

**Wendy Mead OBE**

Chairman

Port Health and Environmental Services Committee



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Mr Rory Stewart MP  
Parliamentary Under-Secretary  
Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs  
Nobel House  
17 Smith Square  
London  
SW1P 3JR

Dear Mr Stewart

**Light duty diesel vehicle emissions**

We at the City of London Corporation were alarmed at the news that Volkswagen has been installing software in 11 million diesel vehicles worldwide in order to manipulate the exhaust emission test for NOx. We understand that this is being investigated by the USA Environmental Protection Agency and that the German government has also launched an investigation into this issue.

The matter of non-compliance of diesel exhaust emissions with Euro Standards has been known for a long time. The City of London Corporation supported research by King's College London in the summers of 2012 and 2013 looking at the problem of real world emissions of NOx compared to Euro Standard requirements. This revealed a large difference in emissions of NOx from vehicles manufactured by different companies. We appreciate that changes are being made to the current European emission testing regime to take into account real world emissions with the introduction of the Real Driving Emission test procedure. However we remain concerned that this new testing procedure could still be manipulated.

Given the on-going non-compliance of NOx emissions from light duty diesel vehicles, we are very interested in investigations that will now be carried out in Europe to assess whether the current testing regime has been manipulated. This should include checks on vehicles other than those manufactured by the Volkswagen group. Could you advise if any specific checks will be made on light duty diesel vehicles on the road in the United Kingdom?

We feel that this matter should be treated with urgency given the extent of non-compliance with nitrogen dioxide limit values across central London, and the recent health evidence which attributes a high level of mortality to long term exposure to nitrogen dioxide.

The City of London Corporation takes the issue of improving air quality very seriously. In order for local policies to be effective, it is essential that there is adequate control of emissions of NOx from diesel vehicle exhausts. This is something that we are unable to influence at local level. The improved emission compliance test is unlikely to come into force before September 2017, so the impact of this will not be seen in central London for a number of years. We urge the Government to consider what additional action can be taken to reduce emissions from diesel vehicles in the short term and reduce the impact that air pollution is having on the health of Londoners.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Wendy Mead". The signature is written in a cursive style with a vertical line separating the first and last names.

**Wendy Mead OBE**

Chairman of the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee