

ANNUAL REVIEW

NSCA
Annual
Review

2003-2004



environmental protection, improvement, innovation

NSCA Annual Review 2003-2004

This year's highlights:

- An exceptionally successful World Clean Air Congress in London
- New local authority guidance on air quality management
- Leading debate on new approaches to EU air pollution limit values
- Survey of local authority action on contaminated land encourages faster progress
- Campaign to introduce more effective car labelling
- Research on local authority roadside emissions testing
- Local authorities and other bodies join Noise Action Day
- Assessment of environmental impacts of transport biofuels
- NSCA's new website averages 33-37,000 hits a week
- NSCA Professional Development Programme launched
- Training events cover air, noise, contaminated land, biofuels and telecoms masts.

Next year's priorities:

- Local action on climate change
- Progress towards a national noise strategy
- Guidance on air quality and development
- Tackling off-road emission sources
- Research on ozone pollution
- Contaminated land designation and remediation
- Maximum CO₂ standards for cars

NSCA in profile

The National Society for Clean Air and Environmental Protection was founded in 1898 as an anti-smog campaigning group. Today it brings together organisations and individuals across the private, public and voluntary sectors to promote a balanced approach to understanding and solving environmental problems.

Its membership includes over 350 corporate bodies – local authorities, businesses and environmental organisations – in addition to individual members.

President: Professor Richard Macrory CBE

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CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

2004 was the year when the air quality world came to London. I am delighted to report that the 13th World Clean Air Congress, organised by NSCA, was by almost every measure an outstanding success and earned the Society wide recognition and appreciation.

For us here in the UK it was significant in another way.

The central aim of the Society is to improve local environmental protection on the ground; to help our members – most of them environmental professionals – to do their job better; and perhaps, most of all, to ensure that their voice and practical experience is heard in the framing of legislation and the development of policy.

What the Congress demonstrated more dramatically than before is that the local, national and global cannot be separated – and this is graphically illustrated by what are likely to prove to be our priorities for the next few years.

Firstly, we must find new ways to support local authorities in addressing climate change and in integrating climate change and air pollution policies in a more effective and coherent manner. The message of the Congress was that climate change is happening now and we need more effective local action to respond to it.

Secondly, we shall continue the work we have led in recent years to strengthen local air quality management. The experience of the last year has shown that there are severe limits to the improvements that can be made without fundamental changes to the European regulatory systems or legislation, particularly the nature of limit values. We have led this debate in the last year and will continue to do so.

On industrial regulation, the tension between the local, national and international will be at the heart of our work – in particular, the unresolved dilemma of how best to reconcile effective pollution control at local level, with trading systems and other economic regimes operating at the national or European level.

I have no doubt that the same themes will recur in other policy areas in which we are involved. With its wide membership and broad perspective I believe the Society will be admirably placed to make as effective a contribution on the key issues which inform local, national and global concerns, as it has previously done on other issues.

Calum MacDonald
Chairman



*Calum MacDonald,
Chairman, NSCA, 2003-04*

PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

One of the highlights of the year was the IUAPPA World Clean Air Congress, which brought together air quality experts from all over the world for a week of discussion and debate. The message of the Congress was that environmental issues such as climate change and air quality are more interlinked than previously recognised – a message which resonates with our own members' actions at local level. However as the scope of local environmental regulation broadens to encompass air quality, noise, contaminated land and climate change, our members are becoming increasingly stretched. We need renewed political commitment and effective resourcing for environmental protection, and in the run-up to a general election, we will be making that point loud and clear.

Another year of successful training events included one-day seminars on air quality management (in association with the Dispersion Model Users Group), noise, contaminated land, transport biofuels and mobile phone masts. NSCA workshops have developed a great reputation for bringing together policymakers and practitioners; this year we introduced two new workshops – on noise, and contaminated land – alongside the traditional Spring Workshop on air quality management. From this year, delegates attending both a one day training seminar as well as the two day workshop on either noise, air quality or contaminated land are awarded an NSCA Professional Development Programme (PDP) Certificate, representing formal certification of three days' intensive training in their speciality.

