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1 FEB 2016

Mr Clive Stott

Dear Mr Stott

Thank you for your letter dated 4 December 2015. Please accept my apologies for not being able to respond to you before the *Meeting of Environment Ministers* held on 15 December 2015 at which changes to the *National Environment Protection (Ambient Air Quality) Measure (Air NEPM)* were discussed and agreed upon.

As you are likely aware, on 15 December 2015 Ministers agreed to adopt reporting standards for the annual average and 24-hour average for $PM_{2.5}$ of $8\mu g/m^3$ and $25\mu g/m^3$, respectively, with a commitment to further reduce these to $7\mu g/m^3$ and $20\mu g/m^3$ by 2025. Ministers also agreed to a reporting standard for the annual average for PM_{10} of $25\mu g/m^3$, with a review of this standard scheduled for 2018. To strengthen the implementation of these particle standards in the Air NEPM, I am considering further policy instruments and emission reduction interventions within Tasmania to achieve improved air quality.

With regard to national compliance reporting, the Air NEPM has been designed to provide a nationally consistent reference data set for major population centres and as such, only well-defined reference methods or their equivalents are used to collect the data. The annual compliance reporting of this reference level data will remain a requirement under the revised Air NEPM. However, the emphasis in the revised Air NEPM placed on determination and reporting of population exposure to $PM_{2.5}$ will likely mean that alternate methodologies may be used to measure or estimate exposure in areas away from reference level air quality monitoring stations. As you have noted in your letter, Tasmania's BLANKET monitoring network provides indicative particle concentrations from many areas of the State. I am informed that the Air NEPM Expert Working Group is actively exploring the use of non-reference technologies, modelling, inventories and other approaches to develop a nationally consistent means of measuring and reporting on population exposure. The Tasmanian experience forms part of the information the Expert Working Group is canvassing in this endeavour.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Groom", written over a white background.

Matthew Groom MP

Minister for Environment, Parks and Heritage