

PRESS RELEASE

Aberdeen City and Shire councils join forces to combat air pollution

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire councils and the Regional Transport Partnership, Nestrans are working with local commercial fleet operators in a new scheme that will improve air quality across Aberdeen City and Shire.

The scheme was launched at the Town House, Aberdeen last month, with award presentations to inaugural members which included, DHL, Dyce Carriers, Freelands Freight Services, Hargreaves Logistics, John G Russell, Robert Gordon University, Sport Aberdeen, W Munro and William Walker Transport Ltd. The City and Shire council fleets are leading by example and were among the first applicants to the scheme.

The ECO Stars scheme encourages and supports operators of HGVs, vans, buses and coaches to run their fleets more efficiently. ECO Stars fleet experts assess each fleet, award a star rating based on current performance and produce a 'roadmap' of recommendations which will help operators to reduce vehicle emissions while also reducing operating costs. Membership is free to all fleet operators, irrespective of the size of their operation.

Councillor Ross Grant, Spokesman for Transport and Regeneration at Aberdeen City Council, welcomed members and officials to the launch and said, "The Aberdeen City and Shire scheme is the first ECO Stars scheme in Scotland to be run as a partnership across more than one local authority area. This partnership is further strengthened by support from the North East Scotland Freight Forum and Nestrans for which we are grateful. Participation in the ECO Stars scheme will help the city with its target of reducing carbon emissions by 31% and compliance with national nitrogen dioxide and particulate air quality objectives by 2020."

The ECO Stars Fleet Recognition Scheme was originally set up in South Yorkshire, in 2009, when local councils wanted to tackle local air quality issues caused by transport. Seven years later, ECO Stars has gone from strength to strength, with 24 schemes in the UK and several more in Europe.

Mark Cavers, ECO Stars Scotland Manager, from consultants TRL who manage ECO Stars on behalf of local authorities said, “The Aberdeen City and Shire scheme means that all four main cities in Scotland have now joined the ECO Stars network and are working with their commercial fleet operators to improve air quality across Scotland.”

Councillor Graeme Clarke Vice-Chair of Aberdeenshire Council’s Infrastructure Services Committee said, “We hope that the north east’s fleet operators will take full advantage of this opportunity to make a difference to their local environment while at the same time improving their bottom line. “

For more information call the ECO Stars Team on 01543 416416, or visit www.ecostars-uk.com.

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Notes for editors

The ECO Stars Fleet Recognition scheme is a free scheme that helps fleet operators improve their efficiency, reduce fuel consumption and emissions and make cost savings.

Originally conceived by councils in South Yorkshire (Barnsley, Doncaster, Sheffield and Rotherham), it has now been adopted by many other council areas in the UK as well as Europe. In total, individual schemes have more than 400 members with over 45,000 vehicles.

ECO Stars is currently managed by specialist transport consultants, TRL Ltd.

<http://www.ecostars-uk.com/>

About TRL

TRL is the global centre for innovation in transport and mobility. It provides world-leading research, technology and software solutions for surface transport modes and related markets of automotive, motorsport, insurance and energy.

Independent from government, industry and academia, TRL helps organisations create global transport systems that are safe, clean, affordable, liveable and efficient. Core areas of expertise include transport safety; vehicle engineering & simulation; investigations & major incident forensics; human factors & behavioural science; intelligent transport systems; infrastructure asset management; and sustainability & climate change.

Established in 1933 within the British Government as the UK's Transport Research Laboratory, TRL was subsequently privatised in 1996. Today, TRL has more than 1,000 clients across 145 countries, driving positive societal and economic benefit worldwide.

More information can be found at www.trl.co.uk

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