Air Quality and Climate Change

Although anthropogenic climate change has been an issue within the environmental and scientific communities for many years, 2004 has seen its increasing acceptance as a mainstream political issue, particularly in the UK. This year has also seen the emergence of consensus on the need to link more closely air quality and climate change. With both policy areas largely acting on the same sources, there is clearly a need to coordinate both and ensure that where possible their actions are complementary. More

than this, though, we need to understand how a changing climate will affect air quality, and how climate change policies will hinder, and in some cases assist, efforts to improve air quality. The importance of black carbon as an agent of climate change is still uncertain, as is its position as one of the main factors in the health effects of particles. All of these concerns were aired at the IUAPPA World Congress in August, and must form part of NSCA's work on air quality over the coming year.

Many of the measures required to improve air quality impact upon measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, either negatively or positively. NSCA has highlighted the need for action on climate change in two areas. Firstly, there is a need for local authorities to become more fully engaged in climate change, through a mechanism which encourages elected members and officers to tackle local greenhouse gas emissions. We have recommended the establishment of a Standing Conference on Local Authority Response to Climate Change, as a partnership of local authority bodies and relevant government departments, and suggested that local authorities nominate a senior member and officer with overall responsibility for climate change co-ordination within their authority, identifying local champions for action on climate change.

Secondly, it is clear that much of the potential for low-carbon vehicle technologies and design improvements remains unexploited. Vehicle emissions remain a major challenge, and we have recommended that the UK should use its forthcoming chairmanship of the EU to secure agreement on the phased introduction of maximum CO₂ equivalent standards for passenger cars and other road vehicles. This should be backed by an effective consumer energy labelling scheme for cars – the subject of a continuing NSCA campaign.

2004 has also seen the European Clean Air for Europe (CAFÉ) programme move into its final stages, with the establishment late in 2004 of the baseline scenarios from which the Thematic Strategy on Air Quality will be developed. The strategy is due for delivery in June 2005, although it will need to be finalised some months before this. NSCA has sought to influence CAFÉ through a number of routes – through the representation of EEB at Steering Group and working group meetings, through discussions with UK and other Member State representatives, and more lately through contact with EFCA. The year has seen a widening acceptance of the concept of gap closure policies for air quality, as set out in NSCA's 2003 paper *Air Quality Limit Values – Is There A Better Way?* We will be developing these ideas further during 2005.

The Air Quality Committee has continued to play a strong role in the development and implementation of air pollution and air quality policy in the UK. Throughout 2004, guidance on air quality and development control has been underway, the fifth in the Committee's



NSCA Secretary General, Richard Mills received his OBE, awarded for services to the improvement of air quality, from HRH the Prince of Wales



Richard Macrory, Professor of Environmental Law at University College London, was elected President of NSCA at its AGM on 11 December 2003

guidance series and possibly the most problematic in terms of the issues it needed to address. Following widespread consultation, and testing of the central methodologies at the Air Quality Spring Workshop, the guidance was issued in November 2004.

During the latter half of 2004, Defra initiated the third review of the UK Air Quality Strategy. In line with earlier lobbying work by NSCA, the review will focus on the policies in place to improve air quality, and the scope for further action, rather than on the objectives. The review is due for completion in summer 2005, and we anticipate the active involvement of the Air Quality Committee during this period. It is planned, with Defra, to hold a stakeholder conference on the early analysis of baselines and policy options, to provide input and comment, in Spring 2005. 2004 is also a compliance year for the critical particles (PM₁₀) objectives, and data will be available in 2005 to show how much of the country exceeds the objectives, and the extent of further action needed.



Chairman of NSCA Land Committee, Judith Lowe, with some of the speakers at NSCA's Land Quality Update seminar in February 2004, attended by over 150 contaminated land officers

Land Quality

Over the last year the Land Quality Committee has further expanded its work under the guidance of its Chairwoman, Judith Lowe. The Committee itself includes some of the UK's leading land quality professionals and comprises members of NSCA; local authority officers from planning and environmental health departments; academics; industrial representatives; consultants and also representatives of the Environment Agencies and Defra.

