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Dublin Airport Air Quality Monitoring  
Q2 2024

Sustainability Department

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August 2024



## **Dublin Airport Air Quality Monitoring Quarter 2 Report 2024**



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## Glossary

Abbreviation	Definition
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
NO	Nitrogen Oxide
NO <sub>2</sub>	Nitrogen Dioxide
NO <sub>x</sub>	Oxides of Nitrogen
PM <sub>10</sub>	Airborne particulate Matter, particle size less than 10 micron.
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	Airborne particulate Matter, particle size less than 2.5 micron.
AQIH	Air Quality Index for Health
The Regulations	Ambient Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011
WHO	World Health Organisation
AQG	Air Quality Guidelines

## Version Control

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## Executive Summary

daa undertakes a programme of air quality monitoring at Dublin Airport (DAP) and in surrounding communities. Monitoring is undertaken using a stationary continuous air monitoring station located within the DAP boundary. Air quality is also monitored at 11 locations within and outside the airport boundary using passive diffusion tube sampling.

This report provides an overview of the results of air quality monitoring undertaken by daa at DAP and environs in Q2 2024. Air monitoring locations are listed in Table 2 and presented as Figure 1 of this report.

The Ambient Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011 (the Regulations), S.I. No. 180 of 2011, implement EU Directive 2008/50/EC on Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe. The Regulations are referred to in this report for comparison purposes only. There is no requirement under the Regulations for individual companies or operators to carry out air monitoring. In Ireland, compliance with the Regulations is the responsibility of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which is deemed to be the competent authority for the purpose of Directive 2008/50/EC. The EPA is required to submit an annual Air Quality report to the Minister of the Environment, Climate and Communications and to the European Commission. The latest EPA Report entitled "Air Quality in Ireland 2022" was published in September 2023 and is available on the [EPA website](#). The 2023 report will be published later in 2024.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) published updated Air Quality Guidelines (AQG) in 2021 based on the impact of air pollutants on health. The 2023 [Clean Air Strategy for Ireland](#) commits Ireland to meeting WHO AQGs by 2040 and outlines interim targets towards achieving final AQG levels to be met by 2026 and 2030. The 2026 and 2040 targets are included on graphs displaying air quality monitoring results within this report.

This report highlights the air quality levels around Dublin Airport from April to June 2024. The results of the NO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations using the online analyser indicate concentrations are below the relevant annual limit values of 40µg/m<sup>3</sup> and 20µg/m<sup>3</sup> respectively and within the allowed criteria of short-term limit values. The diffusion tube results for NO<sub>2</sub> indicate that the highest concentrations were recorded at the Dublin Airport bus depot which experiences significant vehicular activity.

In collaboration with the EPA, the Dublin Airport continuous air quality monitoring station data is provided to the EPA on a continuous basis. As part of daa's transparency, daa air

quality monitoring station can be viewed on the EPA website: <https://www.epa.ie/air/quality/>.

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Background

Dublin Airport (DAP) is located approximately 10 km north of Dublin city. The areas to the west of the airport are predominantly rural in nature. The airport is surrounded by Swords Village to the north and Santry to the south. The airport is bounded on two sides by the two busiest motorways in the country: the M1 and the M50. The M1 motorway is approximately 1km east of the current location of the airport's onsite air quality monitoring station and the M50 motorway is approximately 2.5 km south of the monitoring location.

### 1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present an overview of the results of air quality monitoring conducted onsite at DAP and at 11 monitoring locations in the vicinity of the airport in Q2 2024. The Ambient Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011, S.I. No. 180 of 2011 (the Regulations), implement EU Directive 2008/50/EC on Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe. This report compares the data collected during the daa monitoring programme with limit values contained in the Regulations to assess air quality at each monitoring location. From Q3 2023, WHO AQGs and interim targets outlined in Ireland's Clean Air Strategy are also presented in this report. Interim and final WHO target values for NO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and PM<sub>10</sub> are presented in table 1.

