

# Clean Air Strategy 2019

## Issues for Environmental Business

### National emission targets

National emission reduction commitments have been set for five pollutants:

- Fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) – 30% reduction on 2005 baseline by 2020, 46% by 2030
- Ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) – 8% reduction on 2005 baseline by 2020, 16% by 2030
- Nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) – 55% reduction on 2005 baseline by 2020, 73% by 2030
- Sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) – 59% reduction on 2005 baseline by 2020, 88% by 2030
- Non-methane volatile organic compounds (NMVOCs) – 32% reduction on 2005 baseline by 2020, 39% by 2030

Action to improve understanding of the problem and its solutions:

- UK Research Innovation (UKRI) has recently launched a new £19.6 million research programme to predict future air quality challenges, identify the most vulnerable groups in society, and improve new technologies and policies for reducing air pollution. The programme will be led by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) with the Met Office.
- Government investing £10 million in improving our modelling, data and analytical tools to give a more precise picture of current and future air quality and the impact of policies to improve it.
- Will increase transparency by bringing local and national monitoring data together into a single accessible portal for information on air quality monitoring and modelling, catalysing public engagement through citizen science.

Action to reduce people's exposure to air pollution:

The government will:

- For PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations, reduce PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations everywhere, so that the number of people living in locations above the WHO guideline level of 10 µg/m<sup>3</sup> is reduced by 50% by 2025, compared to our 2016 baseline. Government will set out further plans to reduce PM<sub>2.5</sub> in due course.
- Provide new powers to enable targeted local action in areas with an air pollution problem.
- Review progress in 2022, and consider whether we should have more challenging milestones. The new Office for Environmental Protection will have a role in the scrutiny of air quality policy.
- Introduce measures to improve public access to information regarding air pollution, including training for health professionals, a personal messaging system etc
- Take action to ban government incentives (such as the Renewable Heat Incentive and Contracts for Difference) biomass in urban areas, due to the high levels of pollution they produce.

## Setting strategic direction for transport

### Road transport:

- Ambition for at least 50% of new cars and 40% of new vans to be Ultra-Low Emission by 2030. Review in 2025 toward meeting this target.
- Further £48 million for the Ultra-Low Emission Bus Scheme
- Highways England delivering £100 million air quality fund to identify viable measures to bring forward compliance on highways, ensuring that 95% of network has a ChargePoint for EVs every 20 miles.

### Maritime:

- Clean Maritime Council founded by Shipping Minister, first meeting was in October 2018. In Spring 2019 it will publish its Clean Maritime Plan to improve air quality on waterways, ports and shipping lanes, reduce GHG emissions from the maritime sector, and deliver clean growth opportunities from green shipping for the UK.
- In 2019 government will publish guidelines to advise ports on how to develop effective and targeted Air Quality Strategies.

### Rail:

- Government is sponsoring the independent assessment of air quality at enclosed stations to identify if there is a widespread problem. This assessment will be completed in early 2019 and will suggest a range of measures that could be undertaken in order to improve air quality in stations

### Aviation:

- Aviation 2050 published 17th December 2018, which includes consideration of air pollutant emissions.

### NRMM:

- For red diesel, government developing options to encourage a clean transition, with next steps to be announced in Spring 2019.
- For NRMM in general, firstly, government will explore the use of environmental permitting for sectors with significant NRMM emissions.
- Legislate enable the Transport Secretary to compel manufacturers to recall NRMM for any failures in their emissions control system.

### **NMVOCs:**

- Plan a public engagement plan with consumer groups, health organisations and industry to raise awareness.
- Explore options such as the development of a voluntary labelling scheme for NMVOC-containing products.
- Consult on changes to Building Regulations standards for ventilation in buildings.

## Ammonia

- Introduce rules on emission-producing practices such as: urea-based fertilisers, solid manure/digestate, slurries
- Regulate to minimise pollution from organic or inorganic fertiliser use – will form expert group to advise on optimal regulation.
- Agree emission limits and Best Available Techniques for dairy and beef farms

## Industrial emissions

Maintain long-standing policy of continuous improvement, and improve it by:

- Developing a series of sector roadmaps with industry
- Ensuring there is a clear process for determine future BAT for industrial sectors
- Consider further action to strengthen current regulatory framework
- Consider the case for tighter emissions standard from medium combustion plants and generators.
- Legislate to close the regulatory gap to apply limits to medium combustion plants between 500kw – 1MW.
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## Improving the legislative framework

- Strengthen, simplify and update the legislative framework that applies at the local level, including updates to both the Local Air Quality Management framework and the Smoke Control Area framework.
- Improving the local government framework

To be outlined in the forthcoming **Environment Bill**. Options under consideration are:

- Ensuring accountability sits at the right tier of local government
- Shifting the focus towards prevention, promoting greater action to avoid exceedances.
- Creating the concept of a lead authority, with requirements on neighbouring local authorities and other public bodies to work collectively to tackle air pollution.
- Requiring local authorities to create an action plan to reduce population exposure during Air Pollution Episodes to protect public health
- Enabling greater local action on PM2.5 by updating the Smoke Control Area (SCA) framework
- Enabling greater local action by improving guidance on the use of existing local powers, strengthening these powers where necessary and introducing new powers
- Developing clear, effective guidance on how AQMAs, SCAs and Clean Air Zones (CAZs) interrelate and how they can be used by local government to tackle air pollution
- Encourage shift towards prevention rather than compliance with maximum limits.
- Give local government new legal powers to tackle PM2.5 emissions from burning.
- Smoke Control Area framework to be simplified and updated.
- Work with MHCLG to continue to improve planning practice guidance on air quality
- Where cost recovery is permitted and available, the government will look to support local government to ensure it is able to fully cover their costs