

Commencement notice for Air Pollution Control (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 gazetted

The Government published in the Gazette today (May 14) the Air Pollution Control (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 (Commencement) Notice (the Commencement Notice).

The Legislative Council passed the Air Pollution Control (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 (the Amendment Ordinance) on April 28 to tighten three air quality objectives (AQOs), namely the 24-hour AQO for sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and the annual and 24-hour AQOs of fine suspended particulates (FSP/PM_{2.5}) stipulated in Schedule 5 to the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (APCO) (Cap. 311) (see Annex) and to provide a transitional arrangement for designated projects with Environmental Permits (EPs) granted under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO) (Cap. 499) before the commencement of the new AQOs.

The Commencement Notice seeks to appoint January 1, 2022, as the day on which the Amendment Ordinance comes into operation.

A spokesman for the Environment Bureau said, "If the Legislative Council passes the Commencement Notice, the new AQOs will take effect on January 1, 2022. To preserve the integrity of the environmental impact assessment system and follow the past arrangement when updating the AQOs, for designated projects with EPs granted under the EIAO before the commencement of the new AQOs, the AQOs which took effect on January 1, 2014, will be applicable to an application for a variation of the EPs lodged within 36 months of the commencement of the new AQOs."

The Commencement Notice will be tabled at the Legislative Council for negative vetting on May 26.