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Consulting Engineers Limited

Thameside Energy Recovery Facility Limited

Abnormal Emissions Assessment

Document approval

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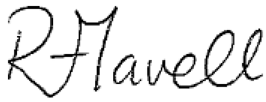
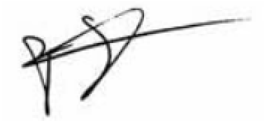
Prepared by:	Rosalind Flavell		Senior Environmental Consultant	27/06/2022
Checked by:	James Sturman		Lead Environmental Consultant	27/06/2022

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1 Introduction

Fichtner Consulting Engineers Ltd (Fichtner) has been engaged to undertake an Abnormal Emissions Assessment to support the Environmental Permit (EP) application for the proposed variation to the Environmental Permit (EP) for the Thameside Energy Recovery Facility (herein referred to as the Facility). Full details of the proposed changes being applied for can be found in the Supporting Information document submitted with this application. The Environmental Permitting Regulations require that abnormal event scenarios are considered.

Article 46(6) of the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED) states that:

"… the waste incineration plant … shall under no circumstances continue to incinerate waste for a period of more than 4 hours uninterrupted where emission limit values are exceeded.

The cumulative duration or operation in such conditions over 1 year shall not exceed 60 hours."

Article 47 continues with:

"In the case of a breakdown, the operator shall reduce or close down operations as soon as practicable until normal operations can be restored."

The conditions detailed in Article 46(6) are considered to be "abnormal operating conditions" for the purpose of this assessment applies to the Facility.

2 Identification of Abnormal Operating Conditions

The following are considered to be examples of abnormal operating conditions which may lead to 'abnormal emission levels' of pollutants:

1. Reduced efficiency of lime injection system such as through blockages or failure of fans leading to elevated acid gas emissions (with the exception of hydrogen chloride);
2. Complete failure of the lime injection system leading to unabated emissions of hydrogen chloride. (Note: this would require the plant to have complete failure of the bag filter system. As a plant of modern design the plant would have shut down before reaching these operating conditions);
3. Reduced efficiency of particulate filtration system due to bag failure and inadequate isolation, leading to elevated particulate emissions and metals in the particulate phase;
4. Reduced efficiency of the Selective Non-Catalytic Reduction (SNCR) system as a result of blockages or failure of ammonia injection system, leading to elevated oxides of nitrogen emissions; and
5. Complete failure of the activated carbon injection system and loss of temperature control leading to high levels of dioxin reformation and their unabated release.

As a modern design, it is anticipated that the Facility will be operated to a high degree of compliance. Therefore, the identification of plausible abnormal emission levels has been based primarily on the data obtained from modern plants. Where actual data is not available, worst case conservative assumptions have been made.

2.1 Plant start-up and shutdown

Start-up of the Facility from cold will be conducted with clean support fuel (low sulphur light fuel oil). Waste will not be introduced onto the grate unless the temperature is above the minimum requirement (850°C) and other operating parameters (for example, air flow and oxygen levels) are within the range stipulated in the permit. During the warming up period the gas cleaning plant will be operational as will be the control systems and monitoring equipment.

The same is true during plant shutdown. The waste remaining on the grate is allowed to burn out, the temperature not being permitted to drop below 850°C by the simultaneous introduction of clean support auxiliary fuel. After complete burnout of the waste, the burners are turned off and the plant is allowed to cool. During this period, the gas cleaning equipment, control systems and monitoring equipment will be fully operational.

It should also be noted that start-up and shutdown are infrequent events; the Facility is designed to operate continuously, and ideally only close down for its annual maintenance programme.

In relation to the magnitude of dioxin emissions during plant start-up and shutdown, research has been undertaken by AEA Technology on behalf of the Environment Agency (EA). Whilst elevated emissions of dioxins (within one order of magnitude) were found during shutdown and start-up phases where the waste was not fully established on the grate, the report concluded that:

"The mass of dioxin emitted during start-up and shutdown for a 4-5 day planned outage was similar to the emission which would have occurred during normal operation in the same period. The emission during the shutdown and restart is equivalent to less than 1 % of the estimated annual emission (if operating normally all year)."