The Committee closely monitors progress and issues in the implementing of the Part IIA contaminated land regime as well as forthcoming legislation relating to land quality, including the Water Framework Directive, which is widely thought to represent the new environmental driver in Europe, and the Environmental Liability Directive. At a national level the Committee responded to a consultation on Best Value Performance Indicators and is considering the implications of environmental permitting.

The LQC remains interested in the area of brownfield development. Following the Barker report, published in March, issues related to brownfield and greenfield development have returned to the policy agenda, and the overlap of brownfield development and waste is likely to remain a topical issue. This is to be addressed more fully in NSCA's "Unintended Outcomes of Waste Regulation" project.

Over the coming year the Committee will focus on soil quality, notably the EU Commission's Soil Protection Strategy where it benefits from having members involved in the Commission's expert working groups. With soil policy becoming increasingly high on the agenda the LQC is considering ways in which it can contribute to further evaluation and development of the key issues. It is also considering the current Defra and Environment Agency soil policy documents in addition to the EC papers with a view to developing an NSCA response to feed into the European process.

The training and seminar programme has continued to develop over the year and this year will see the first of NSCA's 2-day Autumn Workshops on Contaminated Land. In conjunction with the annual Land Update Seminar held in the spring, this workshop will form the basis of NSCA's programme for continuing professional development in land quality.

Waste Issues

During the year NSCA members raised concerns that current definitions of waste and interpretations of waste legislation could conflict with the objectives of the waste hierarchy, and in some cases frustrate efforts to sensibly re-use materials and implement waste minimisation strategies. NSCA therefore carried out a consultation amongst representatives of industry, the regulators and other NGOs. The results of that consultation were developed into a response to the European Commission's Draft Communication "Towards a Thematic Strategy on the Prevention and Recycling of Waste"; NSCA also contributed to a joint UK NGO response to the consultation.

Following a further review, the Society convened a workshop of key stakeholders. The workshop brought together senior specialists from industry, the regulatory bodies, academia and the legal professions to identify and discuss the main issues in waste regulation. The outcomes of the workshop will be circulated widely and will form the basis for NSCA's work in the field of waste minimisation and reduction.



NSCA's annual air quality Spring Workshop continues to provide convivial surroundings for UK air quality experts to review developments in air quality policy and practice

NSCA DIVISIONS

During the past year, NSCA Divisions have organised a number of special conferences and seminars, attracting speakers from the regulatory agencies and local industrial and commercial organisations; the range of topics covered mirrors NSCA's agenda at national level. Our thanks go to the Divisional Hon. Secretaries (listed on the inside back cover) and their colleagues for their hard work on behalf of the Society. Our thanks also go to the many members who have generously hosted meetings for our Divisions.

Seminars and workshops focusing on implementation of the contaminated land regime and other aspects of land remediation continued to feature high on the programmes of a number of NSCA Divisions during the year. Both *NSCA Scotland* and *NSCA Wales* presented results of surveys on implementation of the contaminated land regime in their respective countries at seminars earlier this year, with NSCA Scotland also continuing its highly successful series of training workshops on specific aspects of the regime. Elsewhere, the *East Midlands Division* AGM was followed by a seminar on land remediation; this was also the topic for a *Northern Division* meeting at Cowpen Bewley Woodland Country Park which was formerly a landfill site, and for the *Yorkshire Division* who visited a problem landfill site near Bradford which is being dealt with under the contaminated land regime.

NSCA Wales also collaborated with the CIEH in Wales to arrange a one day conference *Environmental Interventions and Health* with presentations ranging from health and environmental protection, waste disposal, the PPC regime and business practice through to noise and the challenges of sustainable development for public health and pollution control. A meeting at Dow Corning's Barry plant heard presentations from the Carbon Trust in Wales and Dow Corning on the mapping of carbon emissions and future proposals for such mapping – Dow Corning, one of the first companies in the UK to map its carbon emissions, have been working with the Carbon Trust in Wales to map the carbon generated as a result of energy use in its production processes at the plant, with the aim of achieving long-term reductions.

