

EPCA Report Number 36 (July 2010)

In continuation of report no 35 (May 2010) in response to IA 316 regarding proposal the release of funds for an operation control centre for implementation of GPS based automatic vehicle tracking and monitoring system and modern fare collection system

(In the matter of W. P. (C) No. 13029 of 1985; M. C. Mehta v/s UOI & others)

**Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority
for the National Capital Region**

1. Background and recommendations

1. The Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCT) vide I.A 316 has proposed to the Hon'ble Court that the funds collected through the penalties imposed on the diesel buses be released for an operation control centre (OCC) for implementation of GPS based automatic vehicle tracking and monitoring system.
2. The Hon'ble Supreme Court directed EPCA to review the proposal and to give its findings to the court.
3. In May 2010, based on detailed discussions with the Government of NCT of Delhi, EPCA submitted its report no 35 to the Hon'ble Supreme Court, giving an in-principle clearance to the proposal but leaving the sanction of cost and budget for clearance by the government.
4. On May 5, 2010, the Hon'ble Supreme Court directed the following:

“The Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCT) has approached this Court for release of funds collected through the penalties imposed on the diesel buses.

The EPCA is directed to file the post Assessment report and the requirement report so that further action may be taken.

Regarding the modernization of transport systems, the EPCA to file concrete suggestions and its revised report.”

5. On June 7, 2010, the Secretary-cum-Commissioner Transport, Government of NCT of Delhi wrote to EPCA (letter attached), explaining that the matter has been since reviewed. The government has decided to set up the Operations Control Centre with funds from its budget. Instead it has requested, EPCA to forward to the Hon'ble Supreme Court its proposal to use the funds to augment the public transport bus fleet of Delhi. In this proposal, the city will purchase CNG low-floor buses for DTC.

6. EPCA has carefully considered this proposal and believes that this idea is important and worthy of support. The Hon'ble Supreme Court's 5.4.2002 order, which directed diesel-bus owners, who were not in compliance with the directions to move to CNG to deposit Rs 500 per bus per day which was subsequently raised to Rs 1000 per bus per day after 30 days of operation. Hon'ble Supreme Court's established the principle of polluter pays in the field of transport. It would be appropriate that the funds collected from the 'pollution tax' are used to pay for non-polluting vehicles augmenting the bus fleet.

7. The fund collected amounted to about Rs 30 crore and estimating the cost of each bus (modern, high comfort) at Rs 55 lakh (tentatively), the total number of buses that would be added to the city fleet would be about 54. While the number is not large, there is no doubt that this would be the best use of the funds collected. The money would go towards building the public transport fleet of the city. It would be visible and would be an important symbol of the 2nd generation reforms needed to combat the growing air pollution in the city. For the information of the Hon'ble Court, EPCA has been working with city officials to modernize and augment public transport systems. In the past 2 years the city would have added 3790 low-floor buses into the city by August 2010. This is a doubling of the DTC fleet. In addition, the city is working to revamp its blueline (private) bus operations so that there are limited numbers of operators who work across the city and these are accountable for common standards and timetables. This development will be critical for the city.

EPCA's recommendation to the Hon'ble Supreme Court is to release the funds collected through penalties imposed on diesel buses for the purchase of new low-floor CNG buses for DTC. EPCA will continue to monitor progress in this matter and report to the Hon'ble Court.