



National  
Operational  
Guidance

## Control measure

**Air quality cell function**



**NFCC**  
National Fire  
Chiefs Council

Developed and maintained by the NFCC

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### Control measure knowledge

If major chemical air pollution occurs at an incident, the environment agencies and public health bodies will set up an air quality cell. This will include other organisations including the [Meteorological Office](#), [the Health and Safety Laboratory](#) and local authorities.

The air quality cell will co-ordinate air monitoring and will provide air quality information. Public health bodies use this information to provide health advice to responders and the public. See Section 3.8, [Environmental Protection Handbook](#).

Similar arrangements exist in Wales, Northern Ireland and in Scotland, where [Scottish Environment Protection Agency](#) (SEPA) provides air quality monitoring through the [Airborne Hazards Emergency Response](#) (AHER) service.

### Strategic actions

Fire and rescue services should:

- Ensure that lines of communication are in place to disseminate information provided by the air quality cell to incident commanders and other specialist advisers during major incidents or other significant events

### Tactical actions

Incident commanders should:

- Implement appropriate control measures on the receipt of air quality information
- Consider requesting an air quality cell
- Monitor and review the potential impact on public health with the assistance of the public health agency