

FTA calls for national scrappage scheme ahead of air quality plan announcement

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Improvements to UK air quality should be assisted through a national scrappage scheme, says the Freight Transport Association (FTA), the UK's largest trade membership association for the logistics industry. Ahead of the anticipated Government's Air Quality Plan announcement, FTA believes that national level fiscal measures should be announced to enable small business and vehicle owners to meet the costs of operating in new Clean Air Zones (CAZs).

According to FTA, a national scrappage scheme would support efforts to achieve air quality improvements whilst preventing an unsustainable burden falling on small businesses who fail to comply with CAZs, especially small and medium-sized operators and those utilising vans or specialist HGVs.

FTA research suggests that the additional cost of compliance could be in excess of 150% of annual turnover for some SMEs. FTA's Head of National and Regional Policy, Christopher Snelling, commented: "There is no question that we all have to continue to improve air quality – but it should be recognised that our air is getting cleaner all the time. The Government should be pursuing measures that will provide the most health benefit for the least economic disruption. The proposed CAZs pose a serious risk to the

viability of many small businesses based in these zones, and a real risk to jobs and local prosperity.

"When the CAZs are introduced, there will only be five years' worth of compliant HGVs in the national fleet, meaning specialist operators and small businesses who tend to purchase second hand will face a massive cost burden if they are to upgrade vehicles automatically.

"The situation will be even worse for vans, where only two and a half years' worth of compliant vehicles will be available. This is not long enough for a second-hand market in compliant vehicles to have come into existence, and thus requires an immediate purchase of a new vehicle, again threatening the way of life of many small businesses."

As Snelling continues, FTA's membership believes that the Government should take some responsibility for the financial impact which the new legislation and zones will create:

"Air quality is a national problem and there should be national measures to help solve it.

Tax breaks or a scrappage scheme funded by the Government could help business and diesel car drivers cope with the changes and to reduce the need for local restrictions."

Source: [FTA](#)