Official Journal
of the European Union

EN
L series

2026/2468

6.11.2026

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION (EU) 2026/2468

of 5 November 2026

laying down rules for the application of Directive (EU) 2024/2881 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards technical details for the methodology for determining contributions from the re-suspension of particulates following winter-sanding or winter-salting of roads, as well as the corresponding information to be provided by Member States

(Text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Directive (EU) 2024/2881 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2024 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe ([1]), and in particular Article 17(4) thereof,

Whereas:

(1) Directive (EU) 2024/2881 establishes air quality standards and air quality monitoring and reporting in order to ensure a high level of protection for human health and the environment.

(2) Directive (EU) 2024/2881 allows Member States to exclude zones where exceedances of particulate matter (PM_{10}) limit values are attributable to the re-suspension of particulates following winter-sanding or winter-salting of roads from the obligation to establish the air quality plan provided that reasonable measures have been taken to lower such concentrations of PM_{10}.

(3) Directive (EU) 2024/2881 sets out the possibility to subtract the contributions to exceedances of PM_{10} limit values attributable to winter-sanding or winter-salting of roads when assessing compliance with air quality limit values. The subtraction of those contributions is not to prevent Member States from taking action to reduce their health impact.

(4) In accordance with Directive (EU) 2024/2881, the Commission is to provide technical details on how to determine that an exceedance is due to the resuspension of particulates following winter-sanding or winter-salting of roads and details on the documentation and evidence to be provided. Different methodologies exist to demonstrate that an exceedance is due to the resuspension of particulates following winter-sanding or winter-salting and are expected to evolve in the future. It is therefore appropriate to provide technical details regarding the identification and quantification of contribution from resuspended dust regardless of the methods and methodologies used provided that they comply with certain principles ensuring their robustness. The Technical Support Document on the determination of contributions to air pollution attributable to the re-suspension of particulates following winter sanding or salting of roads under Directive (EU) 2024/2881 ([2]) reflects the current best practices applied by Member States.

(5) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Ambient Air Quality Committee,

([1]) OJ L, 2024/2881, 20.11.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/2881/oj.

([2]) Determination of contributions to air pollution attributable to winter sanding and salting of roads – Technical support document on the determination of contributions to air pollution attributable to the re-suspension of particulates following winter sanding or salting of roads under Directive (EU) 2024/2881, November 2026, ISBN 978-92-68-44150-3.

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Definitions

For the purposes of this Decision, the following definitions apply:

(1) 'winter-sanding' means dispersing mineral material for traction control on the road surface;

(2) 'winter-salting' means dispersing salt or brine or solution of a salt for traction control on the road surface;

(3) 're-suspended particles' means particulate matter accumulated on the road surface or the pavement and dispersed into the air again by traffic or wind;

(4) 'coarse particulate matter' or 'coarse PM' means the difference between ambient PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations;

(5) 'coarse PM fraction method' means the method that attributes 50 % of the coarse particulate matter fraction to winter-sanding.

(6) 'winter-sanding or winter-salting assessment day' means a calendar day on which the daily PM_{10} limit value set out in Annex I to Directive (EU) 2024/2881 is exceeded at a sampling point and for which a Member State seeks to demonstrate that the exceedance is attributable to the re-suspension of particulates following winter-sanding or winter-salting of roads.

Article 2

Principles for determining contributions from winter-sanding or winter-salting

For the purpose of demonstrating that exceedances of PM_{10} limit values are attributable to the re-suspension of particulates following winter-sanding or winter-salting, Member States shall comply with the following principles:

(a) provide a robust demonstration that contributions leading to exceedances can be attributed unequivocally to winter-sanding or winter-salting;

(b) provide a quantification of the contributions attributed to winter-sanding or winter-salting that is sufficiently precise and accurate and appropriate to the averaging period of the limit value;

(c) demonstrate that the sampling point for which the contributions are determined is representative of the area affected by winter-sanding or winter-salting;

(d) provide sufficient evidence of the application of reasonable measures to lower PM_{10} concentrations associated with re-suspended particles;

(e) provide sufficient information on the method used to determine the contributions from winter-sanding or winter-salting.