As well as their contaminated land workshops, NSCA Scotland hosted a one day seminar to consider the implications of the (then) Scottish Anti-Social Behaviour Bill; NSCA Scotland has also been working with the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland on its three day Pollution Update Course, which covered air, noise and waste – NSCA Scotland provided speakers for the programme and Chairpersons on some of the

days and it is hoped to work on similar ventures with REHIS in future. Since the advent of devolution the need to have a stronger presence in Scotland has been becoming increasingly evident. Environment, health and planning are all issues devolved to the Scottish Parliament and NSCA Scotland is keen to engage with decision-makers in Scotland and to this end is actively pursuing funding sources with a view to appointing a dedicated Policy Officer within Scotland.

NSCA South West held its 6th Annual Conference with the Air Quality Management Resource Centre at the University of the West of England with presentations on local air quality management, and IPPC and noise; a meeting hosted by the Forest of Dean Council approved proposals for increasing membership, and in July the Met Office hosted a meeting of the Division at their new premises near Exeter, Devon, which included a tour of the building which has won awards for design and environmental performance.

The East Midlands Division's regular programme of meetings included one at Marshall Aerospace at Cambridge Airport which looked at the environmental impact of airports, as well as the effect of aircraft emissions on climate change and global warming. At Castle Cement, Stamford, members discussed the complexity of the PPC regime and were given a tour of the quarry and plant. The Northern Division looked at the environmental powers and duties under the new *Anti-Social Behaviour Act* at their May meeting. For the *West Midlands Division* – now enjoying a revival following a somewhat dormant period – a meeting hosted by Cannock Chase DC provided an opportunity for local authorities to discuss their experiences of the local air quality management regime. The *South East Division* held a successful one day conference on flood risk management and what communities can do to meet the growing threat.

More details of the Divisions' work, contact details and meetings are on NSCA's website.



Members of the East Midlands Division at the Waters' Edge Nature Reserve – formerly a heavily contaminated site where pollutants included anthrax

INTERNATIONAL ACTION

The relative importance of international action to abate air pollution is continuously increasing. On both ozone and particles, in particular, domestic action by the UK will be of limited effectiveness, and a large proportion of air quality regulation is therefore already determined at EU level. On a wider scale it is becoming increasingly clear that the transport of pollutants at hemispheric and even global scales, and their interaction with climate change agents, is of increasing significance. The Society is therefore increasingly complementing its primary work at local level with a commitment to international action, through its membership of the European Federation of Clean Air (EFCA) and its role in servicing the International Union of Air Pollution Prevention and Environmental Protection Associations (IUAPPA).

EFCA

At EU level, the Society made a significant contribution through leading EFCA into closer involvement in the European Union's CAFÉ programme. The Society's work on limit values, reported earlier in this review, was adopted by EFCA and presented at European Commission meetings where it has made a significant contribution to debate on the future development of European air quality regulations. There are major issues here on which the Society is committed to making a leading contribution.

IUAPPA

At the global scale the International Union, of which the Society's Secretary General is currently Director General, is now steadily widening its area of activity. It remains a forum through which the leading air quality societies in some forty countries can cooperate, exchange views and information and generally foster international debate on atmospheric sciences and policy.

Increasingly, however, the Union's aim is to make an effective contribution itself to developments in these areas. It has now identified three key policy areas on which it will focus attention over the next few years:

- The need for new machinery at the hemispheric and global scale to address long range transport of pollution;
- The interaction, at both scientific and policy levels, of climate change and pollution and;



IUAPPA Board Meeting, London

- Transport and air pollution in the world's large and mega cities.

Significant steps forward on each of these were taken in the last year. In January the second of the Union's international seminars on transport and air pollution in mega cities was held in Mexico City, in conjunction with the international research programme being led there by Nobel Laureate Prof. Mario Molina. NSCA contributed strongly to this, with important papers by Prof. Jim Longhurst from The University of the West of England, David Hutchinson from the GLA and Sir Christopher Foster, the internationally distinguished authority on transport economics.

The Union's work on long range transboundary air pollution passed a major milestone with a special meeting at the World Clean Air Congress, to initiate a global forum drawing together regional networks and programmes addressing long range transport of pollution. Sponsored by Defra and the Swedish International Co-Operation Development Agency, the meeting was a notable success with a Standing Forum agreed which will be serviced by the Union.

