

Mr Sean O'Callagan,
Senior Executive Officer,
Cork County Council,
County Hall,
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Dear Mr O'Callagan,

I acknowledge receipt of your correspondence regarding the placement of an air monitoring station in the Cork Harbour area. As part of the development of a new national ambient air monitoring programme the EPA very much welcomes your interest in the establishment of a station at this location. We have previously written to all Local Authorities during 2015 to seek expressions of interest towards expanding the current National Ambient Air monitoring network. The EPA is happy to co-operate in partnership with you towards the provision of real time monitoring of whatever scale, including indicative monitoring, in this area. The EPA is also aware of interest from UCC regarding the establishment of monitoring in the Cork Harbour area and has discussed this matter with them as well.

In the recently published EPA Strategic Plan 2016-2020, a particular emphasis was placed on tackling air quality issues and strengthening the air quality protection frameworks to further protect people and the environment. As part of this, the EPA is developing a new national ambient air monitoring programme under Section 65 of the EPA Act. In developing this new programme the current monitoring network is also being reviewed and options for potential expansion considered, including the location of a monitoring station in the Cork Harbour area. It is anticipated that the proposed programme will be posted for public consultation on the EPA website in June 2016.

You may also be aware that the EPA also carried out an assessment of air quality from August 2007 March 2008 at a Cork Harbour site, using one of its mobile monitoring stations/. The EPA monitored for all parameters for human health which were required under the Air Quality Framework Directive, which was the governing legislation at the time. Results for all pollutants were below EU limit values. Further information and results of the monitoring are available at www.epa.ie/air/quality/data).

In addition, hourly automatic measurements for O₃, NO_x and SO₂ are currently provided in Cork City at the South Link Road monitoring station as well as non-automatic assessment of PM₁₀. Non automatic assessment of PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, heavy metals and Polycyclic Aromatic

Hydrocarbons (PAH) are provided at the monitoring station at Heatherton Park, both stations are operated by Cork City Council (CCC). The EPA is working with CCC towards providing automatic hourly PM₁₀ monitoring in Cork City. As of 2016, hourly automatic measurements for O₃ and SO₂ are now also being provided at the CIT site in Bishopstown, operated by CIT.

I hope this addresses your query. If I can provide further information please contact me at 053-9160666.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Micheál Lehane
Programme Manager