There is therefore no reason why such start-up and shutdown operations will affect the long-term impact of the Facility.

3 Plausible Abnormal Emission Levels

The following plausible abnormal emission levels for the Facility have been identified based on the performance of similar plants in the UK. The plausible abnormal emissions concentrations are presented in Table 1, where available, these have been based on measured data from a comparable Facility.

Table 1: Plausible Abnormal Emissions from an ERF

Pollutant	Permitted Emission Limit, (mg/Nm³)(1)		Plausible Abnormal Emission, (mg/Nm³)	% Above Max Permitted Emission
	Daily Average	½ hourly max		
Oxides of nitrogen	200	400	500(2)	25
Particulate matter (PM_{10})	10	30	150(3)	400
Sulphur dioxide	50	200	450(4)	125
Hydrogen chloride	10	60	900(4)	1,400
Hydrogen fluoride	1	4	20(4)	400
Dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs	0.1 ng/Nm³		1 ng/Nm³	9900(5)
PCBs	0.005 mg/Nm³(6)		0.5 mg/Nm³	9900(7)

NOTES:

(1) All emissions expressed as Nm³ based (dry, 0°C, 11% reference oxygen content).

(2) Taken as the upper end of the range of monitored raw flue gas after the boiler from the Waste Incineration BREF (Table 3.6)

(3) Taken from the IED maximum permitted level.

(4) Based on information presented in the Devonport Decision Document (Reference: EPR/WP3833FT).

(5) Assumes a 99% removal efficiency in lieu of any other information as set out in the Devonport Decision Document.

(6) The Waste Incineration BREF provides a range of values for PCB emissions to air from European municipal waste incineration plants. This states that the annual average total PCBs is less than 0.005 mg/Nm³ (dry, 11% oxygen, 273K). In lieu of other available data, this has been assumed to be the emission concentration for the Facility.

(7) In lieu of any publicly available information, the plausible emissions multiplier for PCBs is assumed to be the same as for dioxins.

A number of assumptions have been made with regard to the emissions of individual metals.

- Emission concentration of mercury has been assumed to be 100% of the ELV in the existing EP of 0.05 mg/m³.
- Emission concentration of cadmium has been taken as half the ELV in the existing EP for cadmium and thallium and compounds of 0.05 mg/m³.
- Emission concentrations of heavy metals that have a short or long-term EAL have been considered (antimony, arsenic, chromium, copper, lead, manganese, nickel, vanadium) and have been taken from the EA guidance document “Guidance on assessing group 3 metal stack emissions from incinerators” (version 4). This guidance summarises the existing emissions from

18 Municipal Waste Incinerators (MWIs) and Waste Wood Co-incinerators in the UK over a period between 2007 and 2015.

- The Predicted Abnormal Emission are calculated based on 15 times the emission concentration, as it is assumed that metals are in the particulate phase, with the exception of mercury, where it has been assumed there is a 99% removal efficiency.

The plausible abnormal emissions concentrations for metals are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Predicted Abnormal Metal Emissions from an ERF

Pollutant	Emission Concentrations (µg/Nm³)	Predicted Abnormal Emission (µg/Nm³)	% Above Max Permitted Emission
Antimony	11.5	172.5	1400
Arsenic	25	375	1400
Cadmium	10	375	1400
Chromium	92	1380	1400
Chromium (VI)	0.13	1.95	1400
Copper	29	435	1400
Lead	50.3	754.5	1400
Manganese	60	900	1400
Mercury	20	5000	9900
Nickel	220	3300	1400
Vanadium	6	90	1400

The definition of 'abnormal operating conditions' also encompasses periods where the continuous emission monitoring equipment is not operating correctly and data relating to the actual emission concentrations are not available. This assessment has only used data where the concentration of continuously monitored pollutants has been quantified. Furthermore, no data on flow characteristics (flow rate, temperature etc.) during these abnormal operating conditions is available, so for the purposes of this assessment the design flow characteristics have been applied to the plausible emission levels to derive an emission rate and assess impact.