To help address the interaction of climate change and pollution, the Union's International Board decided that its World Congress should take the issue as its principal theme; the Congress brought together an exceptionally distinguished group of international authorities on the subject, who raised public debate of the issues to a new level.

World Congress

As well as providing an opportunity for the Union to pursue its interest in the fields described above, this year's Congress in London provided a notable opportunity to bring together scientists, regulators and business interests to review the key atmospheric and wider environmental challenges. Sponsored by BP, Johnson Matthey and Volvo and a wide range of public institutions including Defra, the Environment Agency and the GLA, the five days of the Congress included plenary presentations of exceptional quality; key note addresses by Klaus Topfer, UNEP Executive Director, Environment Minister Lord Whitty and leading industry figures; and nearly 400 oral and poster presentations. For the nearly 700 participants from the UK and abroad the occasion will be particularly memorable for splendid hospitality by the Government in the Durbar Court of the Foreign Office and by the Greater London Authority and by the City Corporation in the Guildhall.

The NSCA's role both in hosting the Congress, and in organising two special parallel workshops (on Modern Regulation, at the Royal Institution, and on Air Quality in Cities, at the GLA) was clearly warmly appreciated by international visitors.

The next World Congress is to be held in Brisbane, Australia, in 2007, with other meetings of the Union meanwhile in Istanbul, Tokyo and Paris.



Cleaner Transport Forum

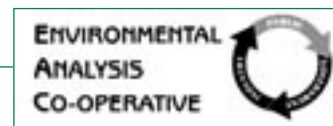
The CTF brings together interests in cleaner automotive fuels and technologies from across industry, local authorities, fleet operators, environment groups and research bodies.

A project on environmental implications of transport biofuels, undertaken in partnership with the Institute for European Environmental Policy included a stakeholder seminar and a conference to launch the findings of the research. We also completed a feasibility study of local biofuels production for East Sussex County Council. The full reports are available on the NSCA website. Concern is now moving to the air quality impacts of biofuels, and the implementation of the EU Directive on Biofuels.

CTF has sought to broker agreement on national standards for Low Emission Zones. Plans for a Low Emission Zone in London are advancing; a LEZ was a manifesto commitment by the Mayor, and Transport for London has been asked to begin preparatory work. The CTF will continue to facilitate discussions between London LEZ interests, and local authorities outside London who were also considering LEZ options. There is increasing interest in local low emission schemes, where local authorities can use planning agreement with developers to encourage cleaner vehicles as part of new development.

CTF is overseeing research on local authority roadside emissions testing, seeking views on what worked well, what proved problematic, and any changes local authority officers would recommend to the future testing regime. Different authorities have taken differing approaches to testing, with some adopting voluntary schemes and others using fixed penalty enforcement. As part of the research, TRL is providing information on emissions data and emissions testing protocols. The research will feed into a Department for Transport review of roadside emissions testing.

Discussions on car labelling have recently taken place at EU level and there was general support for the A-G format proposed by NSCA. Officials are now looking at ways of taking forward a voluntary labelling scheme in the UK, ahead of any EU requirements which are now unlikely to be in place before 2008/9. We hope to work with the car industry, through the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership, to introduce an effective consumer label in 2005.



Environmental Analysis Co-operative

A central concern of NSCA is to ensure that the objectives of environmental protection and enhancement are achieved in the most efficient and cost-effective manner. This requires understanding and cooperation among government, other regulators, regulated businesses and the public at large. The Society therefore services the EAC, which brings together regulators and businesses to explore how environmental regulation can be made more effective.

During the year the Co-operative concluded the main part of its programme exploring issues concerned with the introduction of IPPC and, particularly, its links and relationships with other regulatory systems including planning, water regulation and COMAH. While the EAC will continue to monitor progress at its three Members Forum meetings each year, as well as provide an opportunity for new issues or problems identified by members to be discussed with the Environment Agency, its work is now developing in two other areas – the comparative review of IPPC across Europe, and the new approaches to regulation variously termed ‘smarter regulation’ or ‘better regulation’.

During the year the EAC undertook the first stage of a review of the implementation of IPPC across Europe. This drew on the support of a range of large UK companies who also have major plants elsewhere in the European Union and therefore have experience of several different regulators. After this pilot study a wider review of IPPC regulation across various European countries will be carried out with the aim of clarifying to what extent common and consistent approaches are applied and what systems or policies are in place elsewhere which could usefully be applied in the UK.