Pollutant	Averaging time	unit	EU limit value	WHO interim targets (IT)				
				IT1	IT2	IT3 (2026)	IT4 (2030)	AQG level (2040)
NO <sub>2</sub>	Annual	µg/m <sup>3</sup>	40	40	30	20	-	10
PM <sub>10</sub>	Annual	µg/m <sup>3</sup>	40	70	50	30	20	15
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	Annual	µg/m <sup>3</sup>	20	35	25	15	10	5

**Table 1** WHO Air Quality Guideline (AQG) and Interim Targets

The Regulations and Ireland's Clean Air Strategy are referred to in this report for comparison and reference purposes only. There is no requirement under the Regulations that companies or operators shall carry out air quality monitoring. In Ireland, compliance with the Regulations is the responsibility of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which is deemed to be the competent authority.

A range of parameters are recorded at DAP's continuous on-site monitoring station as follows:

- Sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>)
- Oxides of nitrogen NO<sub>x</sub> (NO and NO<sub>2</sub>)
- Carbon monoxide (CO)
- Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>)
- Particulate Matter (PM<sub>10</sub>)
- Particulate Matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>)

Diffusion tube samplers located in communities surrounding the airport monitor the following gases:

- Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>)
- Sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>)
- Benzene
- Ethylbenzene
- m- and p-Xylene
- o-Xylene
- Toluene
- Ozone

The results of air quality monitoring for all of the above parameters are reviewed by daa on a continuous basis.

To date and in line with air quality reporting at many airports, daa has focussed reporting on the most important parameters:

- Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and Particulate Matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) at the DAP automatic station; and
- Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and Benzene using diffusion tubes at 11 offsite locations.

From 2023 daa is also reporting Particulate Matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) at the DAP automatic station.

## 2.0 Monitoring Locations

A list of the ambient air quality sampling locations is presented in Table 2. Sampling locations are presented as Figure 1.

Ref	Location	Method	Parameters
<b>On-site</b>	Dublin Airport.	Continuous analyser	<b>NO<sub>2</sub></b> <b>PM<sub>10</sub></b> <b>PM<sub>2.5</sub></b>
<b>A1</b>	Forrest Little Golf Club.	Passive Tubes	<b>NO<sub>2</sub></b> <b>Benzene</b>
<b>A2</b>	Kilreesk Lane, St. Margaret's.	Passive Tubes	
<b>A3</b>	Ridgewood Estate West, Swords.	Passive Tubes	
<b>A4</b>	St. Margaret's School and Parish	Passive Tubes	
<b>A5</b>	Fire Station, Huntstown, Dublin Airport.	Passive Tubes	
<b>A6</b>	Southern Boundary Fence, Dublin	Passive Tubes	
<b>A7</b>	Western Boundary Fence, Dublin Airport	Passive Tubes	
<b>A8</b>	St. Nicholas of Myra School, Malahide Road.	Passive Tubes	
<b>A9</b>	Naomh Mearnóg GAA Club, Portmarnock.	Passive Tubes	
<b>A10</b>	Oscar Papa Site, Portmarnock.	Passive Tubes	
<b>A11</b>	Dublin Airport Bus Depot	Passive Tubes	

**Table 2** Community ambient air quality monitoring locations



Figure 1 Air Quality Monitoring Locations



### **3.0 Parameters and Sampling Methodology**

#### **3.1 Offsite Passive Sampling:**

##### **3.1.1 Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and Benzene (C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>6</sub>)**

daa has installed a network of passive diffusion tube samplers in areas surrounding the airport. Monitoring locations are shown on Figure 1 and listed in Table 2. The diffusion tubes are exposed for approximately 4-week intervals and record monthly mean concentrations. Monthly mean concentrations are averaged to give an annual mean, presented in Figure 2. The tubes are analysed using UV Spectrophotometry at a UKAS (United Kingdom Accreditation Service) accredited laboratory. Results are expressed in µg/m<sup>3</sup> (micrograms per cubic metre).

#### **3.2 Onsite Sampling**

##### **3.2.1 Equipment Calibration**

An external expert service provider undertakes routine servicing of the DAP air quality monitoring equipment. The monitoring station undergoes a full service twice yearly. During routine visits, air filters are replaced, and the instruments are calibrated to EPA gas standards. The technician also inspects the functionality of the station and sampling system. An emergency call out service is also provided by the service provider. The routine calibration process takes approximately 24 hours, data collection resumes after this 24-hour period. In Q2 2024, due to down times during calibration and power and connection issues with the equipment, 93% of NO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> data was captured.

