

Air quality policy and legislation – Scotland and UK

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Air Quality Strategy (I)

- **Key requirement of 1995 Environment Act – central government to produce an Air Quality Strategy**
- **1997 – 1st UK Air Quality Strategy published**
- **Initial attempt to provide an overview of air quality policy in the UK and Europe**
- **Further versions published in 2000 and 2007**



Air quality objectives

- **Strategy contains air quality objectives for nine pollutants of particular concern for human health**
- **Also sets dates by when objectives should be met**
- **Objectives derived from health based standards**
- **Most standards set by UK Government's Expert Panel on Air Quality Standards (EPAQS) taking into account all available evidence**
- **These in turn generally derived from World Health Organisation recommendations**



Objectives and legislation

- **2000 – Air Quality (Scotland) Regulations**
- **2002 – Air Quality (Scotland) Amendment Regulations:**
 - Tighter objectives for benzene, carbon monoxide and fine particulate matter**
- **Scottish fine particulate matter objective (PM10) most stringent in UK**
- **2016 – Air Quality (Scotland) Amendment Regulations – Scotland becomes first country in Europe to adopt WHO guideline value for PM2.5 fine particulate matter into legislation**



Local Air Quality Management (I)

- **1995 Environment Act sets out requirements for Local Air Quality Management (LAQM)**
- **UK wide system where local authorities must regularly review and assess air quality in their areas against the objectives**
- **Scottish monitoring network is main information source for this purpose – currently contains > 90 monitoring sites**



Local Air Quality Management (II)

- **If any objective unlikely to be met by required date – local authority must declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)**
- **Must also produce an action plan outlining how issues will be addressed**
- **Currently 38 AQMAs in Scotland in 14 local authority areas – all but two declared for transport related emissions of nitrogen dioxide and/or PM10**



Where we are now - Cleaner Air for Scotland

- **‘Cleaner Air for Scotland – The Road to a Healthier Future’ – Scotland’s first separate air quality strategy published November 2015**
- **Draws together cross Government policies impacting air quality into a single coordinated framework**
- **Sets out c. 40 actions intended to deliver further air pollution reductions**



Key Achievements

- Major reductions in overall levels of key pollutants
- Adopting WHO guideline level for PM2.5
- Expansion of monitoring and public information
- Development of models for the major cities and testing of regional model
- Improved guidance



LEZs

- Introduction of Scotland's first Low Emission Zone in Glasgow at the end of 2018
- Further LEZs in Aberdeen, Dundee and Edinburgh by 2020
- In all other AQMAs by 2023 where evidence supports such an approach
- Publication the National Low Emission Framework, which will form the basis of assessing the appropriateness of LEZs in all other Air Quality Management Areas outwith the four cities.



Challenges

- Continuing exceedance of NOx and particulate levels at specific sites
- Agriculture and domestic burning emissions
- Degree of integration between air quality, placemaking and climate change?
- Finalising air quality indicator work
- Coherence of delivery?

