



Our ref: EN00265
Your ref: Mr J Cheyne

Mr Cheyne

E-mail sent to: juliancheyne@hotmail.co.uk

18 March 2009

Dear Mr Cheyne



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

We refer to your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) received by the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) on 19 February 2009 requesting the following information:

1. *What are the most dangerous particles?*
2. *Are smaller particles more dangerous?*
3. *If PM10 are not the most dangerous particles why is the ODA not measuring those that are more dangerous?*

We confirm that we hold some of the information specified in your request.

Item 1 and 2

The ODA does not determine what dust particles are most dangerous, or whether smaller particles are more dangerous. However, the ODA does follow the guidance which has been set down at National, Regional and local levels. The National Air Quality Strategy is contained on the Department for



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Environment Food and Rural Affairs website which you can find at the link below.

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/airquality/strategy/>

The National Air Quality Strategy states:

“PM10 roughly equates to the mass of particles less than 10 micrometres in diameter that are likely to be inhaled into the thoracic region of the respiratory tract. Recent reviews by WHO [World Health Organisation] and Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants (COMEAP) have suggested exposure to a finer fraction of particles (PM2.5, particulate matter smaller than 2.5 µm diameter, which typically make up around two thirds of PM₁₀ emissions and concentrations) give a stronger association with the observed ill health effects, but also warn that there is evidence that the coarse fraction between (PM10 – PM2.5) also has some effects on health.”

The London Best Practice Guidance (“The Control of Dust and Emissions from Construction and Demolition”) which is publicly available at the link below states:

“PM10 is a mass fraction of airborne particles with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 microns or less. It is comprised of coarse particles (2.5-10 mm in diameter), which are primarily from non-combustion sources and fine particles (less than 2.5 mm), which includes combustion processes or are formed in the atmosphere through the chemical reaction of primary emissions of gases. Particulate matter includes a wide range of sizes and types of particles and will vary in composition from place to place and time to time. Most dust particles are too big to be inhaled but can cause eye, nose and throat irritation and lead to deposition on cars, windows and property. PM10 is of more concern to human health as the particles can enter the lungs, causing breathing and respiratory problems, with long-term health effects dominated by cardiovascular rather than respiratory problems. The PM10 size fraction is associated with a range of effects on health including respiratory and cardiovascular systems (i.e. asthma) and mortality (deaths brought forward). Particles can also carry adhered carcinogenic compounds into the lungs. The most vulnerable people are the elderly, the very young and those with existing heart and lung conditions. The detrimental health impacts of PM10 are not confined to the construction site. These particles can travel further than

coarser dust and so can affect the health of people living and working in the surrounding area of the site.”

http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/environment/air_quality/docs/construction-dust-bpg.pdf

Item 3

The ODA is required to monitor PM₁₀ dust particles based on the London Best Practice Guidance. There is no requirement on the ODA to monitor PM_{2.5} although new national targets will come into effect until 2020.

The ODA has developed a dust monitoring strategy (which has been approved by the ODA Planning Decisions Team (PDT)) which includes the continuous monitoring of particulate matter of 10 microns or less (PM₁₀) at a number of locations at and around the Olympic Park. (Dust monitoring strategy is attached as Annex A, but is publicly available on the ODA PDT website). In terms of this strategy, the PM₁₀ data collected from the OP is then compared against the UK Air Quality Standards.

We trust that the information provided to you is of assistance. However, if you are not satisfied with the response to your request and wish to make a complaint, you should write to The Information Officer, Olympic Delivery Authority, One Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5LN. Please state detailed grounds for your complaint.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Information Commissioner will not make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaint procedure provided by the ODA. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely



Information Officer
Olympic Delivery Authority

