

**Report to the Secretariat of the Montreal Protocol
Regarding Decision X/7 on
Halon Management Strategy**

Introduction

Under Decision X/7, Parties not operating under Article 5 are requested to submit their strategies for managing halons to the Ozone Secretariat by the end of July 2000. In preparing such a strategy, Parties should consider issues such as:

- (a) discouraging the use of halons in new installations and equipment;
- (b) encouraging the use of halon substitutes and replacements from the acceptable environmental and health standpoint;
- (c) considering a target date for complete decommissioning of the non-critical halon installations and equipment; and
- (d) promoting environmentally safe and effective measures for recovery, storage, management and destruction of halons.

2. This report sets out the halon management strategy adopted by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China.

Background

3. In HKSAR, the Ozone Layer Protection Ordinance (OLPO) gives effect to the international obligations affecting HKSAR under the 1985 Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the 1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. HKSAR has been following the requirements of the Montreal Protocol for non-Article 5 Party countries since enactment of OLPO in 1989.

4. Halons are primarily used for extinguishing fires and explosion protection. There are two types of halons, viz halon 1211 (BCF), which is mainly used in portable fire extinguishers, and halon 1301 (BTM) used in fixed fire protection installations. According to a survey conducted by the HKSAR Government in 1994, there were about 500 tonnes of halons in the equipment and installations in HKSAR. The HKSAR Government is currently conducting another survey to update the figure.

Halon Management Strategy adopted by HKSAR

Strategy 1 - Discouraging use of halon in new installations and equipment

Import ban

5. The importation of halons in bulk has been banned since 1 January 1994 under OLPO. Since 2 December 1996, the importation of portable fire extinguishers containing halons has been banned through enactment of the Ozone Layer Protection (Import Banning) Regulation.

Banning use of halons in new installations and equipment

6. Since 1993, the HKSAR Government has ceased to approve halon portable fire extinguishers and fixed installations since 1993; and BCF fixed sprayer units since 1996 for building protection. The HKSAR Government has also prohibited the installation of halon system on new vessels since 1 October 1994 except for critical uses.

Strategy 2 - Encouraging the use of halon substitutes and replacements

Approval of halon substitutes and replacements

7. For land-based building protection, the HKSAR Government accepts the use of suitable halon substitutes and replacements. New substitutes and replacements are added to the approved list from time to time. These include CO₂, foam, dry powder, water/CO₂, halocarbons (i.e. HCFCs, HFCs, PFCs) and inert gases. It is also considering allowing the use of other not-in-kind systems such as water-mist and fine solid particulates. For on-board ship protection, the HKSAR Government follows the international practices stipulated by the International Maritime Organisation. CO₂, halocarbons, foam and water-based systems are acceptable alternatives.

8. Given that HCFCs will also cause depletion of ozone layer, the HKSAR Government will follow the requirement of the Copenhagen Amendment to progressively phase out and ultimately ban the import of HCFCs for local consumption by 2030. To tie in with this strategy, the HKSAR Government will remind those who would like to use HCFCs to replace halons of the future restrictions in the supply of such substance. We will advise them that HKSAR Government does not recommend their use.

Initiatives of the HKSAR Government

9. The HKSAR Government took the lead in replacing all the halon systems and equipment installed/located in government buildings and marine fleets. Between 1993 and 1997, it replaced 142 fixed halon installations and more than 12,000 fire extinguishers. This has encouraged the introduction of halon substitutes and replacements into the market and their wider use by the private sector.

Strategy 3 - Target date for complete decommissioning except for critical uses

10. The HKSAR Government is working on a list of permitted critical uses and the timing for complete decommissioning.

Strategy 4 - Promoting environmentally safe and effective measures for recovery, storage, management and destruction of halon

Options for disposal

11. Companies providing services of recovery, storage, management and destruction of halons in HKSAR have to be approved by the HKSAR Government. Currently, the approved options for disposal of halons include :

- (a) Destruction in HKSAR – halons can be destroyed in approved destruction facility that has been set up for destroying ozone depleting substances;
- (b) Export for use overseas – to control such export by a licensing system under the Ozone Layer Protection Ordinance or the waste permit system under the Waste Disposal Ordinance; and
- (c) Export for destruction – to allow export to overseas destruction facilities with UNEP’s approved technologies under the Ozone Layer Protection Ordinance and to subject such export to control under the Waste Disposal Ordinance.

12. In addition, we are also considering allowing storage of halons in approved premises for critical uses to meet future local or overseas demand.

Halon collection and disposal program

13. The HKSAR Government is considering the feasibility of establishing a halon collection and disposal program to tie in with the decommissioning of use of halons.

Party: Hong Kong Special Administrative Region/People’s Republic of China, November 2000