In defining abnormal operating conditions Annex VI, Part 3 (2) notes that under no circumstances shall the total dust concentration exceed 150 mg/Nm³ expressed as a half hourly average. As such total dust has been included in this analysis. In addition, this section continues to state that the emission limits prescribed for TOC and CO in the IED must not be exceeded. As such there is no potential for the impact of emissions of TOC and CO to be greater than those presented in the Dispersion Modelling Assessment submitted with the EP variation application. Therefore, TOC and CO have not been considered within this abnormal emissions assessment.

4 Impact Resulting from Plausible Abnormal Emissions

4.1 Predicted short-term impacts

In order to assess the effect on short-term ground level concentrations associated with the Facility operating at the identified abnormal emission concentration, the calculated ground level concentration has been increased pro-rata as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Short-term Impacts Resulting from Plausible Abnormal Emissions

Pollutant	AQAL (µg/m³)	Predicted Impact – Normal Operation		Predicted Impact – Abnormal Emissions	
		Conc. µg/m³	% of AQAL	Conc. µg/m³	% of AQAL
Nitrogen dioxide	200	14.02	7.01%	17.52	8.76%
Particulate matter (PM_{10})	50	0.14	0.28%	2.12	4.23%
Sulphur dioxide (24-hour)	125	1.63	1.31%	14.68	11.75%
Sulphur dioxide (1-hour)	350	18.91	5.40%	42.55	12.16%
Sulphur dioxide (15-min)	266	24.44	9.19%	54.99	20.67%
Hydrogen chloride	750	12.87	1.72%	193.12	25.75%
Hydrogen fluoride	160	0.86	0.54%	4.29	2.68%
Pollutant	**AQAL (ng/m³)**	**Predicted Impact – Normal Operation**		**Predicted Impact – Abnormal Emissions**	
		Conc. ng/m³	**% of AQAL**	**Conc. ng/m³**	**% of AQAL**
Antimony	150,000	0.48	0.00%	7.18	0.00%
Chromium	150,000	3.83	0.00%	57.42	0.04%
Copper	200,000	1.21	0.00%	18.10	0.01%
Manganese	1,500,000	2.50	0.00%	37.45	0.00%
Mercury	7,500	10.73	0.14%	1,072.92	14.31%
Vanadium (daily mean)	1,000	0.25	0.02%	3.75	0.37%
PCBs	6,000	1.07	0.02%	107.29	1.79%

As shown the process contribution is not predicted to exceed any of the short-term AQALs. The maximum predicted process contribution (as a % of the applied AQAL) is less than 26% for hydrogen chloride with all other pollutants lower.

4.2 Predicted long-term impacts

In order to assess the effect on long-term ground level concentrations associated with the Facility operating at the identified abnormal emission levels, the calculated long-term ground level concentrations have been increased pro-rata as presented in Table 4 and Table 5.

This assessment assumes that the Facility operates at the daily average BAT-AELs for 8,700 hours per year and at the plausible abnormal emission levels for 60 hours per year.

