

Jim Martin
Chair
Environmental Standards Scotland
Ìrean Àrainneachdail na h-Alba

ENVIRONMENTAL
Standards Scotland
Ìrean Àrainneachdail na h-Alba

ESSChair@environmentalstandards.scot

Dean Lockhart MSP
Convener
Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee
Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

11 August 2022

Dear Convener,

ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS SCOTLAND: UPDATE

Environmental Standards Scotland has been operating for nine months. As a non-ministerial office, Environmental Standards Scotland is accountable to the Scottish Parliament. This letter gives a brief update on our work since the laying of our first [Annual Report](#) in the Parliament on 25 May 2022.

1. We have been consulting on our draft Strategic Plan. This consultation closes on 17 August 2022. Following analysis of responses to the consultation, we will lay a revised draft of our plan in the Scottish Parliament for approval by 30 September 2022, as required by schedule 2 of the UK Withdrawal from the European Union (Continuity) (Scotland) Act 2021 and look forward to the Parliament's scrutiny of it. Environmental Standards Scotland's initial budget was set at £2.3 million. We will reassess this in the context of the responses to our draft Strategic Plan.
2. We have recently concluded consideration of the regulation of acoustic deterrent devices used by fish farms. We were able to resolve this issue satisfactorily with Marine Scotland through our informal resolution process, without the need for a formal investigation. The results of this process are available on our website at:
<https://www.environmentalstandards.scot/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Environmental-Standards-Scotland-ADD-Informal-Resolution-Report.pdf>

Environmental Standards Scotland
enquiries@environmentalstandards.scot
Thistle House, 91 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5HD
0808 1964000

3. We are in the latter stages of an investigation into the system of air quality management as it relates to nitrogen dioxide, where there have been longstanding failures to meet targets. We anticipate that this investigation will be completed in the early part of autumn 2022.
4. In response to a representation, we have launched an investigation into Local Authorities' responsibilities to reduce carbon emissions. We anticipate concluding this investigation in early 2023.
5. To date, we have received twelve representations from individuals and organisations which we are either currently considering or have closed. We have also worked with members of the public to direct them to the best public body to assist them, if Environmental Standards Scotland is not in a position to assist them. All information on our investigations is available on our website at:
<https://www.environmentalstandards.scot/keep-up-to-date/investigations/>
6. Organisationally, we have been building our complement of staff and currently have 16 members of staff in post with a number of recruitment campaigns underway. Our permanent Chief Executive Officer, Mark Roberts, joined the organisation in June 2022. The team are working in a hybrid manner, partly working remotely and partly in our offices in Edinburgh.
7. We have established good working relationships with other key bodies including the Committee on Climate Change, the Office for Environmental Protection as well as key public bodies in Scotland and the wider environmental stakeholder community.

I hope this is a useful update.

Best wishes,

Jim Martin
Chair, Environmental Standards Scotland