

LOCAL AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT - UPDATE

Integration of Air Quality Action Plans into Local Transport Plans (LTPs)

1. Defra assessed the air quality aspects of the LTP2 plans and fed the air quality appraisals into the Government Offices for the Regions. The overall LTP assessments will be issued in December 2006. Defra will work with DfT on the reporting requirements under LTP2.

Beacon Scheme

3. The 8 applications received from local authorities on the Beacon Scheme have been assessed and reduced to 5 (Sheffield, Croydon, Greenwich, Kensington & Chelsea and Sefton) for the next stage. The next round will consist of visits and scrutiny panels. All 5 local authorities will have to make presentations to the Improvement and Development Agency Panel in January next year. Beacon status will be awarded to successful authorities in March 2007.

LAQM Statistics

4. The table shows the number of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) declared and Air Quality Action Plans submitted to Defra/devolved administrations. Figures in () were last reported figures.

	Number of AQMAs declared	Number of Action Plans received
England	176 (175)	117 (112)
Scotland	10(4)	3 (2)
Wales	5 (4)	4 (2)
Northern Ireland	22(22)	4 (2)

5. Majority of AQMAs designated are for nitrogen dioxide and particulates (PM₁₀) objectives. Road traffic emissions are the main source in 95% of the AQMAs. Only a handful have been designated as a result of industrial sources. The first AQMA for benzene (2010 objective) was designated in England, in 2005. 50% of AQMAs in Northern Ireland have been designated for domestic emissions.

6. The majority of the Action Plans received focus on measures dealing with road traffic, such as local traffic management schemes, setting up clear zones, local emissions zones (particularly in London) or working with the Highways Agency to tackle pollution on the motorways/trunk roads. Defra encouraged LAs whose draft action plan primarily related to local road transport to integrate them into the second round of LTPs .

Third round of reviews and assessments

7. Local authorities began their third round of reviews and assessments this year. Updating and Screening Assessments (USAs) were required by 30 April 2006. 287

English authorities (89%), 19 Scottish authorities (59%), 18 Welsh authorities (82%) and 26 NI authorities (100%) have to date submitted a USA.

Evaluation of LAQM

8. Defra and the devolved administrations are carrying out an evaluation of the LAQM review and assessment process and action planning and website/helpdesk support services. A questionnaire was issued in September to all local authorities, regional co-ordinators and placed on LACORS's website. It sought views on the current process and level of support provided. Evaluation Reports will be published in early 2007 and responses will be taken into account in the revision of the local authority guidance due in 2007/08.

Defra/DAs
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