Table 4: Long-term Impacts Resulting from Plausible Abnormal Emissions

Pollutant	AQAL (µg/m³)	Predicted Impact – Normal Operation		Predicted Impact – Abnormal Emissions	
		Conc. (µg/m³)	% of AQAL	Conc. (µg/m³)	% of AQAL
Nitrogen dioxide	40	0.52	1.30%	0.53	1.32%
Particulate matter (PM_{10})	40	0.04	0.09%	0.04	0.10%
Hydrogen fluoride	16	0.004	0.02%	0.004	0.03%
Pollutant	**AQAL (ng/m³)**	**Predicted Impact – Normal Operation**		**Predicted Impact – Abnormal Emissions**	
		Conc. (ng/m³)	**% of AQAL**	**Conc. (ng/m³)**	**% of AQAL**
Antimony	5,000	0.04	0.001%	0.05	0.001%
Arsenic	3	0.09	1.55%	0.10	1.70%
Cadmium	5	0.09	1.86%	0.10	2.04%
Chromium	5,000	0.34	0.01%	0.38	0.01%
Chromium (VI)	0.2	0.00	0.19%	0.00	0.21%
Copper	10,000	0.11	0.00%	0.12	0.00%
Lead	250	0.19	0.07%	0.21	0.08%
Manganese	150	0.22	0.15%	0.24	0.16%
Mercury	250	0.19	0.07%	0.31	0.13%
Nickel	20	0.82	4.10%	0.90	4.49%
PCBs	200	0.02	0.01%	0.03	0.02%

The process contribution is not predicted to exceed any of the long-term AQALs. The maximum predicted process contribution (as a % of the applied AQAL) is less than 5% for nickel, with all other pollutants lower.

There is no AQAL for dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs against which the impact can be assessed. Therefore, to assess the impact of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs, the increase in concentration at the point of maximum impact has been assessed. As can be seen from the results presented in Table 5, the impact of abnormal emissions is predicted to increase in the maximum ground level concentration by 67.81%.

Table 5: Long-term Impacts from Predicted Dioxin Emissions

Pollutant	Predicted Impact – Normal Operation	Predicted Impact –Abnormal Emissions	
	fg/m³	fg/m³	% increase
Dioxins	0.37	0.17	67.81%

Based on the results of the Dioxin Pathway Intake Assessment (DPIA), the highest dose of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs is predicted to be 3.25% of the TDI. This is based on the ingestion and inhalation of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs by a child agricultural receptor at the point of maximum impact. Assuming the impact of abnormal operations, it is calculated that the process contribution at this receptor will be (3.25% x 1.6781) = 5.45% of the UK TDI for dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs. Existing sources contribute 90.65% of the TDI, and therefore, the total exposure will be 96.10% of the TDI.

In addition, the DPIA considers the impact of the ingestion of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs by an infant being breast fed by an adult agricultural receptor at the point of maximum impact. The impact is predicted to be 19.7% of the UK TDI for dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs. There are no other significant pathways for infant receptors. Assuming the impact of abnormal operations, the impact at this receptor will be (19.7% x 1.6781) = 33.06% of the UK TDI for dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs.

Based on the conservative assumptions used within the modelling, there will be no exceedences of the TDI for dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs.

5 Predicted Environmental Concentration – Abnormal Operations

The EA's Air Emissions Guidance includes the following method for identifying which emissions require further assessment as they do not screen-out as 'insignificant' by applying the following criteria:

- the long-term process contribution is <1% of the long-term environmental standard; and
- the short-term process contribution is <10% of the short-term environmental standard.

Where the impact of abnormal emissions is greater than the above criteria consideration of the background concentration has been made to ensure that the AQAL is not exceeded as a result of abnormal operations.

5.1 Background concentrations

Appendix A outlines the values for the annual average background concentrations that have been used to evaluate the impact of the Facility. These are as presented in the Dispersion Modelling Assessment submitted with the EP application.

5.2 Predicted short-term impacts

Table 6 below presents the predicted impacts of plausible abnormal operations in the short-term at the point of maximum impact and the Predicted Environmental Concentration (PEC) (process contribution plus background) for those pollutants for which the impact presented in Table 3 is greater than 10%.

