

International Developments

European Commission

CAFE

1. The Clean Air for Europe (CAFE) programme is one of the thematic strategies established under the 6th Environmental Action Programme. The Commission has started the initial stages of the revision of the National Emissions Ceilings Directive, the second stage of the CAFE process.

Current and recent negotiations

2. Negotiations are underway on the proposal for a new air quality Directive. The Austrian Presidency are aiming for political agreement to the Directive at the June 2006 Environment Council. The European Parliament are working to complete their First Reading in June.
3. Negotiations are underway on the proposal for new standards for emissions from cars and light good vehicles (EURO 5).

Transposition and implementation

4. The Sulphur Content of Marine Fuels Directive (2005/33/EC) has been published in the Official Journal. Member States have until the 11th August 2006 to transpose into national law. Defra have begun the transposition process.
5. The 4th Air Quality Daughter Directive (2004/107/EC) requiring monitoring of four heavy metals and PAHs has been published in the Official Journal. Member States have until 15 February 2007 to complete transposition. Defra and the Devolved Administrations and Gibraltar will be issuing consultation papers on how the UK proposes to transpose in due course.
6. Directive 2004/42/EC has been transposed. It will reduce solvents (ozone precursors) levels in household paints and varnishes and, products used for vehicle repair and re-spraying. The new standards for paints come into force in 2007 and 2010. Ministers have accepted the case for giving effect to the derogation provided for in the Directive to exclude paints used for historic buildings and vehicles. Proposals for consultation will be published later this year.

UNECE Protocols

7. The POPs Protocol came into force in October 2003. The UK ratified the Protocol on 2 September 2005. We expect that there will be active discussions over the next couple of years on proposals to add further substances to the Protocol.
8. The Heavy Metals Protocol came into force in December 2003 and the UK ratified the Protocol on 6 July 2005.
9. The Gothenburg Protocol came into force in May 2005. The UK ratified the Protocol on 8 December 2005. The coming into force of the Protocol which will trigger a review process, parallel to CAFE.

Revised Large Combustion Plants Directive

10. Before Christmas we announced that we intend to implement the Directive using a "combined approach" of emission limit values and a National Emission Reduction Plan based on the "common stack" definition. This provides industry with the much needed certainty and the recommended time of two years to carry out corporate planning by the compliance date of 1 January 2008.
11. We worked closely with stakeholders in developing the "combined approach" and we gave stakeholders a choice on whether they would rather be in a National Plan or use emission limit values. We worked with the European Commission for better implementation in order to meet socio-economic concerns of industry and to meet the security and diversity of energy supply concerns while meeting the environmental objectives of the Directives. This has had a positive outcome. The Commission accepted the "combined approach" as the best way forward.
12. The UK submitted its final national plan to the European Commission setting out how it intends to implement the EU revised Large Combustion Plant Directive by the Commission's deadline of 28 February 2006. The European Commission has up to 6 months to evaluate the UK national plan. The Environment Agency, Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Environment and Heritage Services of Northern Ireland will be working with industry to prepare for implementation. Industry has begun making its investment decisions.

Defra
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