



House of Commons  
Environmental Audit  
Committee

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**Greening Government 2004**

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**Eighth Report of Session 2003–04**





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*Report, together with appendix and  
formal minutes*

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## The Environmental Audit Committee

The Environmental Audit Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to consider to what extent the policies and programmes of government departments and non-departmental public bodies contribute to environmental protection and sustainable development; to audit their performance against such targets as may be set for them by Her Majesty's Ministers; and to report thereon to the House.

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The constitution and powers are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally Standing Order No. 152A. These are available on the Internet via [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk).

### Publication

The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the Internet at: [www.parliament.uk/parliamentary\\_committees/environmental\\_audit\\_committee.cfm](http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/environmental_audit_committee.cfm).

A list of Reports of the Committee in the present Parliament is at the back of this volume.

### Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are: Mike Hennessy (Clerk); Lynne Spiers (Second Clerk); Eric Lewis (Committee Specialist); Elena Ares (Committee Specialist); Anna O'Rourke (Committee Assistant); Caroline McElwee (Secretary); and Robert Long (Senior Office Clerk).

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### References

In the footnotes of this Report, references to oral evidence are indicated by 'Q' followed by the question number. References to written evidence are indicated by page number as in 'Ev12'.

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# Conclusions and recommendations

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## The Sustainable Development in Government 2003 annual report

1. The latest Sustainable Development in Government annual report is far narrower in scope and significance than previous Government reports in this series. It focuses only on operational management issues, and does not cover the mainstreaming of environmental objectives within policy development—including environmental screening and appraisal, setting environmentally related policy targets, monitoring and reporting on them, and raising awareness in both departments and their associated bodies. (Paragraph 10)
2. The Sustainable Development in Government 2003 report includes a commitment that these other key policy and awareness aspects would be reported on in the annual report on the UK Sustainable Development Strategy. However, DEFRA did not include in the 2003 departmental questionnaire any questions relating to these aspects, and the annual report on the UK Strategy (March 2004) does not in fact contain any objective data or comparative analysis of departmental performance in this respect. (Paragraph 13)
3. It is regrettable that the Government appears to have abandoned monitoring policy and awareness aspects of the Greening Government initiative in a systematic and objective manner. It is still more surprising that ENV(G) sanctioned such a change to the coverage of the 2003 departmental questionnaire, and the Government should state explicitly whether it did in fact do so. It should also explain how, in the absence of comparative information, ENV(G) proposes to assess departmental performance in greening policy and raising awareness, or whether it now sees its role as being limited to greening operations. (Paragraph 15)
4. The Government should, in future, collect information systematically from departments on a range of issues relating to greening policy and raising awareness, and report on these in the Sustainable Development in Government annual report. If it does not intend to do so, we will return to the practice of collecting such information ourselves. (Paragraph 16)
5. Environmental targets in policy-related areas are likely to play a far more important and crosscutting role in the future, particularly if the new UK Sustainable Development Strategy highlights key priorities for action. A structured approach – akin to that now adopted for operational management—to both output and process related targets should therefore be developed as part of the reviews of the Sustainable Development Strategy and the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. (Paragraph 19)

## Greening Operations

6. Progress on completing the Framework remains slow, and we are disappointed that procurement remains a crucially important area where targets have yet to be set. The implications of the huge growth in Private Finance Initiative are immense, given the

need to embed far higher environmental standards within such projects, and this is a subject to which we intend to return in future. (Paragraph 22)

7. Our overall conclusion is that the picture of departmental performance emerging from the NAO analysis of the Sustainable Development in Government 2003 report does not differ substantially from our own analysis of operational data for the previous year. The data in the report has significant weaknesses, which limit the conclusions that can be drawn from it. However, taking it at face value, departments' performances appear to vary hugely. Some departments have made good progress in certain areas, while others report only minimal achievements. (Paragraph 23)
8. Examples of such variations include: (Paragraph 25)
  - *The percentage of staff covered by a certified environmental management system.* This ranged from 0% (CO, DfES, DfID, ECGD, HMT, LCD, LOD) to 70% for DWP, 80% for ONS and 100% for DCMS.
  - *The number of alternatively powered vehicles (including LPG).* Of those departments with significant car fleets, the Department for Work and Pensions does commendably well, with 624 vehicles out of a fleet of 2852; whereas Customs and Excise, the Inland Revenue, and the Home Office, with 5836 vehicles between them, could only manage a total of 183 alternatively powered vehicles.
  - *The percentage of waste recovered.* Six departments were unable to produce any data, while the remaining departments ranged from 0% (Export Credits Guarantee Department) to 79% (Department of Trade and Industry).
  - *The percentage of renewable energy purchased.* Six departments purchased 10% or less of their electricity requirements from renewable sources. By contrast, six other departments purchased between 50% and 90% from such sources.
  - *The proportion of desk-top paper purchased which met the recycling specification.* This ranged from 0% (Cabinet Office, Export Credits Guarantee Department) to 100% (Department for Culture, Media and Sport). The performance of the Ministry of Defence and the Department for Work and Pensions, which between them account for over 50% of all desk-top paper bought, remains very poor (2% and 3% respectively).
9. The Government should conduct a detailed analysis of the reasons for the large variations in departmental performance as it is unlikely that they relate to inherent differences in their estates and activities. Future Sustainable Development in Government annual reports should comment in more depth on the reasons for such variations. (Paragraph 27)
10. The Government should clarify on what basis bodies are, or are not, to be included in the Sustainable Development in Government report, and it should explain how this relates to the exemptions in the Sustainable Energy Act. It must also ensure that departments do include in returns all those bodies—in particular, executive agencies – which should be included. (Paragraph 31)

11. Data reliability remains a significant problem and may explain anomalies in departmental performance. In accordance with best practice, departments should be required to provide evidence that all their environmental performance data has been independently validated. (Paragraph 32)
12. The Government should ensure that operational targets, and the methodology for monitoring them, are clear and unambiguous. The rationale for setting specific targets in relation to current performance and industry norms should also be clearly explained in the Framework. (Paragraph 33)
13. The Sustainable Development in Government report should include aggregate data for the performance of the Government estate as a whole, and the narrative could usefully include more discussion and comparisons of trends across Government over time. (Paragraph 34)
14. DEFRA should consider publishing a composite version of the report and the associated data as a single file for download, as an aid to those who seek a complete text or single electronic document for research or analysis. (Paragraph 35)
15. The Government must ensure that the move to intranet-only publication does not lead to a downgrading of the priority and importance accorded to the Sustainable Development in Government Report and the provision of related data. (Paragraph 36)
16. The poor quality of current data and the need for independent validation is likely to lead to more formal departmental systems for reporting environmental impacts. We are therefore exploring with the NAO how they might assist us in assessing the adequacy of these systems in relation to both policy and operations. (Paragraph 38)
17. We find it bizarre and highly unsatisfactory that the Government should have set a target of sourcing at least 10% electricity from renewables by 2008 when analysis of the latest data shows that 17 out of the 20 ministerial departments already meet – or in many cases significantly exceed—this target. The Government must explain why it has not set a more challenging target. We also expect all individual departments which are currently meeting or exceeding the target to set their own appropriate and challenging targets. (Paragraph 41)
18. The extensive delay in publishing departmental energy performance data is unacceptable and the Government must ensure that data for 2003-04 is available far earlier. It should also state how much of the 12.5% carbon reduction target is likely to be met simply through changes in the fuel mix by 2010-11 rather than by actual reductions in demand. (Paragraph 42)
19. It is regrettable that the Government should claim a likely carbon reduction in government departments of 29% by 2010 against a 1990 baseline, when the NAO has concluded that figures for performance from 1990 to 2000 are unreliable and cannot be audited. (Paragraph 44)

## Conclusion

20. Our findings indicate that, although progress continues to be made in some departments on some aspects of the Greening Government initiative, there is a perceptible loss of overall momentum—particularly in embedding sustainable development within policy making. The review of the Framework provides a timely opportunity for the Government to demonstrate a new commitment to the Greening Government initiative and ensure that the Sustainable Development in Government annual report does indeed live up to its name. (Paragraph 47)

## Introduction

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1. The Environmental Audit Committee (EAC) coined the term “greening government” in one of the first reports it undertook following its creation in 1997.<sup>1</sup> The phrase refers not only to incorporating environmental objectives in operational aspects of departmental performance (eg by reducing energy and water consumption and recycling waste); but also—and in some senses more importantly—to greening the fundamental objectives of departments by ensuring that full weight is given to environmental impacts in policy appraisal and development.

2. Greening Government has comprised a core aspect of the work of this Committee over the last seven years. We produced several major reports on this topic in 1998, 1999, and 2000.<sup>2</sup> It was as a result of EAC recommendations that the Green Ministers began to publish an annual report from 1999, and indeed EAC itself initiated the annual questionnaire to departments which formed the basis for these reports.<sup>3</sup>

3. We last reported specifically on the Greening Government initiative in November 2003. This was prompted by a number of changes, including the transformation of the Green Ministers Committee to a formal Cabinet sub-committee—ENV(G)—and the consequent rebranding of the Green Ministers report as the Sustainable Development in Government (SDiG) annual report. The first SDiG annual report formed the basis of our November 2003 report, the Government response to which we published in March 2004.<sup>4</sup>

4. This report focuses on the second SDiG annual report, published in November 2003, and covering the period from April 2002 to March 2003. Our previous work on Greening Government has been mainly based on an analysis of departmental data which our own staff carried out. This year, the National Audit Office (NAO) has carried out such an analysis on our behalf, and we are grateful for its memorandum, printed here as an appendix. We anticipate that NAO analysis of future SDiG reports and associated departmental data will become a regular feature of our own work, and we have also identified with the NAO some specific areas where it could usefully carry out further work over the next six months.

5. As the SDiG 2003 annual report focuses only on greening operations (see below), it has not afforded us the opportunity to comment on the range of policy and awareness issues which form such an important aspect of the Greening Government initiative. This report should therefore be read in conjunction with our November 2003 report, which represents a more comprehensive assessment of progress.<sup>5</sup>

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1 EAC, Second Report of 1997-98, *The Greening Government Initiative*, HC 517.

2 EAC, Second Report of 1997-98, *The Greening Government Initiative*, HC517, 1997-98; EAC, Sixth Report of 1998-99, *Greening Government 1999*, HC 426; EAC, Fifth Report of 1999-2000, *The Greening Government Initiative: First Annual Report from the Green Ministers Committee*, HC 341.

3 The 1998 and 1999 Greening Government reports from the EAC were based on questionnaire surveys it conducted of all ministerial departments and some major agencies.

4 For the Government Response see the EAC’s Third Special Report of 2003-04, HC 489.

5 EAC, Thirteenth Report of Session 2002-03, *Greening Government 2003*, HC 961.

# Sustainable Development in Government: The Second Annual Report

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6. The *Sustainable Development in Government: Second Annual Report* (hereafter referred to as the SDiG 2003 report) was published in November 2003.<sup>6</sup> In a radical departure from previous practice, the report focuses exclusively on operational management topics rather than on the wider Greening Government agenda, including policy making and awareness. We comment on this further below.

7. A second change, though more minor, relates to the presentation of the report: only the executive summary was printed (as a single A4 leaflet), the main report being available only on the web. Following the precedent set in previous years, the departmental responses to the questionnaire on which the report is based have also been made available only on the internet.

## A narrower scope

8. The greening government agenda, as defined by EAC itself from 1998 and by the reports from the Green Ministers Committee, is focused on embedding environmental and sustainable development objectives in all aspects of the work of departments and their associated bodies—both in terms of greening operational management and, even more importantly, greening policy making.

9. Previous Government and EAC reports therefore covered a variety of issues in relation to policy making, such as staff resources devoted to promoting sustainable development, policy screening and environmental appraisals, target setting, monitoring, staff awareness and training, and mainstreaming sustainable development in the work of associated bodies. And it was these areas which gave rise to many of the critical findings.

**10. The latest Sustainable Development in Government annual report is far narrower in scope and significance than previous Government reports in this series. It focuses only on operational management issues, and does not cover the mainstreaming of environmental objectives within policy development—including environmental screening and appraisal, setting environmentally related policy targets, monitoring and reporting on them, and raising awareness in both departments and their associated bodies.**

## Reporting elsewhere

11. The Executive Summary of the SDiG 2003 report did include a commitment that these policy and awareness aspects would be included in the next annual report on the UK Sustainable Development Strategy (“*Achieving a better quality of life*”). However, the 2003 questionnaire on which the SDiG 2003 report is based did not include any questions on policy and awareness—unlike previous annual questionnaires. It is therefore difficult to see on what objective evidence such reporting could be based.

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6 The report can be found at: <http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/sdig/reports/index.htm>

12. The annual report, *Achieving a better quality of life*, was subsequently published in March 2004.<sup>7</sup> Paragraphs 2.19 to 2.41 cover the role of departments in embedding sustainable development in policy making, the 2004 Spending Review, the role of the Cabinet Committees ENV and ENV(G), and the use of policy appraisal tools. However, much of the narrative is very general in nature: the only specific information on departmental performance is contained in two sentences—one citing those departments which have issued sustainable development strategies or policy statements, and the other citing those which have set up dedicated Sustainable Development Units.

**13. The Sustainable Development in Government 2003 report includes a commitment that these other key policy and awareness aspects would be reported on in the annual report on the UK Sustainable Development Strategy. However, DEFRA did not include in the 2003 departmental questionnaire any questions relating to these aspects, and the annual report on the UK Strategy (March 2004) does not in fact contain any objective data or comparative analysis of departmental performance in this respect.**

### The role of ENV(G)

14. It is unclear to us whether the decision to narrow the focus of the departmental questionnaire was a considered policy change—in which case we might have expected to have been informed early in 2003 when the questionnaire was being planned. The inclusion of a small section on departmental performance in the annual report on the UK Strategy certainly appears to be a token afterthought and the context in any case inappropriate, given the far wider scope of that report. Moreover, it is extraordinary that ENV(G) could have sanctioned such a change, given that its remit is “*to consider the impact on sustainable development of Government policies*” and “*to improve the performance of Departments in contributing to sustainable development.*”<sup>8</sup> One might have imagined that comparative information on departmental performance in embedding environmental objectives within policy making and awareness raising would have been central to that role.

**15. It is regrettable that the Government appears to have abandoned monitoring policy and awareness aspects of the Greening Government initiative in a systematic and objective manner. It is still more surprising that ENV(G) sanctioned such a change to the coverage of the 2003 departmental questionnaire, and the Government should state explicitly whether it did in fact do so. It should also explain how, in the absence of comparative information, ENV(G) proposes to assess departmental performance in greening policy and raising awareness, or whether it now sees its role as being limited to greening operations.**

### The need for a structured approach

16. The annual questionnaire to departments originated from our own initial inquiry into Greening Government in 1998.<sup>9</sup> For that inquiry, we wrote to all ministerial departments

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7 The report, published by DEFRA, can be found at: <http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/ar2003/index.htm>

8 EAC, Third Special Report of 2003-04, The Government Response to the Committee’s Thirteenth Report of Session 2002-03 on *Greening Government 2003*, HC 489, para 61

9 EAC, Second Report of 1997-98, *The Greening Government Initiative*, HC 517

and to several major agencies and NDPBs, asking them to supply memoranda in response to a questionnaire which we devised. We repeated this process in 1999 for our second report on Greening Government.<sup>10</sup> But in 2000, in order to avoid duplication and bureaucracy, we agreed to base our work on the questionnaire which DETR was by then issuing to obtain evidence for the Green Ministers Report. This approach was satisfactory to the extent that the questionnaire largely fulfilled our own information requirements. **The Government should, in future, collect information systematically from departments on a range of issues relating to greening policy and raising awareness, and report on these in the Sustainable Development in Government annual report. If it does not intend to do so, we will return to the practice of collecting such information ourselves.**

17. We welcomed last year the *Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate* which sets out a structured approach to cross-departmental target setting and monitoring of operations. But we pointed out that there was a need to develop an equally systematic approach to the policy side.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, in 2001 we recommended that there should be an explanatory memorandum for all new environmentally related targets which, *inter alia*, set out clearly the baseline and methodology for monitoring the target.<sup>12</sup> While the Government responded favourably to this recommendation and there was some positive informal contact with DEFRA staff, nothing appears to have come of this.