##### **3.2.2 Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>)**

Onsite monitoring of NO<sub>2</sub> is carried out on a continuous basis at the stationary airport monitoring station. Measurement of NO<sub>2</sub> is carried out using a Horiba APNA-370 ambient NOx monitor which employs a crossflow modulated chemiluminescence method. The results are expressed in µg/m<sup>3</sup>.

##### **3.2.3 Particulate Matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) and (PM<sub>2.5</sub>)**

PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> are defined as airborne particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter equal to or less than 10µm and 2.5µm respectively. PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> are monitored on a continuous basis at the airport monitoring station. The PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> instruments automatically measure and record airborne particulate concentration levels using the principle of beta ray attenuation. The sampler monitors the PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> content of air by drawing a measured volume of air through a chamber containing a pre-conditioned and pre-weighed filter in accordance with the internationally accepted US EPA protocol for PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> sampling. The results are expressed in µg/m<sup>3</sup>.

## **4.0 Monitoring Results**

### **4.1 Offsite NO<sub>2</sub> Monitoring Results**

Figure 2 presents the annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> concentration for each location based on the monthly passive tube sampling. The Regulations mandate an annual mean limit value of 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> for NO<sub>2</sub>. The WHO AQGs outline interim targets (2026) towards achieving final AQG levels to be met by 2040 under Ireland's Clean Air Strategy, which are included in the graph below. As can be seen from Figure 2, the mean NO<sub>2</sub> levels including at the bus depot sampling point A11 are currently below the annual regulatory limit. The monthly average for A11 for parameter NO<sub>2</sub> during Q2 was calculated at 32.47 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. The high level of NO<sub>2</sub> is related to the volume of vehicular traffic at this location. The NO<sub>2</sub> analysis result for A11 in January and A9 in March 2024 are excluded from the below graph. The laboratory completing analysis of the diffusion tubes reported that the tubes contained water and the results may be compromised. As the very low NO<sub>2</sub> levels recorded in these samples was likely erroneous and an outlier, it is not deemed representative of the air quality in the area during this period and is excluded from reporting.

