



NEPC Report on the Implementation of the
Ambient Air Quality NEPM

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PART 1 — GENERAL INFORMATION

NEPM details

Title: National Environment Protection (Ambient Air Quality) Measure

Made by Council: 26 June 1998

Commencement Date: 8 July 1998 (advertised in Commonwealth of Australia Gazette no GN 27, 8 July 1998, p 2211)

NEPM goal (or purpose)

The goal of the National Environment Protection (Ambient Air Quality) Measure is set out in clause 6 of the Measure as follows:

6. National environment protection goal

The National Environment Protection Goal of this Measure is to achieve the National Environment Protection Standards as assessed in accordance with the monitoring protocol (Part 4) within ten years from commencement to the extent specified in Schedule 2 column 5.

Desired environmental outcomes

The desired environmental outcome of the National Environment Protection (Ambient Air Quality) Measure is set out in clause 5 of the Measure as follows:

5. Desired environmental outcome

The desired environmental outcome of this Measure is ambient air quality that allows for the adequate protection of human health and well-being.

Evaluation criteria

The assessment of the effectiveness of the National Environment Protection (Ambient Air Quality) Measure is based on the following criteria.

General criteria (Specified in the NEPC Implementation Reporting Protocol)

- progress in implementing the NEPM
- compliance by parties bound by the NEPM with NEPM protocols and/or other NEPM reporting requirements
- progress toward achievement of the NEPM goal, the desired environmental outcomes and any NEPM standards
- issues arising that reflect on the efficiency and simplicity of NEPM administration.

PART 2 — IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEPM AND ANY SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

This part provides a summary of jurisdictional reports on implementation, discussion of any issues of concern raised by jurisdictions and Council's overall assessment of the implementation of the NEPM.

Legislative, regulatory and administrative framework

Table (5): Summary of Implementation Frameworks

Jurisdiction	Summary of Implementation Frameworks
Commonwealth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the Commonwealth does not have exclusive legislative powers for any region with a population of 25 000 or more, the Commonwealth is not required to undertake direct monitoring action.
New South Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NEPM is implemented through programs that are incorporated in the NSW Government's 25-year Air Quality Management Plan, <i>Action for Air</i>.
Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NEPM was adopted as the State environment protection policy (Ambient Air Quality), made under the <i>Environment Protection Act 1970</i>. • The revised SEPP (Air Quality Management) together with revisions to the SEPP (Ambient Air Quality) provide a modern statutory policy framework for air quality management under which the NEPM goal can be achieved.
Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NEPM is implemented under the <i>Environmental Protection Act 1994</i> and Environmental Protection (Air) Policy 1997.



Jurisdiction	Summary of Implementation Frameworks
Western Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NEPM is implemented under the <i>National Environment Protection Council (Western Australia) Act 1996</i>. • The Environmental Protection Policy (EPP) for Air Quality setting NEPM standards and limits is being developed. • The EPP for Control of Sulfur Dioxide in the Kwinana Area sets ambient standards and limits that are defined differently from the NEPM. • The EPP for Control of Sulfur Dioxide in Goldfields Residential Areas (Kalgoorlie and Other Areas) was reviewed and amended in 2003.
South Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under s.28A of the <i>Environment Protection Act 1993</i>, the NEPM operates as an environment protection policy from the day the NEPM is given effect.
Tasmania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NEPM was taken to be a State Policy under the <i>State Policies and Projects Act 1993</i> on 31 March 1999. • The draft EPP (Air Quality) has been developed to provide an implementation framework for the NEPM.
Australian Capital Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislative, regulatory and administrative frameworks for implementation of the NEPM are in place.
Northern Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Environment Protection Objective for Ambient Air Quality pursuant to the <i>Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998</i> is being developed.

Council assessment of Implementation Frameworks

Most jurisdictions have incorporated the NEPM into their legislative frameworks, adopted through environment protection legislation and the making or amendment of State Policies.

Implementation activities

Table (6): Summary of Jurisdictional Implementation Activities

Jurisdiction	Summary of Implementation Activities
Commonwealth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commonwealth chairs and supports the Peer Review Committee. • The Commonwealth provided funding towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the production of the first national report summarising current and historic air quality in Australia – the Fine Particle Compositional Study which is being undertaken to determine the chemical composition and seasonal variation of fine particles and selected air toxics in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide – the Woodsmoke Personal Exposure Monitoring Study, conducted in Launceston, Tasmania. • The Commonwealth undertook a number of projects principally funded under the Natural Heritage Trust Air Pollution in Major Cities Program. • Under the <i>Fuel Quality Standards Act 2000</i>, the level of sulfur allowed in diesel was reduced from an average 1300 parts per million to 500 parts per million from 1 January 2003.