Article 3

Identification of days with potential contribution from winter-sanding or winter-salting

1. Member States shall identify days with a potential contribution from winter-sanding or winter-salting in accordance with paragraphs 2 to 5.

2. Member States shall identify re-suspension episodes attributed to winter-sanding in cases where at least one sanding application occurred prior to the assessment day during the winter season and by assessing evidence supporting that sanding material remained available for re-suspension on the assessment day.

3. Member States shall identify re-suspension episodes attributed to winter-salting taking into account the timing of the most recent salting application in the area prior to the assessment day during the winter season as well as temperature, precipitation, and road-surface conditions between the salting application and the assessment day.

4. Member States shall identify re-suspension episodes attributed to winter-sanding or winter-salting taking into account:

(a) the proximity of the sampling point to the area where the salting or sanding application occurred;

(b) the possible influence of long-range contribution to PM_{10} concentrations;

(c) the dryness of the road surface on the day of assessment demonstrated by meteorological observations or any other suitable methodology.

5. Member States shall demonstrate that no other sources have significantly contributed to the re-suspension episodes attributed to winter-sanding or winter-salting or have significantly contributed to the increased PM_{10} concentrations.

Article 4

Quantification of the contribution from winter-sanding or winter-salting

1. Member States shall quantify the contribution from winter-sanding or winter-salting by applying an appropriate method complying with the principle laid down in Article 2, point (b), and the requirements laid down in this Article.

2. Where the requisite data and information for the implementation of other appropriate methods to quantify the contributions from winter-sanding are not available, Member States may apply the coarse PM fraction method. Where Member States apply the coarse PM fraction method, either independently or in conjunction with other methods, they shall ensure that:

(a) a high coarse PM fraction compared to that in sampling points not influenced by winter-sanding of roads is calculated and the $PM_{2.5}/PM_{10}$ ratio is equal or less than 0,5;

(b) PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ are sampled and measured at the same sampling point and with the same or equivalent method or, if $PM_{2.5}$ measurements at the same sampling point are not available, that $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations are estimated using the $PM_{2.5}/PM_{10}$ ratio at a comparable sampling point;

(c) studded tyres are either not used within the assessment area or constitute no more than 1 % of the tyre usage.

3. Where Member States apply a chemical analysis method for the quantification of the contributions from winter-salting, either independently or in conjunction with other methods, they shall ensure that:

(a) information on the chemical composition of the salt used is available;

(b) PM_{10} samples at the sampling point influenced by winter-salting or at a sampling point with similar characteristics are collected for each affected day and analysed in accordance with the applicable reference method or any equivalent method;

(c) appropriate calculation methods for the determination of the salting material concentration for each affected day are applied.

4. The contributions from winter-sanding or winter-salting shall be determined at each sampling point concerned for each assessment day and expressed in $\mu g/m^3$.

Data obtained for the quantification of contributions attributable to winter-sanding or winter-salting through the use of measurements or modelling shall meet the relevant data quality objectives laid down in Annex V to Directive (EU) 2024/2881.

Where it cannot be demonstrated that the adjusted daily PM_{10} concentration is below the applicable daily limit value, the exceedance shall not be treated as attributable to winter-sanding or winter-salting for the purposes of this Decision.

5. Member States may consider that an exceedance of the PM_{10} limit value for the 1-day averaging period set out in Annex I to Directive (EU) 2024/2881 ('daily PM_{10} limit value') is attributable to winter-sanding or winter-salting where the daily PM_{10} concentrations reduced by the contribution from winter-sanding or winter-salting ('adjusted daily PM_{10} concentrations') do not exceed the daily PM_{10} limit value for the days concerned.

6. Member States may consider that an exceedance of the PM_{10} limit value for the calendar year averaging period set out in Annex I to Directive (EU) 2024/2881 ('annual PM_{10} limit value') is attributable to winter-sanding or winter-salting where the adjusted annual PM_{10} concentration does not exceed the annual PM_{10} limit value for the calendar year concerned.