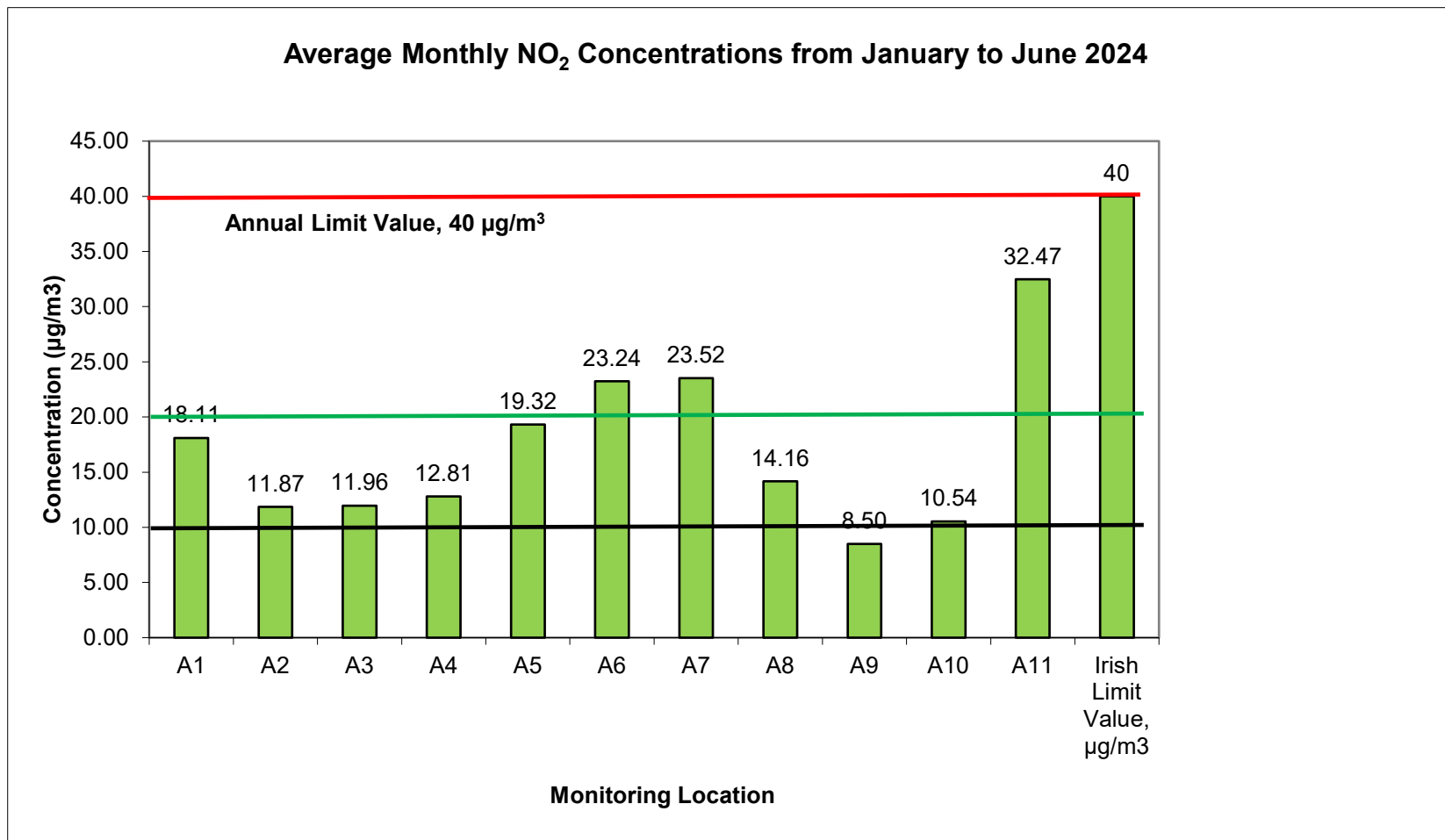
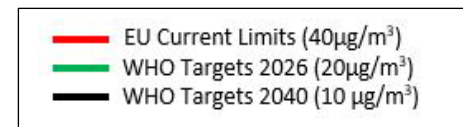