Table 6: Short-term PEC Resulting from Plausible Abnormal Emissions

Pollutant	AQAL (µg/m³)	Background Conc.	PC – Abnormal Emissions	PEC – Abnormal Emissions	
		µg/m³	µg/m³	µg/m³	% of AQAL
Sulphur dioxide (24-hour)	125	27.6	14.68	42.28	33.83%
Sulphur dioxide (1-hour)	350	27.6	42.55	70.15	20.04%
Sulphur dioxide (15-min)	266	27.6	54.99	82.59	31.05%
Hydrogen chloride	750	1.4	193.12	194.54	25.94%
Pollutant	**AQAL (ng/m³)**	**Background Conc.**	**PC – Abnormal Emissions (1)**	**PEC – Abnormal Emission**	
		ng/m³	**ng/m³**	**ng/m³**	**% of AQAL**
Mercury	7,500	6	1072.9	1078.5	14.38%

As shown, the PEC is not predicted to exceed the AQAL at the point of maximum impact for any pollutant during abnormal operations.

5.3 Predicted long-term impacts

Table 7 below presents the predicted impacts of plausible abnormal operations in the long-term at the point of maximum impact, and the PEC, for those pollutants for which the impact presented in Table 4 is greater than 1%. This assessment assumes that the Facility operates at the BAT-AELs for 8,700 hours per year and at the plausible abnormal emission levels for 60 hours per year.

Table 7: Long-term PEC Resulting from Plausible Abnormal Emissions

Pollutant	AQAL (µg/m³)	Background Conc.	PC – Abnormal Emissions	PEC – Abnormal Emission	
		µg/m³	µg/m³	µg/m³	% of AQAL
Nitrogen dioxide	40	21.9	0.53	22.43	56.07%
Pollutant	**AQAL (ng/m³)**	**Background Conc.**	**PC – Abnormal Emissions (1)**	**PEC – Abnormal Emission**	
		ng/m³	**ng/m³**	**ng/m³**	**% of AQAL**
Arsenic	6	1.1	0.10	1.20	20.03%
Cadmium	5	0.4	0.10	0.45	9.04%
Nickel	20	1.3	0.90	2.20	10.99%
(1) The ground level impact has been calculated by apportioning the maximum monitored emission concentration for each metal to the total group 3 metal Process Contribution.					

As shown, the PEC is not predicted to exceed the AQAL at the point of maximum impact for any pollutant during abnormal operations.

6 Summary

An assessment of the impact on air quality associated with abnormal operating conditions from the Facility has identified plausible abnormal emissions based on a review of monitoring data from operational facilities of a similar type in the UK. Notwithstanding the low frequency of occurrence of such abnormal operating conditions identified by the review, the potential impact on air quality has been assessed.

The predicted impact on air quality associated with the identified plausible abnormal emissions has been calculated by pro-rating the impact associated with normal operations by the ratio between the normal and plausible abnormal emission values. With regard to short-term impacts this is considered to be a highly conservative assessment as it assumes that the plausible abnormal emissions coincide with the worst-case meteorological conditions.

Even with these highly conservative factors, there are no predicted exceedences of any of the short-term or long-term air quality limits associated with abnormal operations. The maximum predicted short term process contribution (as % of the applied AQAL) is less than 26%; and the maximum predicted long-term process contribution (as % of the applied AQAL) is less than 5%. Abnormal emissions from the Facility will not cause any exceedences of any AQAL. In addition, there will not be any exceedences of the TDI for dioxins.

It is concluded that during periods of abnormal operation as permissible under the IED (Article 46) is not predicted to give rise to an unacceptable impact on air quality or the environment.

Appendices

A Background Concentrations

Pollutant	Annual Mean Concentration	Units	Justification
Nitrogen dioxide	21.9	$\mu g/m^3$	Maximum mapped background concentration for the grid containing the Facility (2018 Defra dataset)
Sulphur dioxide	13.8	$\mu g/m^3$	Maximum mapped background concentration for the grid containing the Facility (2001 Defra dataset)
Hydrogen chloride	0.71	$\mu g/m^3$	Maximum monitored concentration across the UK 2011 to 2015
Mercury	2.80	ng/m^3	Maximum monitored concentration between 2016 and 2020 from London Westminster
Cadmium	0.35	ng/m^3	Maximum UK monitored concentration between 2016 and 2020 from Chadwell St Marys
Arsenic	1.10	ng/m^3	
Nickel	1.30	ng/m^3	

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