

Transcript of remarks by SEN

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, on the implementation of the Producer Responsibility Scheme on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment before attending a meeting with the Kwai Tsing District Council today (August 2):

Reporter: Mr Wong, there is only one contractor, Alba, collecting old items from households and collection time may take days. If citizens do not want to keep a bulky item like an old fridge at home for so long, they may need to pay to the sellers at extra cost for a speedier collection service. So, do you think the policy is adding burden to consumers?

Secretary for the Environment: We have to understand that similar policies around the world actually require the balancing of all the concerned factors. The idea is that, if one would like to buy a new appliance, he should have a certain plan in advance. Say, if he would like the new appliance to be delivered in three days after (the day of) purchase, then they can easily match their purchase plan with the free removal service on the same day. So, it is actually a kind of reasonable arrangement.

Reporter: There is only one contractor handling all cases. Do you think it has enough capacity to handle all service requests in Hong Kong?

Secretary for the Environment: Regarding the capacity, there are actually two aspects. Firstly is the end-of-pipe capacity. That means whether the facility has adequate recycling capacity. The chosen recycler by most of the retailers actually has a plant in the EcoPark. Their basic capacity can handle about half of the total concerned electronic waste (e-waste) in Hong Kong. So it's good enough. At the same time, there are two other licensed operators and altogether they can handle all concerned e-waste in Hong Kong. In terms of end-of-pipe capacity, it should be enough. Actually, I want to add that currently not all the e-waste is taken for recycling. Some of them are in pretty good shape and they can be reused. The second aspect is about logistics, whether the operators have the capacity to take those old items from your home or premises to the plants. Actually this is quite flexible because operators can easily engage more logistic operators to cope with the situation. It's a matter of choice that most retailers have chosen one licensed operator at present. Given this situation, the chosen operator has already beefed up its logistic capacity. The performance pledge of "T+3" free removal service (collecting the waste equipment three working days after receipt of the service requests from the sellers) should be able to achieve by 100 per cent.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)