

Hong Kong's prototype electric bus goes up in flames: Short circuit blamed

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News > Hong Kong > Health & Environment TRANSPORTATION Danny Mok and Christy Leung

HK\$3.8 million vehicle that had just passed extensive road tests and was ready to go into commercial operation reduced to a charred wreck



Hong Kong's prototype electric bus on fire Photo: Supplied

A HK\$3.8 million prototype electric bus, the **first to be designed in the city** but built on the mainland, went up in flames on Sunday. The fire department believed the vehicle, which had just passed a road test and was ready for commercialisation, suffered a short circuit and overheated battery. Police were alerted at about 5.30pm on Sunday when a driver passing the parking site in **Fuk Hi Street** on the Yuen Long Industrial Estate noticed thick black smoke billowing into the air. Firemen put out the flames shortly before 6pm but the bus was reduced to a charred wreck.



[1]A spokesman for the **Hong Kong Productivity Council, which designed and unveiled the bus** in a promotional event on October 26, said the vehicle had been handed over a couple of weeks ago to the project sponsor Green Dynamic Electric Vehicle, a subsidiary of Hong Kong-listed China Dynamics (Holdings), for commercial production after passing road tests.

He was surprised by the incident and said the council would investigate.

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China Dynamics said in a statement that “vigorous testing” had been **conducted by the Productivity Council and a third party on the mainland and in Hong Kong, and the vehicle had been approved.** The company said it and the council would investigate the cause of the fire. It said apart from the bus in Hong Kong, there was another in Dongguan which was operating properly, and the **loss of the vehicle had no major impact on the financial position and operation of the company and its subsidiaries.** The **HK\$40 million project** began in August 2013, and was **funded by the government's Innovation and Technology Fund.**

The electric bus was constructed at a cost of about HK\$3.8 million – twice the price of a diesel bus.

While it was designed locally for the city's winding roads, the bus was made on the mainland due to a lack of manpower and space to build it in the city. The council's chairman, Stanley Lau Chin-ho, previously vouched for its safety. "Although the coach was assembled on the mainland, it underwent nine months of tests in Chongqing and Dongguan to ensure its safety. I am sure there would not be any problems," said Lau at a promotional event in October. The 11.75-metre-long, 12.5-tonne single-decker electric bus was made of lightweight T6-grade aluminium alloy. Weighing 10 per cent less than earlier electric buses, the vehicle's rechargeable lithium polymer batteries were designed to save energy, with 16 sets fitted behind the driver's seat and at the rear of the vehicle. It can cover 380km **on a four-hour charge** and travel at up to 70km/h with 75 passengers

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Green Dynamic's CEO Andrew Yung Ka-wo said at the same event that no purchase orders had been made yet, but hoped it could be launched in the market early next year. Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying announced in his policy address last year that the government would promote the use of electric vehicles and would fund the purchase of 36 single-deck electric buses by franchised bus companies.

New World First Bus and City Bus, jointly owned by Chow Tai Fook Enterprises and NWS Holdings, said they had purchased 10 single-decker electric buses – with five from BYD and the other five from Great Dragon. The spokesperson said the buses were on trial from this quarter for two years to fully assess operational efficiency and performance.

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[1] http://www.scmp.com/sites/default/files/styles/980w/public/images/methode/2015/12/14/4b0afc36-a1cb-11e5-9340-91203134f877_image_hires.jpg?itok=adtyyHZ-

[2]

http://www.google.com.hk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=newssearch&cd=1&ved=0ahUKEwir4c38w9nJAhXDLpQKHd2YBnkQqQIGigAMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.scmp.com%2Fnews%2Fhong-kong%2Feconomy%2Farticle%2F1872155%2Ffirst-hong-kong-designed-electric-bus-hits-citys-roads-month&usg=AFQjCNEIlgY0U_OYB2O6J41qQg-1rFnW7g

[3] <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/1845387/first-five-byd-electric-buses-ordered-new-world?page=all>

[4] <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/economy/article/1872155/first-hong-kong-designed-electric-bus-hits-citys-roads-month>

[5] <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/1845387/first-five-byd-electric-buses-ordered-new-world>