18. The need for a more systematic approach has also recently been highlighted in our work on aviation and the 60% carbon reduction target. The Government has failed to clarify what the baseline is against which performance should be measured and how the target relates to greenhouse gases other than CO<sub>2</sub>. In our latest report on aviation, we called on the Government to clarify these issues as a matter of urgency.<sup>13</sup>

**19. Environmental targets in policy-related areas are likely to play a far more important and crosscutting role in the future, particularly if the new UK Sustainable Development Strategy highlights key priorities for action. A structured approach—akin to that now adopted for operational management—to both output and process related targets should therefore be developed as part of the reviews of the Sustainable Development Strategy and the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate.**

## Greening operations

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20. Our last report on Greening Government was based on an analysis of departmental data carried out by our own staff. This year, in response to a recommendation we made in that report, the NAO has carried out this analysis on our behalf. We are very grateful to the NAO for its memorandum which is printed in full as the Appendix to this report. The memorandum relates only to operational issues, reflecting the narrower scope of the SDiG 2003 report. In the following paragraphs, we have highlighted a few key messages and

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10 EAC, Sixth Report of 1998-99, *Greening Government 1999*, HC 426.

11 EAC, Thirteenth Report of Session 2002-03, *Greening Government 2003*, HC 961, paragraph 64

12 EAC, First Report of Session 2000-01, *Environmental Audit :The First Parliament*, HC 67, paragraphs 48-59.

13 EAC, Seventh Report of Session 2003-04, *Aviation: Sustainability and the Government Response*, HC 623, paragraphs 23-25

would refer the reader to the NAO's own clear exposition for further details. We should also point out that some of the figures we have quoted are drawn from data in the SDiG report itself rather than the NAO memorandum.<sup>14</sup>

## The Framework

21. The Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate was launched in July 2002. It supersedes previous guidance to departments and represents a more comprehensive approach to setting targets across all departments and monitoring them in a systematic way. It consists of 9 parts—an overarching statement (Part A) followed by 8 other parts covering specific operational areas (travel, water, waste, energy, procurement, estates management, biodiversity, and social impacts). The overarching statement includes requirements on departments to identify impacts, publish delivery plans, implement environmental management systems, and report publicly on performance.<sup>15</sup>

22. Each of these parts was intended to include an introduction, detailed information on all the cross-departmental targets set, and a further section setting out progress in achieving targets. When we reported in November last year, we found that only four of the nine parts of the Framework had been published. There has been limited progress here, with targets now covering five areas. **Progress on completing the Framework remains slow, and we are disappointed that procurement remains a crucially important area where targets have yet to be set. The implications of the huge growth in the Private Finance Initiative are immense, given the need to embed far higher environmental standards within such projects, and this is a subject to which we intend to return in future.**

## Departmental performance

23. **Our overall conclusion is that the picture of departmental performance emerging from the NAO analysis of the Sustainable Development in Government 2003 report does not differ substantially from our own analysis of operational data for the previous year. The data in the report has significant weaknesses, which limit the conclusions that can be drawn from it. However, taking it at face value, departments' performances appear to vary hugely. Some departments have made good progress in certain areas, while others report only minimal achievements.**

24. We commented last year on these variations and recommended that the Government should investigate the reason for them as a matter of urgency and make publicly available the findings. The Government response suggested that some differences in performance were inevitable, given the differences in departmental estates and activities, and it went on to suggest that that improved data collection and monitoring would help to identify areas where performance could be improved.

25. The situation does not appear to have improved substantially over the last year, as the NAO concluded that “departments' performances appear to vary widely, but clear conclusions are hard to draw because of data limitations in the SDiG Report 2003.”<sup>16</sup> The

14 We have, for example, sometimes quoted absolute figures where the NAO has quoted percentages, or vice versa.

15 The Framework can be found at:<http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/sdig/improving/index.htm>

16 Appendix, Executive Summary

NAO also commented that where there were variations, the SDiG Report provided little or no text to explain these variations.<sup>17</sup> **Examples of such variations include:**<sup>18</sup>

- ***the percentage of staff covered by a certified environmental management system.*** This ranged from 0% (CO, DfES, DfID, ECGD, HMT, LCD, LOD) to 70% for DWP, 80% for ONS and 100% for DCMS.<sup>19</sup>
- ***the number of alternatively powered vehicles (including LPG<sup>20</sup>).*** Of those departments with significant car fleets, the Department for Work and Pensions does commendably well, with 624 vehicles out of a fleet of 2852; whereas Customs and Excise, the Inland Revenue, and the Home Office, with 5836 vehicles between them, could only manage a total of 183 alternatively powered vehicles.
- ***the percentage of waste recovered.*** Six departments were unable to produce any data,<sup>21</sup> while the remaining departments ranged from 0% (Export Credits Guarantee Department) to 79% (Department of Trade and Industry).
- ***the percentage of renewable energy purchased.*** Six departments purchased 10% or less of their electricity requirements from renewable sources.<sup>22</sup> By contrast, six other departments purchased between 50% and 90% from such sources.
- ***the proportion of desk-top paper purchased which met the recycling specification.*** This ranged from 0% (Cabinet Office, Export Credits Guarantee Department) to 100% (Department for Culture, Media and Sport). The performance of the Ministry of Defence and the Department for Work and Pensions, which between them account for over 50% of all desk-top paper bought, remains very poor (2% and 3% respectively).

26. Certain departments have made substantial improvements in a couple of areas. DfID, for example, now purchases 60% of its energy from renewable sources as against only 10% in the previous year; while HMT has registered an even more impressive jump—from 0% to 90%. Similarly, various departments (HMT, DfID, FCO) have improved their performance substantially in purchasing recycled paper. However, as the poor performance of the MOD and DWP in paper procurement demonstrates, there is a long way to go and the extent of the variations in performance remains huge.<sup>23</sup>

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17 Appendix, paragraph 20

18 Supporting data for the variations quoted here can be found in the Appendix or in the SDiG 2003 annual report itself.

19 The abbreviations used here refer to the following departments: the Cabinet Office, Department for Education and Skills, Department for International Development, Export Credits Guarantee Department, HM Treasury, Lord Chancellors Department (now the Department for Constitutional Affairs), Law Officer's Department, Department for Work and Pensions, Office of National Statistics, Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

20 Liquid Petroleum Gas

21 LOD, MoD, C&E, DCMS, LCD, IR, ECGD

22 ONS, IR, DCMS, DWP, ECGD, MoD.

23 Appendix, *passim*, and the SDiG 2003 annual report.

27. **The Government should conduct a detailed analysis of the reasons for the large variations in departmental performance as it is unlikely that they relate to inherent differences in their estates and activities. Future Sustainable Development in Government annual reports should comment in more depth on the reasons for such variations.**

## Reporting on the Government Estate

28. An important issue raised by the NAO is the fact that the SDiG 2003 report does not include some significant public bodies.<sup>24</sup> We commented on this in our previous report on Greening Government, and it has come to the fore also in the context of the Sustainable Energy Act and the curious definition of the Government Estate which it contains.<sup>25</sup>

29. The NAO list some of the departments and Government bodies which are not currently included in the SDiG report but which are likely to have significant sustainable development impacts. These include the Government Communications Headquarters, the Security Service, the Crown Estate, the regulators (Ofsted, Ofgem, Oftel, etc), the Government Offices for the Regions, associated bodies such as the Environment Agency, and significant satellite organisations such as the National Health Service and the education sector. The NAO goes on to state:

*The rationale for the coverage of the SDiG Report, and the exclusions from it, is not clear. If there is a rationale, it might perhaps be expected to include those organisations with the most significant sustainable development impacts. The executive summary to the SDiG Report commits the Government to review the Framework; the review is likely to include the issue of whether participation should be widened.*<sup>26</sup>

30. It is not even clear whether departments have properly included all the bodies which should be included. In its analysis, the NAO comment that: “under SDiG guidance departments are supposed to have included their executive agencies in their reporting, but it is not clear from the SDiG report whether they have in fact done so; in some cases departments have only reported on the performance of part of their estate, perhaps a single executive agency...”<sup>27</sup> We too have had our suspicions on this score before.

**31. The Government should clarify on what basis bodies are, or are not, to be included in the Sustainable Development in Government report, and it should explain how this relates to the exemptions in the Sustainable Energy Act. It must also ensure that departments do include in returns all those bodies—in particular, executive agencies – which should be included.**

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24 Appendix, paragraphs 13-15.