Jurisdiction	Summary of Implementation Activities
Commonwealth (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Woodheater Audit Program was undertaken to determine whether particle emissions from woodheaters available for retail sale are consistent with certified emissions and to determine whether woodheater design checks are a reliable proxy for expensive emissions testing. • The \$2.05 million Launceston Woodheater Replacement Program continued to be implemented during 2002–03 to address air quality in Tasmania’s Tamar Valley.
New South Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action for Air is the overarching air quality management plan for the Sydney Greater Metropolitan Region. Existing strategies in the plan are complemented by further initiatives which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a Clean Air Fund for projects to reduce emissions from smaller commercial/industrial and domestic activities – a Cleaner Vehicles Action Plan, the first element of which, the Clean Car Benchmarks, were released – a Woodsmoke Reduction Program – a project to investigate voluntary measures to increase the supply and uptake of cleaner small engines – a proposal to regulate to limit petrol vapour pressure in summer – the commencement of a review of the Clean Air (Plant and Equipment) Regulation 1997.
Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPA Victoria chaired the project team on the development of a variation to the NEPM to include an advisory PM_{2.5} standard. • Two additional performance monitoring stations were established and campaign monitoring undertaken in two locations. • New instruments were installed at four sites to monitor PM₁₀ continuously by tapered element oscillating microbalance (TEOM). • Monitoring with the mobile air monitoring laboratory continued and a second mobile laboratory was acquired. • Other activities included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – working with EPA licensees to examine their emissions management in accordance with the requirements under the new SEPP and promoting the application of best practice – undertaking the Eco-maintenance Program for diesel vehicles. – developing a statutory policy for the management of emissions from domestic solid fuel heating.
Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EPA continued to upgrade its ambient air monitoring network with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the commencement of ozone and nitrogen dioxide monitoring at the North Coast station in south-east Queensland – the acquisition of PM_{2.5} monitoring instrumentation. • The EPA has undergone assessment by NATA for accreditation. • The South-East Queensland Regional Air Quality Strategy is currently being revised.



Jurisdiction	Summary of Implementation Activities
Western Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Department of Environment focused on:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– continuing with work to obtain NATA accreditation of NEPM monitoring activities– monitoring of PM_{2.5} and 10-minute sulfur dioxide concentrations to facilitate the review and/or development of NEPM standards for these pollutants– implementation of a number of priority actions within the strategy for the Perth Air Quality Management Plan– releasing the results of a case-crossover analysis for air quality data and morbidity and mortality in Perth– improved community access to air quality monitoring data via the Air Quality webpage– maintaining stringent automotive fuel quality standards.
South Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A number of monitoring stations and instruments were brought into service, including two sites in regional urban centres and four sites within metropolitan Adelaide.• A formal program has been developed to obtain NATA certification within two years.• The Environment Protection (Air Quality) Policy 1994 is currently under review.
Tasmania	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment focused on:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– commencing campaign monitoring of PM₁₀ in Devonport– commencing work to obtain NATA accreditation of NEPM monitoring activities– developing a monitoring capacity for PM_{2.5}.
Australian Capital Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The ACT has implemented a number of initiatives to target wood heater emissions including the ACT Firewood Strategy, the licensing of firewood merchants, and from 1 January 2004, the introduction of a wood heater subsidy scheme aimed directly at reducing particle levels, in particular those less than 2.5 microns.• Lead monitoring has ceased as ambient air lead levels are now significantly lower than the national standard.
Northern Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activities continue to focus on further characterising and addressing particulate matter from landscape fires, the primary air pollutant of concern.



Council evaluation and assessment of Jurisdictional Implementation Activities

In this reporting year, jurisdictions have:

- made significant contributions to the activities of the Peer Review Committee, notably in the development of *Technical Paper 8 Annual Reports for the Ambient Air Quality NEPM*, which is designed to provide consistency in NEPM reporting across jurisdictions
- continued with work to obtain or maintain NATA accreditation of NEPM monitoring activities
- maintained monitoring sites and extended existing networks.

It is pleasing to note that three jurisdictions – South Australia, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory – have found levels of lead to be sufficiently below the standard that monitoring for lead is no longer required.

Jurisdictions have also reported on their management strategies towards achieving the goal of the NEPM. These strategies are focused on pollutants of concern within individual jurisdictions. It should be noted that a number of the management strategies being implemented under the Diesel Vehicle Emissions NEPM will have positive outcomes for the Ambient Air Quality NEPM.

PART 3 — ASSESSMENT OF NEPM EFFECTIVENESS

To fulfil the requirements of the NEPM, jurisdictional monitoring regimes involve a network of sites. Not all pollutants are measured at every monitoring site, nor is this required by the NEPM. Additionally, a NEPM monitoring program is a subset of each jurisdiction's Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Program.

The current results show that Australia's air quality is generally good. Monitoring results indicate that, in most cases, the NEPM standards are being met. In a few cases, jurisdictions have not demonstrated compliance with the NEPM standards as some sites are yet to be commissioned. At other sites, the NEPM standard has been exceeded.

In this reporting period, some jurisdictions have expressed concern that for specific Ambient Air Quality NEPM standards the 2008 goal might not be achievable

in the short term. As demonstrated in Part 2 individual jurisdictions, often in partnership with the Commonwealth, are focusing on management strategies to achieve the goal.

PART 4 — REPORTING REQUIRED BY THE NEPM

This was the first year that jurisdictions have submitted a report interalia on compliance with clause 17 of the NEPM. These reports have been prepared in accordance with the Peer Review Committee's *Technical Paper 8 Annual Reports for the Ambient Air Quality NEPM*. More detailed monitoring data are available in jurisdictional compliance reports which are available from <www.ephc.gov.au>.

PART 5 — REPORTS ON IMPLEMENTATION BY JURISDICTIONS

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