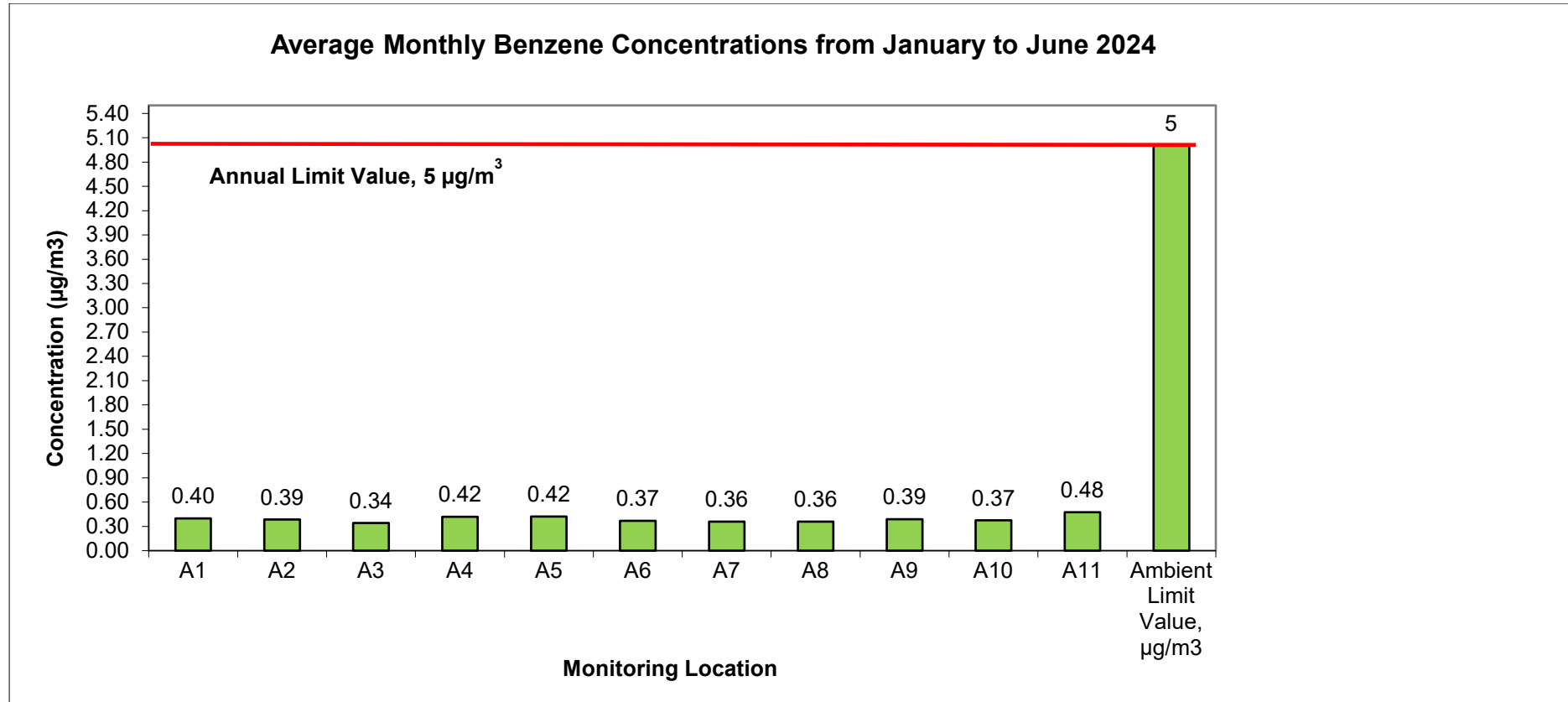