25 In defining the scope of the Act in relation to the CHP target, the Sustainable Energy (CHP Provisions) Order 2003 specifically excluded the following organisations :the Office of the Judge Advocate General of the Forces; the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency; the Information Technology Services Agency; the National Insurance Contributions Office; the Invest in Britain Bureau; the National Savings; the Probation Service; the Farming and Rural Conservation Agency; the NHS Estates.

26 Appendix, paragraph 15

27 Appendix, paragraph 19, sixth bullet

## Other NAO observations

32. In its analysis, the NAO makes a number of other observations. Firstly, the need for independent validation, where it comments that “*data quality is often poor – there are gaps in data, errors and a general lack of validation—which means that most conclusions about departments’ performance must be heavily qualified.*”<sup>28</sup> The NAO also points to inconsistencies in data: some departments, for example, claim to recover materials such as cans and fluorescent tubes but only to recycle a proportion of the material recovered – despite the fact that recycling is the only alternative to disposal.<sup>29</sup> At present, there is little evidence that data input online by departments to the SDiG database is audited or verified in any systematic way. Unreliable data may explain some of the variations in departmental performance, and indeed the SDiG 2003 report includes a number of references to discrepancies in previous figures (eg the DWP water consumption figure for 2001-02 which would appear to be too low). Independent validation of data would also help to ensure that all aspects of a department’s activities – including all its executive agencies—are included. **Data reliability remains a significant problem and may explain anomalies in departmental performance. In accordance with best practice, departments should be required to provide evidence that all their environmental performance data has been independently validated.**

33. A closely related issue is the fact that targets are sometimes stated in ambiguous terms, or else the methodology for measuring them insufficiently clarified, leading departments to interpret and report them in different ways. Such ambiguity may undermine the value of making comparisons between departments or drawing overall conclusions about central government’s performance. In addition, the basis for target setting is generally not stated or explained, and it is therefore difficult to assess how reasonable and challenging they are. **The Government should ensure that operational targets, and the methodology for monitoring them, are clear and unambiguous. The rationale for setting specific targets in relation to current performance and industry norms should also be clearly explained in the Framework.**

34. The NAO also discusses the potential for the SDiG report to provide more information on aggregate performance. At present data tables accompanying the SDiG 2003 report simply provide information on individual departments and do not generally include totals. It is sometimes difficult or indeed impossible to work out aggregate figures and assess the performance of the Government estate as a whole—though occasionally overall figures are included in the DEFRA narrative (as in the case of energy). The NAO points out that explicit coverage of overall performance would also allow a comparison of trends across government over time.<sup>30</sup> **The Sustainable Development in Government report should include aggregate data for the performance of the Government estate as a whole, and the narrative could usefully include more discussion and comparisons of trends across Government over time.**

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28 Appendix, Executive Summary (second bullet) and paragraph 19

29 Appendix, paragraph 19, eighth bullet

30 Appendix, paragraph 16

35. Finally, the NAO comments on the presentation of the SDiG report, including the benefits and disbenefits of internet-only publication. While internet access itself is not likely to be a significant issue, accessing the information on the SDiG database in the form in which it is held is certainly far more daunting. The NAO points out that *“the user must access all the individual sections separately, and download or print them individually, which is no small task and could be a barrier to all but the most determined users or those with administrative and technically competent support.”* Indeed, even to view or print the results in a meaningful form often requires substantial reformatting of the data tables. **DEFRA should consider publishing a composite version of the report and the associated data as a single file for download, as an aid to those who seek a complete text or single electronic document for research or analysis.**

36. We also have other concerns of our own about the presentation of the report and related information. The useful lists of administrative and senior officials to contact on operational or policy related issues is no longer contained within the report, and do not appear to be available on the SDiG website. Moreover, we find it extraordinary that the main data on departmental energy performance was not available when the NAO conducted its analysis in March 2004, and is still not available on the SDiG website (see below). **The Government must ensure that the move to intranet-only publication does not lead to a downgrading of the priority and importance accorded to the Sustainable Development in Government Report and the provision of related data.**

## Departmental reporting

37. We pointed out last year how few departments produced their own sustainable development or environmental reports, and we commented that departments must not use the production of the SDiG report as an excuse for not reporting themselves. We recommended that departments should be required to report separately on their environmental impacts and to include in these reports coverage of not only the department itself and its agencies, but their associate bodies also.<sup>31</sup>

38. The Government response indicated that further consideration would be given during 2004 to how departments can improve upon their reporting of sustainable development outside the Framework in a policy context. But it implied that, with regard to operational impacts, the current systems of departmental reporting – mainly in departmental annual reports and websites – were adequate.<sup>32</sup> However, **the poor quality of current data and the need for independent validation is likely to lead to more formal departmental systems for reporting environmental impacts. We are therefore exploring with the NAO how they might assist us in assessing the adequacy of these systems in relation to both policy and operations.**

## Energy

39. In this report, we have not commented at length on specific operational aspects of performance. However, in the case of energy there are some issues we would like to

31 EAC, Thirteenth Report of Session 2002-03, *Greening Government 2003*, HC 961, paragraphs 53-55

32 EAC, Third Special Report of Session 2003-04, HC489, paragraph 42

highlight. Targets for energy under the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate were only set in February 2004, some three months after the SDiG report was compiled. The latter therefore assessed performance against interim targets such as the requirement to obtain 5% of electricity from renewables by March 2003, and to reduce carbon emissions by 1% a year.

40. The energy Framework section now includes the following targets (which supersede and update the previous interim targets):

- Government Departments to reduce absolute carbon, from fuel and electricity used in buildings on their estate, by 12.5% by 2010-11, relative to 1999-2000.
- Government Departments to increase the energy efficiency of the buildings on their estate, measured in terms of kWh of (1) fuel and (2) electricity use per square metre of buildings floor area, or estate area, by 15% by 2010-11, relative to 1999-2000.
- Government Departments to source at least 10% electricity from renewable sources by 31 March 2008.
- Government Departments to source at least 15% of electricity from Good Quality Combined Heat and Power by 2010.
- By March 2006 Government will develop a long-term strategy, up to 2020, for sourcing renewable energy on the Government Estate.
- Departments to include clauses to ensure opportunities are identified and measures taken for reducing carbon emissions and collecting energy data (by fuel type), as far as practical, in all estate management contracts initiated from August 2004.

**41. We find it bizarre and highly unsatisfactory that the Government should have set a target of sourcing at least 10% electricity from renewables by 2008 when analysis of the latest data shows that 17 out of the 20 ministerial departments already meet—or in many cases significantly exceed—this target.** One might have thought that the reason for doing so is that the Government is treating this target as an aggregate target relating to the whole Government estate. Given the poor performance of the MoD (3%) and its dominance in terms of energy demand (it is responsible for almost twice the carbon emissions of all other departments put together), the Government might justifiably have felt apprehensive about setting a higher target. However, this does not seem to be the rationale as in fact the Government has specifically agreed that the MoD will not have to meet this target until 2010. **The Government must explain why it has not set a more challenging target. We also expect all individual departments which are currently meeting or exceeding the target to set their own appropriate and challenging targets.**

42. With regard to the 12.5% reduction in carbon by 2010-11, this is broadly equivalent to the previous interim target of an absolute carbon reduction of 1% a year. At the time the NAO carried out its analysis, data on departmental performance against both this and the energy efficiency target was not available and even now does not appear to be disclosed on the SDiG website. The SDiG 2003 report itself states that absolute carbon emissions in civil

departments actually increased in 2002-03, though this was compensated for by an improvement in the MoD.<sup>33</sup> **The extensive delay in publishing departmental energy performance data is unacceptable and the Government must ensure that data for 2003-04 is available far earlier. It should also state how much of the 12.5% carbon reduction target is likely to be met simply through changes in the fuel mix by 2010-11 rather than by actual reductions in demand.**

43. The Government's Energy Efficiency Action Plan refers to the new 12.5% target and then goes on to state: "This new commitment, in addition to the 19 per cent reduction already achieved in the 1990s campaign, means the Government estate should achieve an overall carbon reduction of some 29 per cent relative to 1990." Yet civil departments barely managed an energy efficiency improvement of 8% in the 1990s, and the overall performance only rose to 19% through the inclusion of the MoD. Furthermore, the NAO carried out an audit of these figures several years ago,<sup>34</sup> but it was unable to validate performance against the target of a 20% reduction in energy consumption because:

- Departments and agencies were unable to provide sufficient supporting evidence to enable the NAO to reach a conclusion on the reasonableness of the methodology used to collate data for the target's baseline year, 1990-1991 or the accuracy of that data.
- The methodologies used by departments and agencies constituting the Military Estate for collecting data including that for the final year of the target, 1999-2000, did not reflect properly the changes in the size and nature of that estate. The NAO was therefore unable to conclude on the reliability of the figures for the Military Estate including 1999-2000, and hence on whether the overall data for that year are fairly presented.<sup>35</sup>

**44. It is regrettable that the Government should claim a likely carbon reduction in government departments of 29% by 2010 against a 1990 baseline, when the NAO has concluded that figures for performance from 1990 to 2000 are unreliable and cannot be audited.**

## Conclusion

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45. The SDiG 2003 report includes a commitment to review the Framework for Sustainable Development in Government during 2004-05. The Framework has provided a structured approach to setting targets and monitoring progress in operational areas. However, the review provides an opportunity to consider:

- the role of ENV(G) in relation to the Sustainable Development in Government initiative and the scope for developing a more structured approach in embedding sustainable development in policy making and awareness.
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33 See Part E of the SDiG 2003 report at: <http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/sdig/reports/ar2003/parte.htm>

34 This work was in response to a specific recommendation the EAC made in its Fifth Report of 1999-2000 (*The Greening Government Initiative: First Annual Report from the Green Ministers Committee*, HC 341, paragraph 45). The results of the NAO's work were summarised in the *Third Annual Report of the Green Ministers*, published in November 2001.

35 *ibid.*

— the role and relationship between the Sustainable Development in Government Report and reporting carried out by individual departments, bearing in mind the need for departments to report more fully on performance and to obtain independent validation of environmental performance data.

46. In our view, there is a vital need to collect comparative information on policy and awareness related processes within Government departments, and we see the annual SDiG report as central to that process. Future reports should include a rigorous and comprehensive analysis: only in this way can ENV(G) monitor progress effectively, adjust priorities and set targets as required.

**47. Our findings indicate that, although progress continues to be made in some departments on some aspects of the Greening Government initiative, there is a perceptible loss of overall momentum—particularly in embedding sustainable development within policy making.** It is crucial to the credibility of the Government as a champion of sustainable development internationally that it can demonstrate a strong record of improvement domestically. This needs political leadership from the top and ENV(G) must play a much more active role in driving forward progress and ensuring that departments meet the challenges we face. **The review of the Framework provides a timely opportunity for the Government to demonstrate a new commitment to the Greening Government initiative and ensure that the Sustainable Development in Government annual report does indeed live up to its name.**

## APPENDIX

### NAO Memorandum prepared for the Environmental Audit Committee

#### Sustainable Development in Government Report, 2003.

##### Executive summary

The National Audit Office examined the Sustainable Development in Government Report 2003 (the SDiG Report 2003), in response to a request from the Environmental Audit Committee of the House of Commons. The SDiG Report 2003 provides information about the performance of 20 central government departments and their executive agencies in nine areas of sustainable development, for the financial year 2002-2003. It is co-ordinated by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and published on the Internet. The report covers nine areas: ‘overarching commitments’ to sustainable development (Environmental Management Systems and public reporting); travel; water; waste; energy; procurement; estates management; biodiversity and social impacts. We examined seven of the nine areas; biodiversity and social impacts were excluded since targets and monitoring are relatively undeveloped.

We found that:

- **The sustainable development targets need to be more clearly defined and their rationale explained**—targets for the nine areas are being published under the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate, and to date cover five of the nine areas (overarching commitments, travel, water, energy and biodiversity). Even where targets are available, it is not clear why a particular issue has been selected for monitoring. The baselines against which departments’ performances are measured is not stated. Some targets do not appear to be very stretching. Also, targets are sometimes stated in ambiguous terms, which may lead departments to interpret them in different ways; for example, in the waste area, a definition of the term ‘total office waste’ is not provided. This ambiguity may undermine the value of making comparisons between departments or drawing overall conclusions about central government’s performance.
- **Departments’ performances appear to vary widely, but clear conclusions are hard to draw because of data limitations in the SDiG Report 2003**—on the basis of the data presented in the SDiG Report 2003, departments’ sustainable development achievements are highly variable, both between areas (e.g. water monitoring is relatively advanced, while waste management is generally poor) and between departments. However, data quality is often poor—there are gaps in data, errors and a general lack of validation—which means that most conclusions about departments’ performance must be heavily qualified.
- **Taking the data at face value, however, some departments do appear to have made significant achievements, in at least some of the areas.** Most departments have environmental management systems and mechanisms for reporting on performance

on at least some of their sites. Use of energy from renewable sources is widespread, while some departments have well-established strategies for sustainable timber procurement and use of 'alternative' fuel (electricity or liquefied petroleum gas (LPG)) in their fleet vehicles. Conversely, most departments' performance against water consumption targets is poor, despite the fact that most have water monitoring systems in place. Waste management is a particularly weak area. For some targets, the overall results across government are skewed by the fact that a few very large departments are performing poorly. For example, less than 25 per cent of all paper used meets the standards for recycled content, since MoD and DWP use very little recycled paper.

- **The report presentation is helpful but could be further improved**—the SDiG report was published only on the Internet, in the form of 'narrative' (descriptive) pages of text accompanied by data tables. This format has helped Defra to collect the data more efficiently, and has also made it more readily available to many potential users. The 'narrative' sections in each area provide interesting insights, but they suffer from a lack of common purpose, format or content.

We also note that the SDiG Report 2003 does not cover some significant public bodies; Defra is due to review this issue and others, during 2004.

## Purpose of this briefing

1. This briefing presents the results of the National Audit Office's analysis of the Sustainable Development in Government Report 2003 (hereafter referred to as the SDiG Report 2003) in response to a request, in November 2003, from the Environmental Audit Committee of the House of Commons<sup>36</sup>. The SDiG Report 2003 provides information about the performance of 20 central government departments (listed in Annex A) and their executive agencies against a range of sustainable development measures, for the financial year 2002-03. This briefing describes the work done and our findings for seven of the nine areas of sustainable development covered in the SDiG Report 2003<sup>37</sup>.

## The SDiG Report and related targets

2. The government has monitored the sustainable development performance of its departments for some years, beginning in 1998-1999 with the First Annual Report of the Green Ministers' Committee<sup>38</sup>. During this time the monitoring and reporting format have evolved, and this process is a continuing one.

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36 Greening Government 2003. House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee. Thirteenth Report of session 2002-03 page 9.

37 The SDiG report 2003 covers nine areas. Two of these, biodiversity and social impacts, are excluded from our analysis since targets and monitoring are relatively undeveloped.

38 The Ministerial Sub-Committee of Green Ministers is made up of 19 government ministers, from 16 central government departments plus three ministers from the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland Offices. Originally formed in 1997 as an informal committee, it was upgraded to Cabinet sub-committee status after the general election in 2001.

3. A recent significant change has been the separation of reporting on government departments' **operational performance** from reporting on how sustainable development is incorporated into departments' **policy processes**:

- For the first time, the SDiG Report 2003 reports only on operational performance.
- Reporting on policy issues for 2003 appears in the annual report on the UK Sustainable Development Strategy, 'Achieving a Better Quality of Life' published in March 2004. Thereafter, the Government will determine how best to report on policy making.