When calculating the adjusted annual PM_{10} concentrations, Member States shall use the adjusted daily PM_{10} concentrations and not discard the daily PM_{10} value from the exceedance statistics after identifying an influence of winter-sanding or winter-salting for a given day.

7. The procedures for subtracting the contributions of winter-sanding or winter-salting shall be applied individually at each sampling point, and the calculated PM_{10} concentrations shall be considered representative of the spatial representativeness area of the sampling point in question.

Where the results are to be applied at a different spatial scale than the spatial representativeness area of the sampling point, a representative area around the sampling point in question may be specified taking into account the specific characteristics of the source and the differing dispersion patterns of the winter-sanding or winter-salting component.

Article 5

Application of reasonable measures to lower PM_{10} concentrations

Member States shall provide the Commission with evidence of the application of reasonable measures such as optimised sanding and salting practices, snow removal, road maintenance, dust binding, and street cleaning to lower PM_{10} concentrations associated with re-suspended particles due to winter-sanding or winter-salting.

Member States shall submit the evidence referred to in the first subparagraph in the form of technical reports in accordance with the Annex.

Article 6

Documentation

Member States shall document the method applied to demonstrate that any exceedances are due to re-suspended particles from winter-sanding or winter-salting. To that effect, they shall submit to the Commission technical reports in accordance with the Annex.

Article 7

Entry into force

This Decision shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

Done at Brussels, 5 November 2026.

For the Commission
The President
Ursula VON DER LEYEN

ANNEX

Information to be included in the technical report

A. **Aim and scope:**

1. reported year;

2. statement of purpose of the technical report referring to the application of Article 17 of Directive (EU) 2024/2881.

B. **Competent authority and body:**

1. Member State;

2. name of the competent authority or designated body;

3. description of the role and involvement of the competent authority or designated body.

C. **Description of the exceedance situations attributable to winter-sanding or winter-salting:**

1. list of zones affected by contributions where exceedances of the applicable air quality standards are attributable to winter-sanding or winter-salting for the reported year;

2. sampling points affected by contributions attributable to winter-sanding or winter-salting;

3. number of exceedances of the daily PM_{10} limit value measured;

4. information on the sources of PM_{10} in affected zones;

5. daily PM_{10} concentrations before and after subtraction of the winter-sanding or winter-salting contribution for all assessment points and areas;

6. estimated number of exceedances of the daily PM_{10} limit value after subtraction of the winter-sanding or winter-salting contribution;

7. annual PM_{10} concentrations before and after subtraction of the winter-sanding or winter-salting contribution for all assessment points and areas (if relevant).

D. **Description of the procedure used to determine the contributions from the re-suspension of particulates following winter-sanding or winter-salting:**

1. a description of the method used for the identification and quantification of the contributions from winter-sanding or winter-salting;

2. description of the application of the principles set out in Article 2 to the method used to determine the contributions;

3. information on the quality control and quality assurance of the applied methods and references to the underlying methodological reports;

4. uncertainty analyses associated with the quantification, clearly reflecting the margin of error, confidence intervals, or any other relevant statistical measures to ensure precision and accuracy of the quantifications.

E. **Evidence demonstrating that the exceedance situations are due to the re-suspension of particulates following winter-sanding or winter-salting:**

1. the list of dates identified as re-suspension episodes attributed to winter-sanding or winter-salting, including evidence of how these have been determined;

2. presence of winter-sanding or winter-salting prior to the subject exceedance;

3. validation of the dry road surface condition on the day of the subject exceedance;

4. information on other PM_{10} sources, including contributions from natural sources, that contribute to elevated PM_{10} concentrations.

F. **Evidence demonstrating that reasonable measures have been taken to lower PM_{10} concentrations:**

1. list and brief description of practices applied to lower PM_{10} concentrations during and after winter-sanding or winter-salting.