

STATEMENT BY THE MAYOR CONCERNING HIS DECISION TO PUBLISH REVISIONS TO THE MAYOR'S TRANSPORT AND AIR QUALITY STRATEGIES

Introduction

1. Improving air quality for Londoners is one of my key priorities, because London has the worst air pollution in the UK and amongst the worst in Europe, and it affects the health and quality of life of people who live, work and visit London. Following extensive public and stakeholder consultation I have today decided to take the formal step of publishing (that is bringing into force) revisions to my Transport and Air Quality Strategies so that in due course (and subject to further public consultation on the details of the scheme) a London-wide Low Emission Zone (LEZ) can be introduced, potentially with effect from early 2008.

2. The revisions to the two strategies are in identical terms, and public and stakeholder consultation has taken place on both at the same time. This has avoided unnecessary duplication and the process has been readily comprehensible to all concerned.

3. TfL has carried out the extensive consultation on my behalf and has provided me with a Report which sets out details of the consultation. The Report also records TfL's response to submissions to the consultation and its recommended modifications to the Revisions in the light of those submissions. I have been supplied with the consultation responses, including those which were received after the end of the consultation period. I am arranging for TfL's Report to be published, and also the advice of GLA officers which I have followed without making any further changes beyond the modifications recommended by TfL.

Summary of the Revisions

4. The Revisions insert new sections 4G.126-4G.198 and new Proposals 4G.27 - 4G.30 in the Transport Strategy, and replace existing sections 4C.1-4C.35 and Proposal 10 of the Air Quality Strategy with new sections 4C.1-4C.73 and add new Proposals 10-13. The revisions have been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment, and I have taken the environmental report and opinions expressed on it into account in reaching my decisions.

5. The text of the revised Proposals (including modifications) is as follows:

- **Proposal 4G.27 and 10:** The Greater London area should be designated a Low Emission Zone (LEZ). The proposed LEZ would target the most individually polluting vehicles (HGVs, coaches, buses, heavier LGVs and minibuses). By so doing it would accelerate the introduction of cleaner vehicles and reduce the numbers of more polluting vehicles driving within the Greater London area. The LEZ would be implemented from early 2008; it would require certain heavy duty vehicles (HGVs, buses and coaches) to meet a proposed emission standard of Euro III for PM₁₀, which would change in 2012 to Euro IV for PM₁₀. Should the

European Commission set a new standard covering ultra-fine particles or PM_{2.5} TfL will consider including such a standard within the LEZ. Appropriate standards to address emissions from heavier LGVs and minibuses would also be set to take effect from 2010.

- **Proposal 4G.28 and 11:** Transport for London will consider further the environmental, health, economic and other impacts of the proposed LEZ when considering whether to make an order. The outcome of these investigations and other factors, including consultation results, will also be taken into account by the Mayor in deciding whether or not to confirm an order.
- **Proposal 4G.29 and 12:** Transport for London will continue to investigate further the options for the proposed LEZ, including the additional option of Euro IV for oxides of nitrogen (NOx) and the range of vehicles covered by the scheme.
- **Proposal 4G.30 and 13:** Transport for London will monitor and assess the performance of any London Low Emission Zone that is established, to understand the range of impacts and to inform decision-making.

6. These revisions provide the strategic framework for the introduction of orders (subject to their own statutory processes) which will seek to improve air quality in Greater London from 2008 by discouraging the most polluting Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs), buses and coaches from driving within Greater London. It will also encourage operators to clean up their vehicles to meet an emission standard of Euro III for PM₁₀ from 2008, with the standard rising in 2012 to the higher Euro IV standard for PM₁₀. Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs) will not be targeted in the first phase, but the strategy encompasses the heaviest, most polluting LGVs and minibuses as well from 2010. The overall standards will initially be set by reference to PM₁₀ only, though in due course it may be that compliance with standards for emissions of oxides of nitrogen (and other pollutants, such as PM_{2.5} which is currently being considered for regulation) will also be required.

7. There are no specific proposals within the strategy revisions to target other vehicles, although this is a matter which is to be kept under review, and the text of the revisions has been modified to provide for this. I mention this matter below.

Representations and objections

8. Most consultation responses supported the LEZ proposals (89% of public responses and 60% of stakeholder responses). But, as is to be expected, certain parts of the business community were less enthusiastic, with an equal proportion of businesses indicating support and opposition (41%), while more of the responses from a small group of 'other organisations' opposed (42%) than supported (25%) the proposals. A number of organisations representing the road haulage industry opposed the revisions.