4. Operational reporting is based increasingly on the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate (the Framework). Co-ordinated by the Sustainable Development Unit (SDU) of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Framework's first targets were published in 2002 and to date cover five of the nine areas. In the areas where Framework targets have not yet been published, other targets may exist, but these will in time be superseded by the Framework. The nine areas and associated targets are set out in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: The nine sustainable development areas and associated targets**

Area	Main aspects covered	Framework target
Overarching Commitments	Incorporating commitments to sustainable development by for example implementing an Environmental Management System (EMS) and reporting publicly on environmental performance	Since July 2002
Travel	Reducing the environmental impacts of business travel and employees' commuting journeys	Since July 2002
Water	Reducing departments' water consumption	Since July 2002
Waste	Reducing departments' waste generation and improving waste management practices such as recycling	Expected to be published during 2004;
Energy	Reducing carbon emissions by making use of Combined Heat and Power (CHP) systems, and to use energy from renewable sources	Since February 2004
Procurement	Incorporating sustainable development considerations into departments' procurement strategy, for example by purchasing recycled paper and timber from sustainable sources	Expected to be published during 2004;
Estates Management	Using environmental standards for construction and buildings refurbishment projects	Expected to be published during 2004;
Biodiversity	Taking measures to avoid damage and enhance biodiversity on departments' estates	Since August 2003
Social Impacts	Enhancing the government's role as an employer and its impact on the local communities in which it operates	Expected to be published during 2004;

**The Framework targets are being rolled out gradually across the nine areas.**

Source: National Audit Office

5. The SDiG Report 2003 is based on a detailed web-based questionnaire, consisting of over 200 questions. The questionnaire was first circulated to departments for comment and subsequently, in finalised form, in May 2003. Departments then had two months to complete it, returning their responses to the SDU by the end of July 2003.

6. The SDiG Report 2003, consisting of the tables of departments' responses to each question plus an accompanying narrative written by SDU, was published on the Sustainable Development in Government website in November 2003.<sup>39</sup> The report is available only in electronic form; a brief executive summary was available in hard copy.

## Our approach to this analysis

7. We developed a framework of key questions which drew on previous NAO experience and data validation guidelines from recognised sources. The questions were designed to investigate four overall issues:

- **Targets:** The quality (e.g. appropriateness, clarity and coverage) of the sustainable development targets that departments are being asked to achieve (either Framework targets or any other targets that pre-exist the Framework);
- **Data:** The completeness and quality of the data included in the SDiG Report 2003 (including comprehensiveness, internal consistency and whether or not it had been validated);
- **Performance:** Departments' achievements, according to the data available;
- **Narrative:** The quality of the narrative which accompanies each section of the report and interprets the data (e.g. whether it draws accurate conclusions from the data and provides helpful illustrative examples).

8. Our analysis was based primarily on review of the published data and narrative, combined with detailed discussion with the Defra SDU team and other contacts where necessary. We did not directly research departments' processes for completing the SDiG questionnaire. This primary research will be an important element of further work the NAO will carry out on specific areas of sustainable development in government.

## General observations

9. Our analysis takes as its starting point the view that departments are primarily responsible for their own sustainable development data and performance. The role of Defra and the SDU is to help set government-wide targets, provide guidance, co-ordinate data collection and act as rapporteur to provide an overview of performance.

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39 <http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/sdig/reports/ar2003/index.htm>

### ***There is a growing body of targets and data***

10. The SDiG Report 2003, and the growing volume of Framework targets and guidance to departments, provides an ever-increasing source of good practice and performance data on how government is taking forward the sustainable development agenda.

### ***Internet publishing offers benefits and disadvantages***

11. The decision to publish the Report only on the internet makes the publication more readily available to many potential users, and it is likely that only a very few potential users will have been deterred by the lack of a hard copy or unavailability of internet access. There is a down-side to publication on the web, however. The user must access all the individual sections separately, and download or print them individually, which is no small task and could be a barrier to all but the most determined users or those with administrative and technically-competent support. For the future, Defra could consider publishing a composite version in a single file for download, as an aid to those who seek a complete text or single electronic document for research or analysis.

12. The availability of much of this information on the internet is helpful. The use of web-based data collection has also helped departments provide Defra with the information it requires in a more efficient manner. Although this might have been expected to speed up the timetable for reporting, the SDiG 2003 report was still published in November, the same month as in the previous year when manual methods were used. There may be some scope to improve the timeliness of reporting in future years.

### ***The report does not include some significant public bodies***

13. The SDiG Report 2003 covers 20 central government departments (listed in Annex A)<sup>40</sup> and their executive agencies; agencies' performance is included in the reporting by their 'parent' departments and is not shown separately. The bodies covered range from very large departments with thousands of staff and several major sites around the UK, such as the Inland Revenue (IR) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), to small departments such as the Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD).

14. Some sizeable departments and other government bodies, which are likely to have significant sustainable development impacts, are not currently included in SDiG reporting. These include the Government Communications Headquarters, the Security Service, the Crown Estate, the regulators (Ofsted, Ofgem, Of tel, etc) and the Government Offices for the Regions. Reporting also excludes other associated bodies such as Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs), for example the Environment Agency, as well as significant satellite organisations such as the National Health Service and the education sector.

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40 16 major departments on the Green Ministers' Committee, plus a further four departments (Customs and Excise, Exports Credit Guarantee Department, Inland Revenue and the Office for National Statistics). The Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland Offices, which are represented on the Green Ministers' Committee, are excluded from SDiG reporting since Sustainable development is a 'devolved issue' for which the devolved administrations are responsible.

15. The rationale for the coverage of the SDiG Report, and the exclusions from it, is not clear. If there is a rationale, it might perhaps be expected to include those organisations with the most significant sustainable development impacts. The executive summary to the SDiG Report commits the Government to review the Framework; the review is likely to include the issue of whether participation should be widened.

### *The narrative sections could be more useful*

16. The Report describes the targets and presents the associated data relating to each department. Each area of the report also includes a narrative, written by SDU. These narrative sections provide interesting insights and views, but they suffer from not having a common purpose, format or content, and it is not clear for whom they are written. In future reports, the narrative section could usefully cover:

- The basis for targets, and any significant changes in targets since the previous year.
- Discussion of whether targets need to be reviewed, or supplemented to fill gaps in coverage.
- Performance overall, whether government and departments are likely to meet the targets on the basis of current progress, and any significant changes in performance since the previous year.
- Commentary on those departments making good progress, and discussion of the challenges which may impede progress by others.
- Examples of interesting and useful initiatives which departments have undertaken.
- Links to relevant websites providing guidance to departments.

17. A narrative report along these lines would sit well with Defra's role as co-ordinator and rapporteur on sustainable development performance, whilst departments remain responsible for their own data and performance.

## Targets and data

### *Targets*

18. On the targets in the SDiG Report 2003, we found that:

- **The coverage of targets is growing** as the Framework develops. As Figure 1 shows, three areas have had targets since 2002, another since 2003 and targets for the other five areas are expected to appear in 2004.
- **The Framework provides a mix of process targets** (for example, to implement an Environmental Management System) **and outcome targets** (for example, to reduce water consumption to a certain level), **but there is scope for more of the latter:** for example on water, where outcome targets only apply to office sites. There is nothing wrong with process targets – they indicate how departments are supposed to take

forward the sustainable development agenda – but they should be accompanied by outcome targets wherever possible. Around a third of current targets are outcome-based. On the plus side, all areas except that relating to overarching commitment, which is process-based by its nature, now have at least one outcome target.

- **The basis for target setting is not stated, and thus it is difficult to assess the reasonableness of the performance departments are expected to achieve.** Some targets have been based on pre-existing and other relevant targets (for example, national targets), but in other areas they may reflect industry norms, wider policy objectives or knowledge of departments' current achievements and the progress that might reasonably be attained. This explanation is not provided, however, and this means it is difficult if not impossible to assess whether government departments are being expected to do more or less than, for example, similar organisations in the private sector or elsewhere in the public sector.
- **Some targets do not appear to be very stretching.** The most striking example is the target for departments to obtain at least 10 per cent of their energy from renewable sources by 2008—17 out of 20 departments had achieved this target by 2003. Where targets seem likely to be achieved early, the targets could be reviewed; as noted in paragraph 15 above, a review is planned. In a different way, the targets for 10 per cent of fleet cars to use alternative fuels, and to reduce single car occupancy commuting by 5 per cent, do not seem to be overly demanding although the lack of explanation (see previous point) prevents a definitive judgement on this point. Defra explain that the Framework targets are intended to represent a level of achievement that most departments feel they can realistically achieve. The information gathered by the SDiG report 2003 indicates the range of departments' actual achievements, which will help to set more demanding targets in a second round of the Framework.
- **In more than a few instances the targets are stated in terms which are ambiguous or open to different interpretation,** which may in turn lead departments to plan action and provide information on different bases. While some flexibility is appropriate for targets which are applied to departments with a range of sizes and activities, this level of ambiguity could mean that data on overall and departmental performance is undermined. For example, the target for establishing Environmental Management Systems (EMS) leaves departments to define what constitutes a “main office” for which an EMS should apply; the target for verifying environmental performance data does not specify what “verify” means or how this should be achieved; and the target for departments to “consider joining” the Watermark scheme seems particularly vague.