Figure 2 Average Monthly NO<sub>2</sub> Concentrations Q1 & Q2 2024



#### 4.2 Offsite Benzene Monitoring Results

Figure 3 presents the annual mean Benzene concentration for each location based on the monthly passive tube sampling. The Regulations mandate an annual mean limit value of 5 µg/m<sup>3</sup> for Benzene. As can be seen from Figure 3, the annual mean values were below the limit value of 5 µg/m<sup>3</sup> at all monitoring locations.



**Figure 3** Average Monthly Benzene (C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>6</sub>) Concentrations Q1 & Q2 2024

### 5.0 On-site Airport Monitoring Station Results

#### 5.1 On-site Airport Monitoring Station Results: Daily Average NO<sub>2</sub>

NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations are measured at the automatic on-site station at Dublin Airport. Figure 4 presents the daily average NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations measured during Q2 2024. The equivalent daily average was calculated as 15 µg/m<sup>3</sup>.

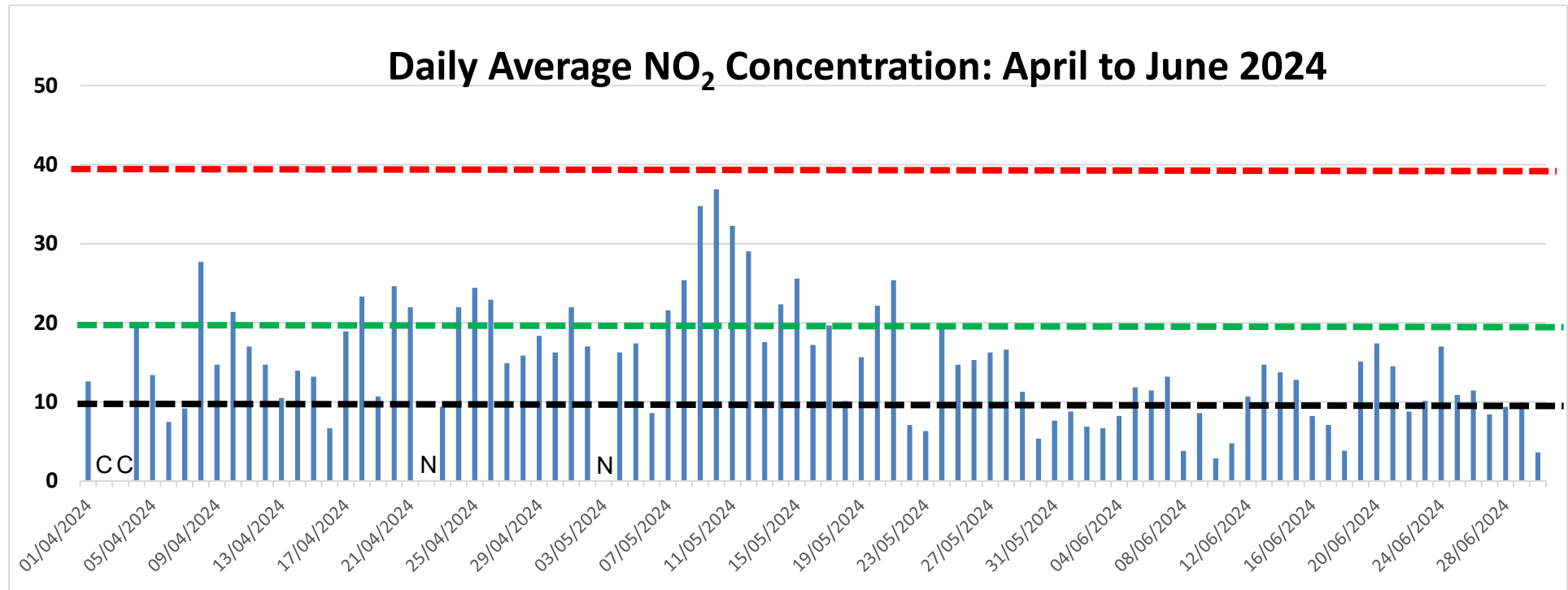
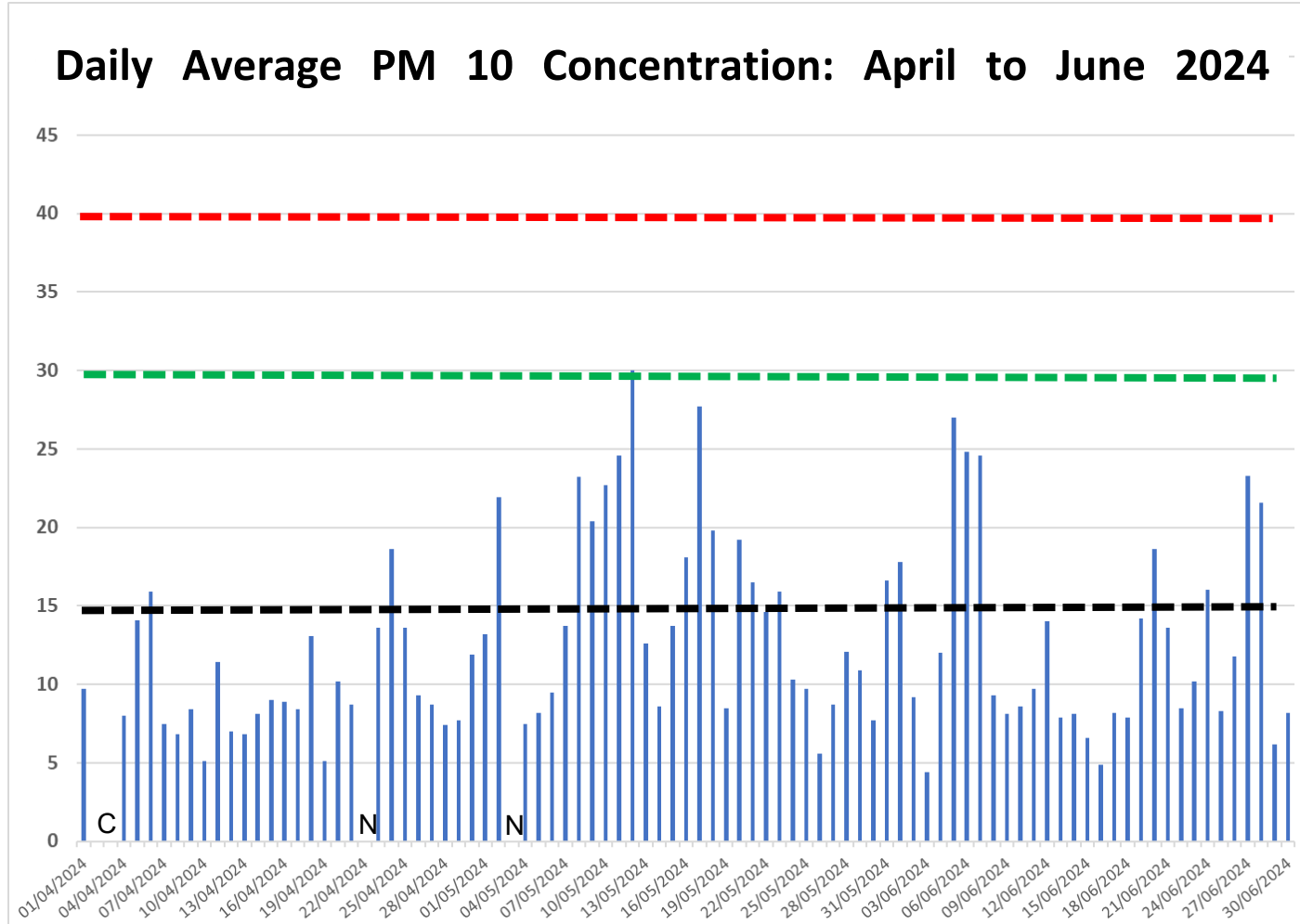


