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Briefing Note: Notification of New Initiative to Improve Air Quality

As you are no doubt aware, this month TfL is to embark on an innovative new pilot project, using targeted cleaning and dust suppressants to improve air quality in London.

The first initiative of its kind in the UK, the six month dust suppressant trial will take place between Victoria Embankment and Tower Hill, and at Marylebone Road/Euston Rd - areas which are at risk of exceeding EU limits on particulates. The trial will run from autumn until spring 2011, during the period when particulates are most prone to exceed EU limits.

The carriageways will be treated during the night with a fine coating of Calcium Magnesium Acetate (CMA). The solution will cause the particulates to bond to the carriageway. A biodegradable saline solution which is harmless to plants and water, CMA binds dust without any adverse environmental impact.

When tested in Europe, dust suppressants have been found to reduce emissions by 18-40%. The results are unknown in London as the conditions are different. During the course of the London trial, air quality in the area will be constantly monitored by road side particulate monitors. The results will be published in autumn 2011, and if the initial trial proves successful, this method could be extended to other priority locations that are at risk or have already exceeded EU limit values.

This project is one of many initiatives designed to deliver the Mayor's air quality strategy. Other initiatives include the launch of Barclays Cycle Hire; encouraging the uptake of electric vehicles; and the introduction of new Low Emission Zone standards, more hydrogen buses and best practice guides for building sites.

Details of the new pilot project are available online at tfl.gov.uk/dustsuppressants

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