

# NAO VFM study: Tackling local air quality breaches

Discussion at ADEPT Environment Board, Jan 2021

# Outline

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About the NAO study on tackling local air quality breaches

- Scope
- Approach
- Timetable

Any initial comments on the Board's perspective on our study issues, e.g.

- The scale/nature of air quality issues for local authorities (how pressing a concern tends to be, extent & reasons for variation)
- Local authorities' experience of participating in the NO<sub>2</sub> programme & effectiveness of central government support
- Local authorities' confidence in delivering their air quality priorities and obligations, and any aspects likely to be most straightforward or risky

Contact arrangements

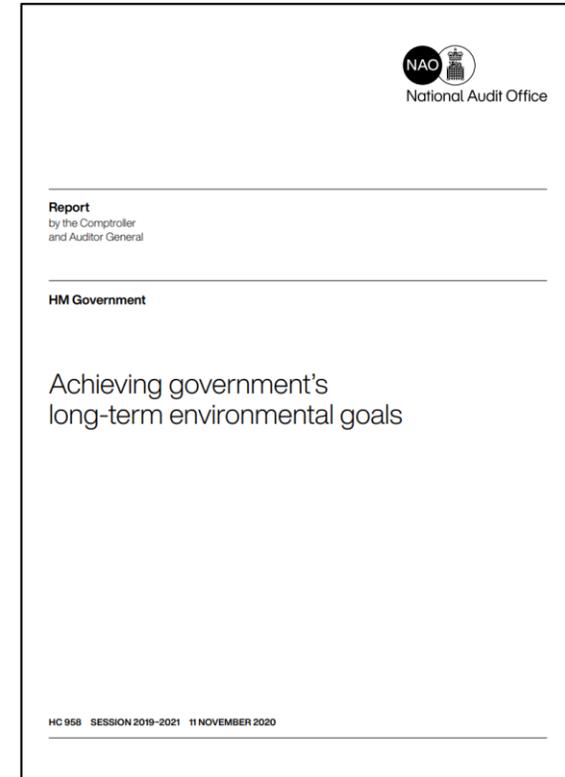
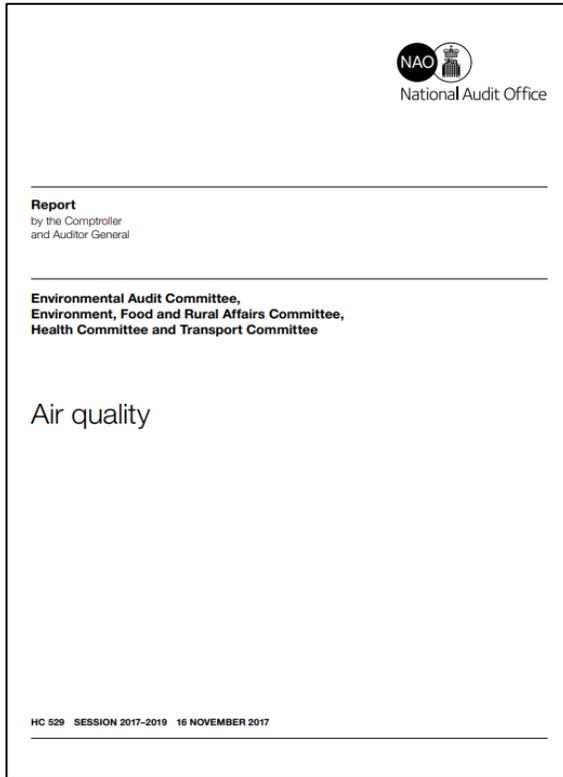
# Introduction to study: scope

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- We are examining:
  - **government's approach to clean air;** and
  - in more detail how effectively national government is **tackling breaches of local air quality limits** (in particular, through its oversight and support for the NO<sub>2</sub> programme of Directions to local authorities, and through measures on the strategic road network).