## Data

19. On the data in the SDiG Report 2003, we found that:

- **The Report provides an increasing volume of data** in relation to a growing number of targets, and there is now plenty of information available for those persons with an interest in government's and departments' performance in promoting sustainable development in their own operations.

- **The Report does not always provide, or give prominence to, performance across the government estate.** Instead, it provides data for individual departments and leaves the reader to reach their own judgement about overall performance. In some instances, this is reasonable because the data do not lend themselves to any sensible aggregation or averaging, but where this is possible the SDiG report could be improved by providing a view of overall performance before drilling down to departmental level. Sometimes, these aggregate views are provided in the narrative, but not always. Explicit coverage of overall performance would also allow a comparison of trends across government over time.
- **There remain considerable gaps in data in some areas.** Sometimes, this is because Framework targets have not yet been set and departments have not routinely collected data (for example, on the volume of different waste streams). But even where targets have been set, there are still a considerable number of nil responses from departments, even where only a yes/no response was sought. For example, in the water section of the SDiG report, eight of the 20 departments supplied no information when asked whether they had identified non-office sites with potential for significant water savings.
- **There is very little evidence of independent validation** or review of the data that departments supply. Although the Framework for overarching commitment includes a target for verification of performance data, the target does not specify what standard of verification would be acceptable, or whether verifiers should be external to the organisation. The questionnaire used to produce the SDiG report does not ask departments to provide any evidence that their performance data has been validated. A very few comments referring to validation are to be found in the SDiG report, not enough to demonstrate that departments have comprehensive or high-quality validation processes in place.
- **In some areas, the questionnaire did not allow departments to provide data in the detail needed to demonstrate achievement against the target.** For example, the questions on estate management do not allow departments to distinguish between new and refurbished buildings, for which there are separate targets; the questions on water do not permit a distinction between new and existing buildings, for which there are different targets; and the questions for waste ask merely for the percentage of departments' sites covered by recycling schemes, rather than for the coverage of sites with more than 50 staff as specified in the interim waste target.
- **The scope for aggregation, comparison and benchmarking of departmental performance is limited by differing interpretation of the data to be provided, because of the ambiguity in the way some targets were drawn up** (see above). For example, under SDiG guidance departments are supposed to have included their executive agencies in their reporting, but it is not clear from the SDiG report whether they have in fact done so; in some cases departments have only reported on the performance of part of their estate, perhaps a single executive agency; and departments may calculate requested data, such as water consumption per employee, in different

ways. This variation in interpretation reinforces the need for greater standardisation and for some measure of validation for the data being reported.

- **Where estimates are provided, the report does not indicate the precision with which these estimates were calculated.** In many cases, especially in relation to processes, questions require a yes or no answer and thus precision is not an issue. Where quantitative answers are required, in some cases these come from existing systems such as utilities bills, and thus the data is likely to be relatively precise—omissions are the most likely source of error. But in other cases, data provided are based on estimates involving sampling methods—for example, on staff travel and commuting. In such cases, departments should be encouraged to state the degree of precision in their estimates or the basis for their estimate.
- **Some likely errors and internal inconsistencies make it through to the final report even though Defra applies reasonableness checks to the data provided by departments.** For example, in the waste section of the report: some departments claim to recover materials such as cans and fluorescent tubes but only to recycle a proportion of the material recovered, despite the fact that recycling is the only alternative to disposal; a few data items are presented in an incorrect format, such as absolute figures where a percentage has been asked for; one department claims to recycle 100 per cent of its plastic and paper and to send waste for incineration, although it is highly unlikely that other types of waste would be incinerated. Again, the responsibility for such errors and inconsistencies should rest with departments, and highlights the need for validation.

## Commentary on performance in each area of sustainable development

20. On the performance revealed in the SDiG Report 2003, we found that:

- **Performance is subject to considerable variation both between areas of sustainable development and between departments.** We comment below on the performance reported in each of the seven areas of the SDiG Report 2003 that we have analysed.
- **In general, though, it is more difficult than it should be to say whether performance is good, bad or indifferent:**
  - for government in general and areas of sustainable development because the basis for target setting is not stated (see above); and
  - for individual departments because there is insufficient information about their starting positions or about the characteristics of their operations to permit a view on the level of performance that might reasonably be expected. Comparisons are also undermined in some areas by inconsistencies in data collection methods. Where there are variations, the SDiG Report provides little or no text to explain those variations.

21. In the sections that follow, departmental names have been abbreviated. A full list of abbreviations used in this briefing is at Annex A.

### ***Overarching commitment***

22. The “overarching commitment” sets out the government’s overall approach to improving government estate performance and hence contributing to the UK’s sustainable development strategy. The overarching commitment sets out an agenda for departments in terms of identifying major sustainable development impacts, planning improvements, and monitoring and reporting performance. Targets for the overarching commitment were set in July 2002.

23. Departments’ achievements against the targets for the overarching commitment are summarised in Figure 2 below. Overall, there has been some positive progress against the targets:

- There is no target that all departments have definitely met, but 14 of the 20 departments have met all the targets **to some extent**.
- The two targets that are closest to being achieved by all departments are the publishing of delivery plans, and the review of arrangements for public reporting. 19 departments have achieved these to some extent.
- This table does not, however, illustrate the detail of some of the targets such as A3 (Implementation of an Environmental Management System or EMS), which may reveal widely differing degrees of implementation.

Figure 2: Departments' performance against overarching commitment targets

Department	Performance against targets				
	A1 Identify significant impacts	A2 Publish delivery plans	A3 Implement EMS (see note)	A4 Review public reporting of performance	A5 Verification of performance data
C&E	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CO	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
DCMS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Defra	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DfES	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
DfID	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DfT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DoH	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DTI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DWP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ECGD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
FCO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
HMT	X *	X	✓	X	✓
HO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LCD	✓	✓	X	✓	X
LOD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MoD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ODPM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ONS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

**Most departments are making progress on the overarching commitment targets.**

Note: ✓ Department has met target (in the case of target A3, this means that a department has introduced at least one EMS, based on data for 2002-2003, when the deadlines for target A3 (31 March 2004 and 31 March 2006) had not yet passed); X Department has missed target (on the basis of data for 2002-03); n/a – not applicable; \*-the Sustainable Development in Government website states that the HM Treasury assessment "should appear shortly".

Note: EMS - Environmental Management System

Source: SDiG 2003 report, and National Audit Office analysis

## Travel

24. Targets for travel concentrate on the outcomes of travel policies rather than the existence of travel plans, which departments have been introducing since the 1998 Transport White Paper. The Framework targets for travel were published in July 2002. Measured against a baseline year of 2002-03 and to be achieved three years later, by 31 March 2006, these are:

- B1 – reduce road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions by at least 10 per cent, to be achieved through any combination of reducing total business vehicle mileage/improving the average fuel efficiency of vehicles/reducing total fuel consumed;
- B2 – require at least 10 per cent of all fleet cars to be alternatively fuelled<sup>41</sup>;
- B3 – reduce single occupancy car commuting by 5 per cent.

