



**BY EMAIL ONLY**

Ms. Maisie Cheng  
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Director of Environmental Protection  
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27 March, 2020

Dear Sir/Madams,

**A Brief Review of AQHI Data of Hong Kong for 2019**

Green Power, a local charitable green group, has been monitoring the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) and the previous Air Pollution Index (API) data for over a decade. Enclosed with this letter is a brief report produced by Green Power regarding our AQHI analyses, i.e. *A Brief Review of AQHI Data of Hong Kong for 2019*.

From the AQHI statistics provided by EPD for 13 General Air Quality Monitoring Stations (General Stations) during 2014-2019 (Table 6), both total number of HHR hours (hourly AQHI  $\geq 7$ ) and days (daily maximum AQHI  $\geq 7$ ) decreased from 2014 to their lowest records in 2016. However, both figures for 2019 rebounded to almost the same level as in 2014 (Graph 1). Such trend in the past six years implied that the health risk of the public associated with air pollution had not been really relieved.

The proportion of highest AQHI of 10+ in recorded HHR hours (hourly AQHI  $\geq 7$ ) increased substantially from 4.1% in 2014 to 7.1% in 2019. It means that even the public were exposed to similar duration of HHR hours (hourly AQHI  $\geq 7$ ), health threat associated with air pollution would be higher in 2019 than in 2014.

According to the AQHI findings from 2014 to 2019, the western territory (i.e. Tuen Mun, Yuen Long and Tung Chung) has been experiencing the worst air quality among the General Stations since 2014. Regrettably, the Administration has downplayed the

anticipated air pollution in their planning for the western territory such as Tung Chung New Town Extension, Hung Shui Kiu New Development Area, Yuen Long South, Kam Tin South, Residential and Commercial Development atop Siu Ho Wan Depot, and artificial islands in East Lantau water proposed under Lantau Tomorrow. There will be a population of over 1,280,000 to 1,680,000 living in the high health risk due to air pollution in these areas if the situation is not improved.

On the other hand, the perceived less polluted districts, namely Eastern District and Tai Po experienced a substantial increase in both HHR hours (hourly AQHI  $\geq 7$ ) and days (daily maximum AQHI  $\geq 7$ ). Such changes may reveal a major increase in emission that promptly study and action to prevent worsening are needed.

Social unrest was initiated by the Government's extradition bill in 2019. Massive use of tear gas grenades and frequent fire-settings occurred for several months continually in densely populated districts at the later stage of social unrest that has drawn public's concern about health and environmental impacts of associated air pollution. However, health and air quality impacts of social unrest have not been reflected through existing AQHI system. In view of the public's grave concern, green groups urged the Administration to address the health impacts associated with the use of tear gas grenades in November 2019.

For any queries, please contact the undersigned at Green Power (T: 3961 0200, Fax: 2314 2661, Email: lkcheng@greenpower.org.hk)

Thank you very much for your kind attention. I look forward to your favourable response.

Yours faithfully,



CHENG Luk-ki  
Director