Figure 4 Daily Average NO<sub>2</sub> Q2 2024 On-Site Air Quality Station

C = Calibration	--- EU Current Limit (40µg/m <sup>3</sup> )
N = No Data	- - - WHO Target 2026 (20µg/m <sup>3</sup> )
	--- WHO Target 2040 (10µg/m <sup>3</sup> )

**5.2 On-site Airport Monitoring Station Results: PM<sub>10</sub>**

Daily average PM<sub>10</sub> concentrations recorded at the automatic station in DAP in Q2 2024 are presented in Figure 5. The average PM<sub>10</sub> was calculated as 13 µg/m<sup>3</sup>.

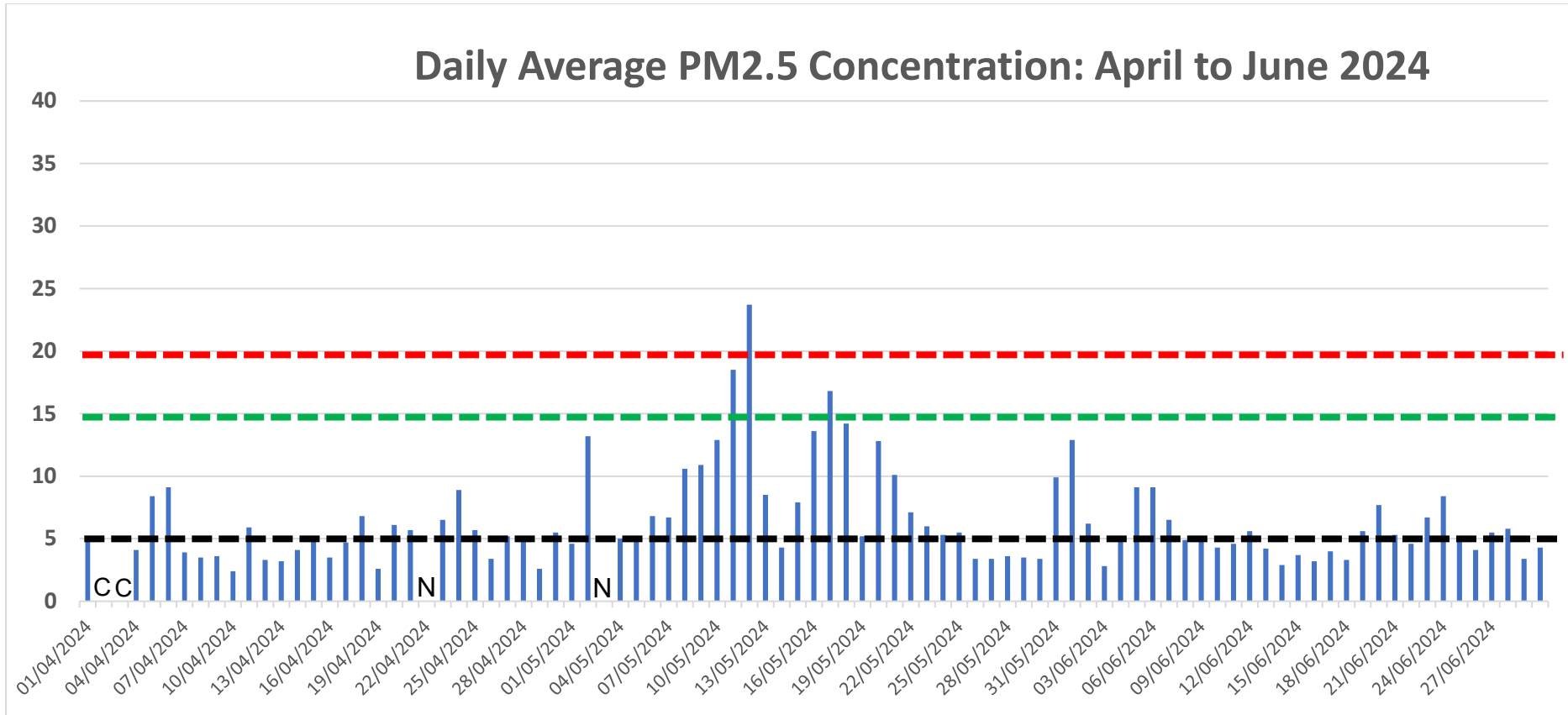


**Figure 5** Daily Average PM<sub>10</sub> Q2 2024

C = Calibration	— — — — — EU Current Limit (40 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )
N = No Data	— — — — — WHO Target 2026 (30 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )
	— — — — — WHO Target 2040 (15 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )

**5.3 On-Site Airport Monitoring Station Results: PM<sub>2.5</sub>**

Daily average PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations recorded at the automatic station in DAP in Q2 2024 are presented in Figure 6. The average PM<sub>2.5</sub> was calculated as 6 µg/m<sup>3</sup>.



**Figure 6** Daily Average PM<sub>2.5</sub> Q2 2024

C = Calibration  
 N = No Data

— EU Current Limit (20 µg/m<sup>3</sup>)  
 - - WHO Target 2026 (15 µg/m<sup>3</sup>)  
 - - WHO Target 2040 (5 µg/m<sup>3</sup>)

The Regulations set a 24-hour PM<sub>10</sub> limit value of 50 µg/m<sup>3</sup> and an annual mean limit value of 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> as shown in Table 3. There is no 24-hour limit value for PM<sub>2.5</sub> set in the Regulations. The annual mean limit for PM<sub>2.5</sub> is 20 µg/m<sup>3</sup>.

Objective	Averaging Period	Limit or Threshold Value (µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	No. of Allowed Exceedances	No. of Exceedances (Year to date)
PM <sub>10</sub> Limit Value	24 hour	50	Not to be exceeded on more than 35 days per year	0
PM <sub>10</sub> Limit Value	Calendar Year	40	NA	NA
PM <sub>2.5</sub> Limit Value	Calendar Year	20	NA	NA

**Table 3** PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> Limit Values



## 6.0 Conclusion

Onsite Monitoring: The results of the NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> concentrations using the online analyser indicate concentrations are below the relevant annual limit value of 40µg/m<sup>3</sup> and within the allowed criteria of short-term limit values. Additionally, the average results are also within the final WHO AQGs to be achieved by 2040. The results of the PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations using the online analyser indicate concentrations are below the relevant annual limit value of 20µg/m<sup>3</sup> and the AQG 2026 target levels.

Offsite Monitoring: Diffusion tube results for NO<sub>2</sub> indicate that the highest concentrations are recorded at the bus depot at the airport. The bus depot at the airport is Ireland's busiest bus depot. The elevated readings are related to the volume of vehicular activity that occurs in the area. Diffusion tube results for benzene indicate that concentrations at all locations are well below the annual average limit value.