not be necessary for separate quoting or collection, i.e. 隱式收費, however, it should be listed in the receipt for transparency. An appropriate and durable label should then be affixed to the EE product for identification.
- 6) Unless such a label is internationally recognized by other countries (upon lobbying and efforts by HKSAR Government), a levy refund system should be set up for tourists to claim/ declare when they take the EE products (brought in HK) with them upon their departure, just like sales tax refund.
- 7) Contingent system should be set up for the loss or damage of label before or at the time of EE product disposal. Re-cycle and Treat (R & T) coupons (回收處理券) may help in this way .
- 8) Levy collected should be deposited into a fund overseen by the Government, for green education and promotion, encouragement of public participation, or even subsidization to the re-cycling industry, if necessary.
- 9) We also have concerns on the following:
 - a. What will the Government do against illegal disposal of EE product?
 - b. Will a fine and/ or term of imprisonment be exercised? If so, what will be the extent of liability? Will it be similar to the prosecution against smoking or littering – say HK\$1,500 fixed lump sum for each time?



- c. Who will be acting as the enforcement authority?
- d. Who are the targets of control – product consumer (primary/ 1st hand, secondary/ 2nd hand, or others?), disposer, premises/ property manager, owners' corporation, and/ or others?

Thank you for your kind attention and we sincerely hope that the above points will be duly addressed with the questions clarified in your next round of consultation. The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors is willing to render further comments and suggestions on the scheme in the next phase of consultation.

Yours sincerely,

Edwin Tang

Honorary Secretary