



LowCVP's Andy Eastlake Joining up the climate change and air quality agenda

GreenFleet readers will be well aware of the wide array of options, current rules and potential future requirements facing the fleet manager. They'll also be aware of the next big policy push to improve air quality in some of our most polluted areas: Clean Air Zones (CAZ).

The CAZ proposals contained in DEFRA's Air Quality Plan – published last December – identifies five key areas (as well as London) where specific actions are required to meet the air quality targets by 2020. The challenge is to reduce NOx emissions – most of which arise from vehicle use in these areas – and which have been implicated in a wide range of health effects, including many thousands of early deaths.

As many readers will be aware, London already has a Low Emission Zone (LEZ) which is designed to reduce emissions of particulates which mainly come from diesel vehicles. London also has its Congestion Charge, of course, which gives CO₂-based discounts for vehicles newer than Euro 5.

However, with new scientific analysis of the health effects of different emissions emerging, efforts to tackle NOx are rising up the agenda, particularly following last year's successful legal challenge against the government over the country's failure to meet European NOx pollution targets in some of the worst affected areas. Plans to target NOx are now high up the political agenda.

For vehicle users and operators, these regulatory changes have the potential to become bewildering. Combined with the revelations around the Volkswagen scandal, knowing what information to trust and what vehicle to buy can be difficult.

It was with this challenging backdrop in mind that the LowCVP recently joined forces with the Clean Air Alliance (CAA) – an umbrella body for organisations focused on tackling poor air quality – to launch an initiative which aims to help bring the lower carbon and cleaner air agendas closer together. We launched a joint high level communiqué, intended to provide a baseline agreement for future collaboration, at a packed reception in the House of Commons.

Two immediate areas in which we aim to work together are the development of a framework for approving retrofit technology in support of the CAZ network and, secondly, to develop the next generation of consumer information for new (and used) vehicles.

All stakeholders in the collaboration realise that we must have clear information which gives the fleet user everything they need to ensure their vehicles truly are lower carbon and cleaner, whilst having the confidence that they will be able to operate in all zones (Low, Ultra-Low, Congestion or Clean Air).

Visit www.lowcvp.org.uk/projects/climate-joint-initiative for further information on the lower carbon, clean air collaboration.

FURTHER INFORMATION

www.lowcvp.org.uk Twitter: @theLowCVP @aeastlake