

14 October 2009

Commissioner Stavros Dimas
Commissioner for the Environment
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
Brussels 1048

Dear Commissioner Dimas

Request to consider rejecting the UK application for a time extension to comply with EU limit values for PM₁₀ in Greater London

As you may be aware, the Mayor of London published a draft Air Quality Strategy on 5th October. The draft Strategy fails to present a credible attempt to meet EU limit values for PM₁₀ by the extended deadline of June 2011. The level of PM10 particles has been rising by 0.4% a year since the late 1990s and road transport is responsible for 83% of PM10 emissions in central London.

We would cite the following serious shortcomings of the draft Air Quality Strategy.

First, a key measure for improving air quality in London, phase 3 of the London Low Emission Zone, has now been delayed until at least 2012 and therefore until after the extended June 2011 deadline.

Second, the Mayor has said that he is minded to dismantle the Western Extension of the Congestion Charge zone by the end of 2010 without specifying measures that will be put in place to mitigate the significant increase in traffic and associated air quality impacts (the implementation of the Western Extension reduced traffic by around 30,000 cars a day).

Third, several of the measures to improve air quality which are included in the draft Air Quality Strategy remain unfunded and therefore must be considered uncertain to have a positive effect on air quality. Other proposed measures will not come into force until 2012.

It is becoming clear that Londoners cannot rely on national or regional government to ensure that EU standards are met and we therefore ask you to act to guarantee compliance with EU law.

Yours sincerely



Stephen Joseph
Executive Director