

Response to Welsh Government consultation

Repeal of 'Further Assessment' Provision in the Environment Act 1995

Summary

We welcome the opportunity to comment on the Welsh Government's consultation on the Repeal of the 'Further Assessment' Provision in the Environment Act 1995.

We are committed to ensuring that any industrial installation we regulate will not contribute significantly to breaches of an EU air quality limit value, and we will work with local authorities and play our part fully in Local Air Quality Management. For example, we have contributed significantly to the preparation of local authority Air Quality Action Plans through the provision of data and guidance.

Subsequent to designating an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), local authority resources would be most effectively deployed in the development and delivery of an Air Quality Action Plan. Natural Resources Wales therefore supports Welsh Government repealing the 'Further Assessment' Provision in the Environment Act 1995.

General Comments

We regulate emissions from industrial facilities under EU legislation, and therefore have a role in ensuring the UK complies with EU obligations on Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (to be replaced by the Industrial Emissions Directive in 2013), Air Quality Directives and the National Emissions Ceiling Directive. We also work with local authorities in Wales to support improvements in local air quality, including the provision of information on regulatory processes to enable them to undertake their air quality reviews and assessment.

We will continue to work in partnership with the local authorities to improve air quality, and we are committed to supporting the development of Air Quality Action Plans. For example, the Natural Resources Wales (and previously the Environment Agency Wales) provide local authorities with air quality advice, guidance and data (including providing access to mobile monitoring equipment to expand the network of existing monitors in the area).

The collection and analysis of detailed information is required by local authorities to both declare an AQMA, and to subsequently prepare an Air Quality Action Plan. Therefore, the additional requirement to prepare a Further Assessment has the potential to create an unnecessary step that does not produce new information.

Subsequent to designating an AQMA, local authority resources would be most effectively deployed in the development and delivery of an Air Quality Action Plan. We therefore support Welsh Government repealing the 'Further Assessment' Provision in the Environment Act 1995.

Further information

Further information or background to this response can be obtained from Dr Richard Griffiths, Natural Resources Wales, Cambria House, 29 Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 0TP, telephone number 02920 466138, richard.griffiths@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk



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