
STATUTORY RULES OF NORTHERN IRELAND

2010 No. 188

The Air Quality Standards Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010

PART 2

Assessment of ambient air quality

CHAPTER 1

**Sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and oxides of nitrogen,
particulate matter, lead, benzene and carbon monoxide**

Assessment thresholds

6.—(1) The Department shall classify each zone according to whether or not the upper or lower assessment thresholds specified in Section A of Annex II to the Directive are exceeded in relation to sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and oxides of nitrogen, particulate matter, lead, benzene and carbon monoxide in ambient air.

(2) The Department shall review the classification of zones carried out in accordance with paragraph (1) at least every five years, and shall do so more frequently if there are significant changes in the activities which may affect levels of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and oxides of nitrogen, particulate matter, lead, benzene or carbon monoxide in ambient air.

(3) When reviewing the classification of zones in accordance with paragraph (2), the Department shall comply with Section B of Annex II to the Directive.

Commencement Information

II Reg. 6 in operation at 11.6.2010, see [reg. 1](#)

Assessment criteria

7.—(1) The Department shall assess the level of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and oxides of nitrogen, particulate matter, lead, benzene and carbon monoxide in ambient air in all zones.

(2) In all zones where the level of those pollutants exceeds the upper assessment threshold referred to in regulation 6, fixed measurements shall be used, but may be supplemented by modelling or indicative measurements or both, in order to provide adequate information on the spatial distribution of the ambient air quality.

(3) In all zones where the level of those pollutants is below the lower assessment threshold referred to in regulation 6, modelling or estimation techniques or both may be used instead of measurement.

(4) In all other zones a combination of fixed measurements together with modelling or indicative measurements or both may be used.

(5) In addition to the measurements referred to in paragraphs (1) to (4), the Department shall measure PM_{2.5} at rural background locations away from significant sources of air pollution, in order to provide information on an annual average basis on the total mass concentration and chemical speciation concentrations of that pollutant.

(6) For the purposes of paragraphs (1) to (4), measurements shall be carried out in accordance with the criteria set out in Sections A and C of Annex I, to the Directive, and for the purposes of paragraph (5), measurements shall be carried out in accordance with the criteria set out in Annex IV to the Directive.

(7) Save as provided for in paragraph (8), for the purposes of paragraph (6), measurements for the purposes of this regulation shall be taken in accordance with the reference measurement methods specified in Section A and Section C of Annex VI to the Directive.

(8) Alternative methods to those referred to in paragraph (7) may be used provided the conditions set out in Section B of that Annex are complied with.

(9) Where measurements are supplemented by modelling or indicative measurement then the Department shall take account of the results of those supplementary methods in assessing ambient air quality for the purposes of these Regulations.

Commencement Information

I2 Reg. 7 in operation at 11.6.2010, see [reg. 1](#)

Location and number of sampling points

8.—(1) The Department shall install sampling points in accordance with Schedule 1 for the assessment of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and oxides of nitrogen, particulate matter, lead, benzene and carbon monoxide.

(2) In zones where fixed measurement is the sole source of information for the assessment of air quality, the number of sampling points must be more than or equal to the minimum number specified in Section A of Annex V to the Directive for the purpose of assessing compliance with limit values and alert thresholds.

(3) In zones other than agglomerations where fixed measurement is the sole source of information for the assessment of air quality, the minimum number of sampling points shall be more than or equal to the minimum number specified in Section C of Annex V to the Directive for the purpose of assessing compliance with critical levels for the protection of vegetation.

(4) In zones where the information from fixed measurement is supplemented by information from modelling or indicative measurement or both, the number of sampling points in either Section A or C of Annex V or both, may be reduced by up to 50% provided that the following conditions are met—

- (a) the supplementary methods provide sufficient information for the assessment of air quality in relation to limit values or alert thresholds;
- (b) the supplementary methods provide sufficient information to inform the public as to the state of ambient air quality; and
- (c) the number of sampling points to be installed and the spatial resolution of other techniques are sufficient for the concentration of the relevant pollutant to be established in accordance with the data quality objectives specified in Section A of Annex I to the Directive and enable assessment results to meet the criteria in Section B of the same Annex.

(5) For the measurement of PM_{2.5} in rural background locations, the Department shall install a sampling point for every 100,000km².

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Commencement Information

I3 Reg. 8 in operation at 11.6.2010, see [reg. 1](#)

Changes to legislation:

There are currently no known outstanding effects for the The Air Quality Standards Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010, CHAPTER 1.