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Is LEZ compliance determined purely by Euro classification, with no allowance for evidence of real-world emissions or vehicle condition?

The emissions standards for petrol and diesel vehicles are set out in the Low Emission Zones (Emission Standards, Exemptions and Enforcement) (Scotland) Regulations 2021. The regulations, which apply to all of Scotland's LEZs, were developed by the Scottish Government.

Entry into Scotland's LEZs is based on the Euro emission engine classification standards and the minimum criteria are:

- Euro 4 for petrol cars and vans
- Euro 6 for diesel cars and vans
- Euro 6 for petrol and diesel taxis and private hire vehicles, according to standard licence conditions, as set out in the Taxi Emission Standards Policy (2021)
- Euro 6 for buses, coaches and HGVs

All zero emission vehicles, including electric vehicles (EVs), meet the LEZ emission standards.

How does the Council verify that all vehicles manufactured after 2016 (Euro 6) genuinely meet the stated emissions standards, given the well-known gap between laboratory certification and real-world emissions?

The emissions data used across Scotland's LEZs is provided and maintained by the UK Government's Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU). It is not the Council's responsibility to verify the information held by JAQU and any concerns related to the quality of the data should be addressed to the UK Government.

Who decided that Euro class alone should define compliance, and what environmental evidence supported this decision?

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 states that vehicles are required to meet specified emissions standards to be driven in Scotland's LEZs without penalty. The Euro classes and the supporting emissions tables were selected by the Scottish government and laid out in detail in Schedule 1 of the regulations. All four Scottish LEZ schemes must operate in compliance with the Act and Regulations.

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 is the basis for the environmental considerations in decision making, as laid out in section 2B of the Act.

Request for a detailed written explanation of:

The exact process and criteria used to determine compliance;

The emissions data used across Scotland's LEZs is provided and maintained by the UK Government's Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU). Vehicle compliance is checked via an automatic lookup of the data set using vehicle registrations. The compliance criteria are those listed in Schedule 1 of the regulations.

The evidence that supports treating Euro 6 classification as proof of lower emissions

We do not hold this information. The Council is enforcing a set of nationally standardised regulations; therefore, we suggest that your questions regarding Euro 6 classification should be addressed to Transport Scotland or the Scottish Government.

Any mechanisms that allow individual owners to challenge or review their vehicle's classification.

If the keeper of a vehicle provides a copy of their Vehicle Logbook (V5C) along with supporting evidence from the vehicle manufacturer that shows the vehicle is compliant, the Council has a process in place with the DVLA that enables us to present the information and seek a compliance review. The process is typically quick with a final response inside 48 hours.

The primary objective of Edinburgh's LEZ is to protect public health and improve air quality by reducing the number of highly polluting vehicles in and around the city centre.

Multiple sustainable mass and active travel methods into the LEZ are available to the public, including: trains, trams and buses (all of which offer park and ride options), cycling, wheeling and walking. This ensures that drivers of non-compliant vehicles have a choice of alternative modes of transport when accessing the city centre.

Additionally, the Energy Savings Trust operates an LEZ support fund and offered a range of LEZ related grants to individuals and businesses to help them prepare for the LEZ.