

LCQ20: EV-charging at Home Subsidy Scheme

Following is a question by the Hon Frankie Yick and a written reply by the Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, in the Legislative Council today (October 20):

Question:

To promote popularisation of electric vehicles, the Government launched the EV-charging at Home Subsidy Scheme (EHSS) in October 2020. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of (i) the number of applications received by the Government and the total number of parking spaces involved, (ii) the number of applications approved by the Government as well as the total amount of subsidies and the total number of parking spaces involved, and (iii) the total number of applications rejected by the Government together with a breakdown by major reason for rejection, since the launch of EHSS;

(2) as one of the eligibility criteria for EHSS is that among all the eligible parking spaces in a car park, the proportion of those in open area must be less than 60 per cent, but there are comments that from the perspective of prudent use of public money, such criterion is unnecessary since EHSS has specified a ceiling of subsidy (i.e. \$30,000 for each parking space or \$15 million for the entire housing court, whichever is lower), whether the Government will, based on the principle of fairness, remove such eligibility criterion so that more housing courts may participate in EHSS; and

(3) as the Secretary for the Environment indicated in May this year that the public response to EHSS had been overwhelming and, as a result, the commitment of EHSS had almost reached the allocation amount of \$2 billion, whether the Government will expeditiously complete a review of the effectiveness of EHSS and the Government's financial position, so as to decide if there is a need to allocate additional funding to EHSS; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Government has launched the \$2 billion EV-charging at Home Subsidy Scheme (EHSS) on October 21, 2020, to subsidise installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging-enabling infrastructure in car parks of existing private buildings. Regarding the questions raised by the Hon Frankie Yick, my replies are as follows:

(1) The market response to the EHSS has been overwhelming. By the end of September 2021, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has received more than 500 applications involving over 108 000 parking spaces. Among these applications, we have approved 180 applications involving over 40 000 parking spaces.

The housing estates with approvals given are progressively procuring the services of a consultant to design and monitor the installation works of the EV charging-enabling infrastructure carried out by the contractor. We will know the amount of subsidies to be granted to applications after each approved housing estate has completed the public tendering of engaging the services of a consultant and a contractor to conduct the installation works respectively.

On the other hand, by the end of September 2021, the EPD has rejected a total of six applications which failed to meet the eligibility criteria of the EHSS.

(2) and (3) The Government needs to set out a suitable subsidy framework and clear eligibility criteria for application for the EHSS, so that we can make good use of the limited resources provided under the subsidy scheme.

As the EHSS is welcomed by the market, we are now reviewing the subsidy framework and eligibility criteria by making reference to the experience and data obtained and the feedback from the stakeholders since the launch of EHSS. In order to facilitate low-carbon transformation to tie in with the Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2050 and further improve the air quality, when there is additional funding, we will examine how to cover more car parks with different layouts and conditions in the EHSS, so as to help more car parks of existing private housing estates to be equipped with the EV charging-enabling infrastructure and encourage those who have a need to drive to switch to EVs.