9. In considering the responses TfL has helpfully broken them down under a number of themes. Amongst the issues raised were:

- *The principle of an LEZ*, some arguing that it was unnecessary because emissions are reducing with normal upgrading of vehicles, and others that it would not be cost-effective. I have no doubt whatsoever that something needs to be done, and the sooner the better. I am unaware of any better way forward.
- *Vehicles to be included*, many arguing that LGVs and cars should be included from the outset and some that coaches should not be included at all. I am satisfied that it is right to start the scheme with the heaviest most polluting vehicles first, starting with HGVs, buses and coaches, followed by heavier LGVs (including minibuses, but excluding the lightest LGVs, mostly 'car-derived vans', which have car-like emissions). Nevertheless, following a large number of representations arguing for the inclusion of cars, I have asked TfL to look at the implications of including cars and car-derived vans in the LEZ at a later date.
- *Vehicle emission standards*, where the main issues were whether "Euro emission" standards should be used, and if so, whether 2010 was too early to move from Euro III to Euro IV for HGVs, buses and coaches. I am satisfied that it is right to use "Euro emission" standards for HGVs, buses and coaches, and that an age-based scheme could be regarded as unfair since vehicles of the same Euro class and emissions, but of a different age, would be treated differently. Reluctantly I have accepted TfL's view that the date for moving to Euro IV for HGVs, buses and coaches should be delayed to 2012 to reduce compliance costs to operators. I would have wanted to target specifically oxides of nitrogen as well as PM₁₀, but I accept TfL's advice that there are too many unresolved issues about certification and testing for oxides of nitrogen for a standard to be workable at this time. Therefore that will remain a matter to be implemented in the future if it should be feasible.
- *Impacts on business and public sector*, where it is argued, and I accept, that there will be significant costs for small businesses and the public sector in replacing and upgrading vehicles. However, I also accept TfL's view that it is not unreasonable to expect owners of the most-polluting HGVs, buses or coaches to upgrade their vehicles (or fit pollution abatement equipment). A reduction in the residual value of non-compliant vehicles is an unavoidable consequence, but justified by the public benefit that will result from improving air quality standards in Greater London.
- *Air Quality Impacts*, where the two principal concerns were that the proposed LEZ did not go far enough in raising standards, and that there might be a displacement of older vehicles outside Greater London, seeking to avoid the impact of the LEZ. I consider that the LEZ is a sensible way forward, whilst accepting that it cannot on its own solve London's air quality problems. I am advised that there is unlikely to be any considerable diversion around London, and that the LEZ is unlikely to cause any detriment outside Greater London. Indeed, TfL's modelling shows that areas outside London will benefit significantly from the reductions in harmful vehicle emissions which the LEZ is intended to bring about.

These are only some of the matters raised, and I refer those interested to the TfL Report for further details.

Modifications

10. The purpose of consulting stakeholders, operators and the general public is so that their views can be taken into account and the proposals altered or improved as a result of views expressed.

11. Whilst the text of the revisions to the strategies which I am now publishing remains very similar to that upon which TfL consulted, a number of important changes have been incorporated in the final version in response to the consultation. I have already mentioned the three most significant modifications which are the deferral from 2010 to 2012 of the date for compliance with Euro IV for PM₁₀, the postponement pending further investigation of any specific targeting of oxides of nitrogen, and the inclusion (rather than merely investigating this) of the heaviest, most polluting LGVs and minibuses from 2010. I am arranging for Annex H to the TfL Report to be available separately for those who wish to study the individual modifications recommended to, and accepted by, me.

12. None of the modifications, whether to the Proposals or to the supporting text of the two strategies, raises issues of sufficient significance to warrant further consultation, especially since, as I have already said, there will be further consultation on the exact details of the scheme, and the opportunity for objections, as and when statutory orders to introduce the LEZ are made.

Conclusion

13. I am grateful to all who responded to the consultation, and to the TfL team who organised the consultation. The fact that I have not accepted a number of the points raised during the consultation does not mean that I have not considered them or that it was wasted effort to raise them. The way to improve air quality in London is not straightforward and I can readily understand why those at whom the LEZ is directed, and on whom it will impose costs, remain critical of the proposal. It is not, and is not intended to be, a panacea.

14. But I believe we have to make a start, because undoubtedly the emissions of heavier duty vehicles (HGVs, buses and coaches) as well as lighter vehicles (LGVs, minibuses and cars) are a significant factor in the air pollution problems from which Londoners suffer. There is scope for reducing these emissions if there is the will to do so. Londoners overall seem to support me in seeking to achieve higher standards by revising my strategies in this way. It is good that London should take the lead, and TfL will be monitoring the results in due course to measure the impacts of a LEZ and whether any adjustments are needed.



Signed
Ken Livingstone, Mayor of London

Date: 25 July 2006