

# GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Our Ref: MGLA290721-9511

12 August 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for information which the GLA received on 30 July 2021. Your request has been dealt with under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004.

You asked for:

- 1. Are figures available of a comparison between vehicles being left with engines left idling at traffic lights and being stopped and then restarted when lights change?*
- 2. Should engines be turned off at each bus stop when following a bus?*
- 3. Are emissions higher under starting operation?*
- 4. Would there be a regulation that requires the turning off of engines when stuck in a stop-start queue in a traffic jam.*
- 5. Have any studies been carried out to see if measures can be put in place to optimise traffic flow to help reduce current stop-start situation?*
- 6. What will be the cost of monitoring/policing such regulations?*
- 7. Would controls and policing add to traffic jams and increase pollution?*
- 8. Are busses & delivery vehicles subject to roadside checks to see if their engines are operating efficiently?*

Our response to your request is as follows:

1. The GLA does not have modelling or research providing a comparison of vehicle emissions between idling engines and vehicles using stop-start technology at traffic lights. A shift to zero emission vehicle technologies will also reduce exhaust emissions from idling and stop-start driving conditions.

2. Rule 123 of the Highway Code states that drivers must not leave a vehicle engine running unnecessarily while that vehicle is stationary on a public road. It goes on to suggest that drivers should switch off the engine to reduce emissions and noise pollution if the vehicle is likely to remain stationary for more than a couple of minutes, however it is permissible to leave an engine running if the vehicle is stationary in traffic.
3. Yes
4. No. Section 98 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986/1078 requires a driver to stop the engine of a vehicle when it is stationary so far as is necessary to prevent noise or exhaust emissions, **unless the vehicle is stationary because of traffic**.
5. TfL, Bosch and Lambeth Council recently undertook an innovative project in central Brixton aimed at reducing vehicle emissions by employing a new traffic management strategy in the area. Data collected by Bosch air quality monitors was combined with TfL traffic data to control traffic flows by adjusting traffic light timings. Data and lessons from this trial will be used to inform future traffic management interventions across London.
6. Unknown we have not modelled this scenario.
7. Unknown we have not modelled this scenario.
8. The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency and the police have the power to carry out spot checks on vehicles and issue prohibitions if necessary. They can stop vans, heavy goods vehicles, buses and coaches. The officer will check that the vehicle is not breaking any rules or regulations. Vehicle emissions can also be tested during roadside checks. Councils in designated Air Quality Management Areas can also test vehicles at the roadside and issue fixed penalties to drivers whose vehicle fails. The GLA does not undertake roadside emissions testing.

If you have any further questions relating to this matter, please contact me, quoting the reference at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED], Air Quality Team

If you are unhappy with the way the GLA has handled your request, you may complain using the GLA's FOI complaints and internal review procedure, available at:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/governance-and-spending/sharing-our-information/freedom-information>