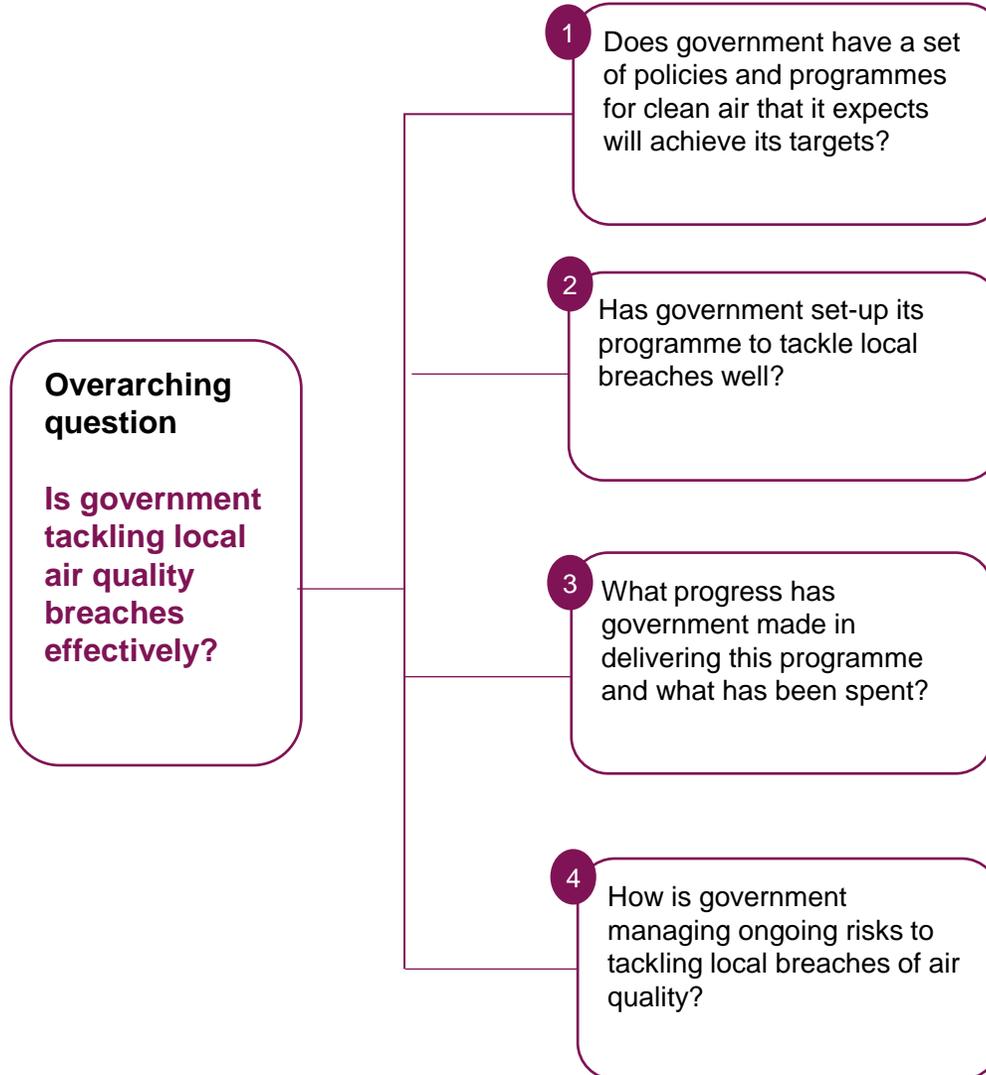
# NAO's climate change and environment work

This study is part of a wider programme of work on climate change and environment and builds upon recent and ongoing work.



# Study questions

We expect the study to consider the following:



# Approach

To answer these questions, we expect to use the following methodologies in fieldwork:

## *Methods*

### **Data analysis**

- Analysis of publicly available air quality monitoring data sets to show trends in air quality on national scale.
- Maps showing LAs subject to directions, where CAZs are confirmed, under consideration or cancelled.
- Analysis of funding government has committed to programmes for clean air.

### **Document review**

- government documents and publicly available information

### **Interviews**

- with JAQU, National Highways and other stakeholders

### **Focus groups with LAs**

- to understand LA's views on how well supported they are and government's approach to tackling local breaches.

# Provisional timetable

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<b>Activity</b>	<b>Completion by</b>
Fieldwork and analysis	November 2021 to February 2022
Emerging findings	February 2022
Drafting	March 2022
Clearance	April/May 2022
Publication	May 2022

*N.B. timetable subject to change*

# Questions

We would welcome any initial comments on the Board's perspective on our scope or study issues, e.g.

- The scale/nature of air quality issues for local authorities (how pressing a concern tends to be, extent & reasons for variation)
- Local authorities' experience of participating in the NO2 programme & effectiveness of central government support
- Local authorities' confidence in delivering their air quality priorities and obligations, and any aspects likely to be most straightforward or risky

## Overarching question

**Is government tackling local air quality breaches effectively?**

1 Does government have a set of policies and programmes for clean air that it expects will achieve its targets?

2 Has government set-up its programme to tackle local breaches well?

3 What progress has government made in delivering this programme and what has been spent?

4 How is government managing ongoing risks to tackling local breaches of air quality?



# National Audit Office

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## Study team

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