

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs,
Scottish Executive, National Assembly of Wales,
Department of the Environment in Northern Ireland

Expert Panel on Air Quality Standards

Halogens and Hydrogen Halides



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Department of the Environment in Northern Ireland

Expert Panel on Air Quality Standards

Guidelines for Halogens and Hydrogen Halides in Ambient Air for Protecting Human Health against Acute Irritancy Effects

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Terms of Reference

The Expert Panel on Air Quality Standards was established in 1991. The terms of reference of the Panel are:

"To advise the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Scottish Ministers, the National Assembly for Wales and Department of the Environment (Northern Ireland) as required, on non-occupational ambient air quality standards, with particular reference to the levels of airborne pollutants at which no or minimal effects on human health are likely to occur;

i. taking account of the best available evidence of the effects of air pollution on human health and of progressive development of the air quality monitoring network; but

ii. without reference to the practicality of abatement or mitigation measures, the economic costs and economic benefits of pollution control measures or other factors pertinent to the management rather than the assessment of risk;

Where appropriate, for example for pollutants where no threshold for adverse effects can be determined, the Panel may wish to recommend exposure-response relationships or other information Government might use to set policy objectives.

to identify gaps in the knowledge needed for standard setting and suggest potential priority areas for future research;

to advise on other aspects of air quality and air pollution referred to it;

for the purpose of informing the development of policy on the improvement of air quality and increasing public knowledge and understanding of air quality issues."

EPAQS does not give approval for products or equipment.

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Preface

The Expert Panel on Air Quality (EPAQS) has reviewed its role in light of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution's 21st report *Setting Environmental Standards*¹ and the growing practice of separating risk assessment from risk management. EPAQS' role is to advise on the impact levels of air pollution have on human health. Specifically, EPAQS' terms of reference are to advise on 'the level of airborne pollutants at which no or minimal effects on human health are likely to occur'. The risk management process is undertaken elsewhere. In particular, the Environment Agency uses EPAQS guideline values for minimal or no observable effects in its regulation to ensure that 'no significant pollution is caused'.

¹ RCEP (1998). *Setting Environmental Standards*. Twenty-first Report of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution. The Stationery Office, London.

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