The high spot of the Co-operative’s work on new approaches to regulation was the major conference held at the Royal Institution, in conjunction with the World Clean Air Congress. This focused on the potential role of trading systems and on the scope for moving progressively towards a more risk-based system of regulation. The programme, which included speakers from Europe, the United States and Brazil, concluded with a notable address by Ludwig Kramer, the retiring Head of Environmental Governance for the European Commission.

The EAC is now reviewing and developing its future programme to take account of the main conclusions emerging from the Conference. For the next couple of years a key theme is expected to be how to reconcile the needs for effective local pollution control with cost-effective national trading systems without increasing the overall burden of regulatory control.

ASSOCIATED BODIES

Dispersion Model Users' Group

The UK Dispersion Model Users' Group (UK-DMUG) was formed over 10 years ago from an initial meeting of air dispersion modellers. It is now part of NSCA and collaborates with the Institute of Air Quality Management (www.iaqm.co.uk) to provide an independent forum for discussion and exchange of information for all dispersion model users. The broad aims of the Group are to:

- Improve the performance of available air dispersion models by influencing model developments, in accordance with the needs of the modelling community, and
- Foster the improvement of dispersion modelling techniques through improvements in communications and dissemination of knowledge within the user community.

During the last year DMUG has held two workshops bringing together a high proportion of the UK air quality modelling community. At its 19th meeting in May the topic under discussion was the difficulties of assessing short term (15 minute) SO₂ impacts in the light of recent advances in modelling techniques and increased availability of ambient monitoring data. At the 20th meeting in November in Birmingham, there was a special joint meeting on using geographical information systems in dispersion modelling and an air quality policy update. The keynote address to both audiences was given by Davide Minotti of Defra. Special thanks to Dr Sarah Lindlay for chairing the DMUG session.

For more information about DMUG, please contact: DMUG Coordinator, Dr Matthew Ireland (matthew.ireland@mottmac.com).

NSCA Divisions and Hon. Secretaries

Scottish Division: Alastair Brown
Northern Ireland Division: Graeme Bannister
Northern Division: Jeff Duffield
North West Division: John Dinsdale
Yorkshire Division: John Parkinson
West Midlands Division: Derek Reynolds
East Midlands Division: Dr. Bill Pearce
South East Division: Rob Gibson
South West Division: Peter Fryer
Wales Division: Alan Brown

Principal Policy Committees

Air Quality Committee: Chairman: Steve Moorcroft
National Noise Committee: Chairman: Keith Horton
Land Quality Committee: Chairman: Judith Lowe

Associated Bodies

International Union of Air Pollution Prevention and Environmental Protection Associations: President: Gavin Fisher, New Zealand
Cleaner Transport Forum: Chairman: Richard Mills OBE
Dispersion Model Users Group: Convenor: Matthew Ireland
Environmental Analysis Co-operative: Chairman: Richard Mills OBE

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Recent Publications

NSCA Pollution Handbook 2004
(February 2004)
Standard reference book for environmental specialists.

NSCA Briefing
Monthly update on air pollution, noise, waste and related environmental issues, and forthcoming NSCA events, both national and regional.

The Potential Environmental and Rural Impacts of Biofuel Production in the UK – Report of a stakeholder consultation process (February 2004)

Expert Paper on the Global Impacts of Road Transport Biofuels – A contribution to the Government's analysis (February 2004)

Sustainable Transport Fuels from Local Woodland – A feasibility study for East Sussex (February 2004)

Information Leaflets
Covering a wide range of issues, from air pollution to contaminated land, noise to fireworks and bonfires, NSCA leaflets provide information on current legislation and issues in environmental protection. They are regularly updated throughout the year to ensure they remain current.

A full list of NSCA publications is available from NSCA or can be seen on the NSCA website.

National Society for Clean Air and
Environmental Protection
44 Grand Parade
Brighton BN2 9QA

Tel: 01273 878770
Fax: 01273 606626

Email: admin@nsca.org.uk
Website: www.nsca.org.uk

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