Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee

Inquiry into air quality in Scotland

Written submission from Andreas Wernsing

[Headers based on the call for views have been provided below for your assistance. Using these headers is not mandatory so please delete as appropriate]

Does Scotland have the right policies (Clean Air for Scotland Strategy), support and incentives in place to adequately tackle air pollution?

I doubt that policies adequately allow vehicles to be checked on the exhausts they emit. Is there a system in place that checks the air on any kind of greenhouse gases? Are the agriculture and shipping industries included in the monitoring of greenhouse gas emissions?

How does the Scottish policy fit with the UK and EU policy on air quality?

Unable to tell.

Are the policies sufficiently ambitious?

The Scottish government needs to ask themselves the questions whether people’s health is negatively affected by exhausts of any kind and whether costs are occurring for the treatment of exhaust related illnesses that could be avoided by reducing exhausts. This will provide the base for judging whether the policies are ambitious or not.

Are the powers and resources of Local Authorities and SEPA to address air pollution adequate?

Probably, but the availability of information concerning individuals breaching the law is not.

Are the policies and delivery mechanisms (support and incentives) being effectively implemented and successful in addressing the issues?

No. When was the last time that a vehicle was stopped by Police for polluting the air due to a faulty diesel soot particle filter?

Is Scotland on target to have a pilot low emission zone (LEZ) in place by 2018 and should there be more than one LEZ pilot?
How about making the M8 and the Edinburgh bypass a pilot low emission zone? That would be ambitious.

How should the improvement of air quality be prioritised in areas where there have been persistent breaches of NO$_2$ limit values?

75% reduction by 2020 in conjunction with upgrading diesel engines by the car manufacturers.

Is adequate consideration given to air pollution from agriculture?

Unable to tell.

Are there conflicts in policies or barriers to successful delivery of the air quality objectives?

Yes. The dependance of the Scottish tax revenues and labour market on Grangemouth gives cause for concern. The same applies to air pollution from aviation for Scottish tourism. The only way to resolve these conflicts is by offering tax incentives on a large scale focusing on individual projects that will gradually upgrade technology to less polluting standards.