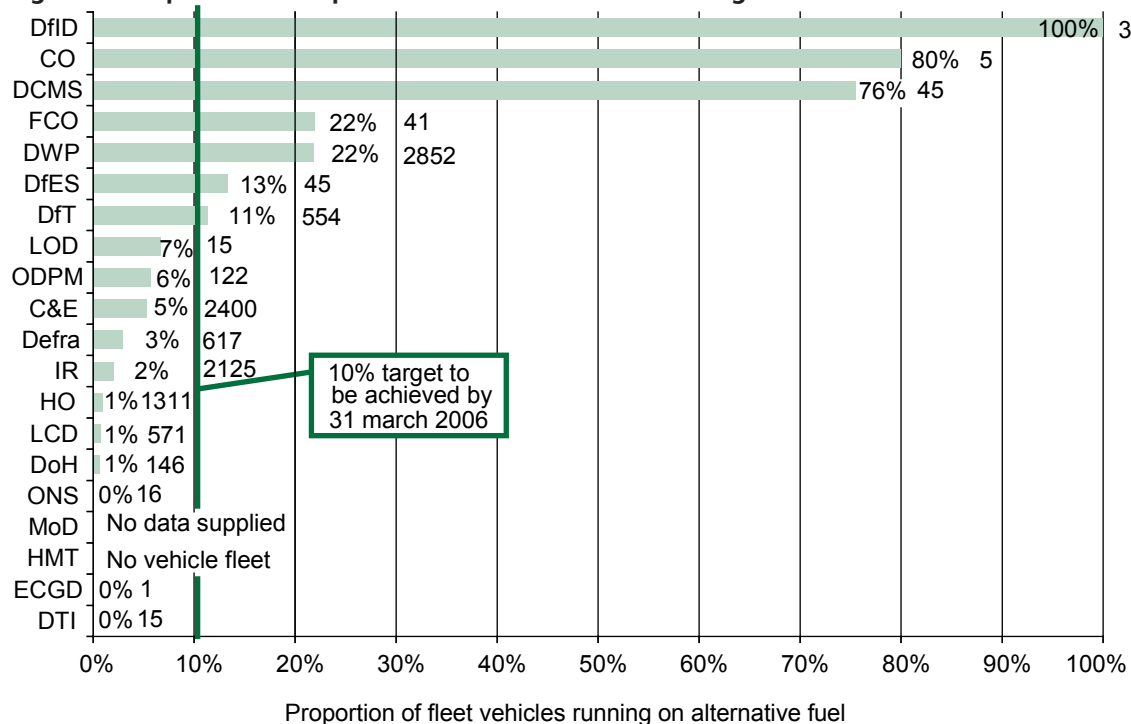
41 This target does not provide a definition of 'alternative' fuel and it is possible that departments' interpretations of the term may vary. Departments' responses vary, supplying data on cars fuelled by Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), dual-fuel (capable of running either on LPG or petrol), or electric vehicles.

25. It is not yet possible to monitor departments' progress against the travel targets, since 2002-03 is the baseline year for these targets. There still appear to be significant limitations in departments' systems for collecting travel data, particularly for employees' commuting journeys, which mean that a useful baseline cannot be established in many cases.

26. On target B1, data on carbon dioxide emissions has two major weaknesses: departments are asked to provide a figure for carbon dioxide emissions but no details are given of how the figure has been calculated; and several departments report a figure for carbon dioxide emissions without indicating whether it represents tonnes or kilograms, introducing a potential error of 1000 per cent. The nine departments who do provide figures emit a total of over 87,300 tonnes of carbon dioxide from their vehicles.

27. On target B2, a total of 957 vehicles (9 per cent of the total fleet) used alternative fuel in 2002-03. This represents a significant improvement from 4 per cent in the previous year, and means that departments are well on the way to achieving their target (Figure 3). This does suggest, however, that the target could be appropriate for inclusion in the review of SDiG reporting (paragraph 15 above). Departments' vehicle fleets are widely variable in size, ranging from one vehicle at ECGD to 2,852 at DWP. Four departments (C&E, DWP, HO and IR) together account for almost 11,000 vehicles, some 80 per cent of the total vehicle fleet. Of these, DWP is the only one of these which has already surpassed the target for 10 per cent of vehicles to be alternatively fuelled. It does seem that some departments with small vehicle fleets are making good progress while those with larger fleets are lagging behind.

**Figure 3: Proportion of departments' fleet vehicles running on 'alternative' fuels**



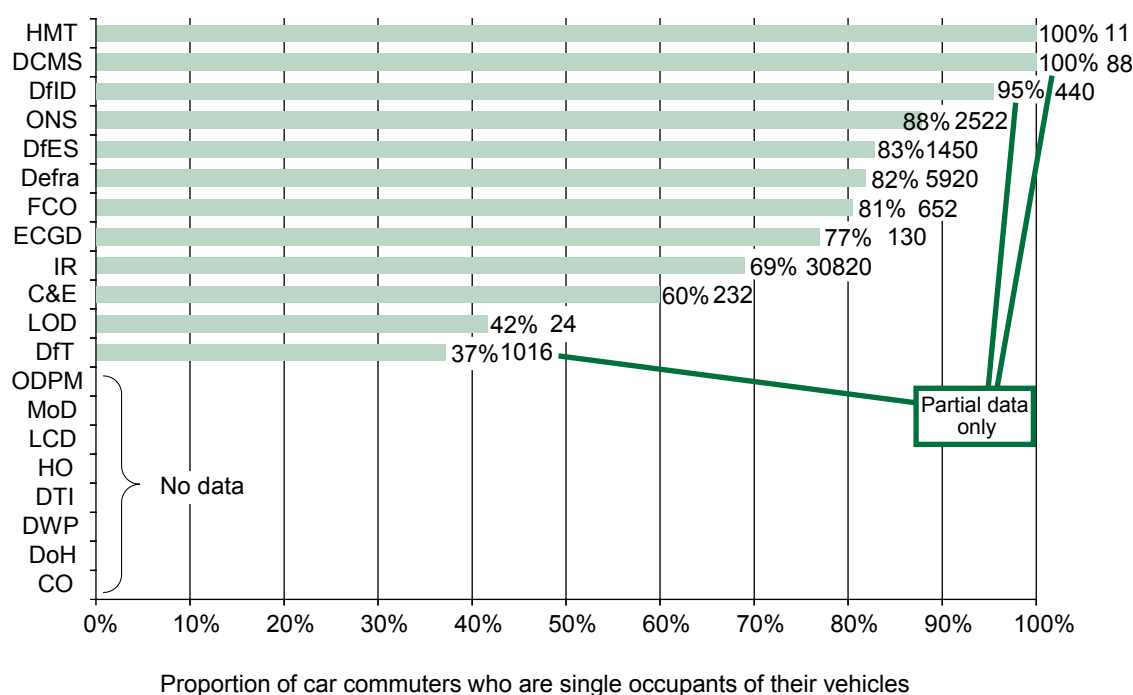
**Most departments make only limited use of vehicles running on 'alternative' fuels (electric or LPG).**

The number of vehicles in each department's fleet is shown at the end of the bar.

Source: SDiG report 2003, & National Audit Office analysis

28. The data reported against target B3, to achieve a 10 per cent reduction in single occupancy car commuting, represents the first year's data and thus provide the baseline against which performance will be measured (Figure 4). Some 43,300 staff commute to work by car, for the 12 departments which supplied data in this area, of which 72 per cent are single occupants of their cars. Some departments such as DWP, HO and MoD, which have extensive regional operations and are very likely to have high levels of car commuting, have not supplied data.

**Figure 4: Single-occupancy car commuting**



**Departments' data on their employees' commuting is limited. Where data is available, it shows that car-sharing is still used only by a minority of car users.**

Note: The number of staff commuting by car is shown at the end of the bar.

Source: SDiG report 2003, and National Audit Office analysis

## Water

29. There are four Framework targets for water, published in July 2002, two for office buildings and two for other types of buildings:

- C1—All departments which have not done so to consider joining the Watermark project by September 2002. Departments which have already joined Watermark should consider by September 2002 whether they have any further sites that should be included in the project.
- C2—Where the department is sole occupier (or is billed for water service charges) to reduce water consumption in office buildings to an average of 7.7 m<sup>3</sup> per person per year by 31 March 2004, or 7 m<sup>3</sup> per person per year for all new buildings and major

refurbishments where design commences after 2002. There was also an interim target to reduce consumption to 11m<sup>3</sup> per person per year by 31 March 2002.

- C3—All departments, by November 2002, to identify non-office sites on their estates where there are likely to be opportunities for significant water savings.
- C4—All departments, by November 2002, to make arrangements to provide available data on significant non-office sites to Watermark, or, if data is not currently available, establish monitoring arrangements with them.

30. Departments' performance against targets for water (Figure 5) is generally weak, but has improved on the performance reported in the previous year:

- Only seven departments had met the interim target for water consumption (an average of 11m<sup>3</sup> per person per year, by 31 March 2002. A year later, in the SDiG report 2003, 13 departments had done so;
- Defra is the only department to have met all four targets;
- There is relatively little data available for the targets referring to non-office sites (C3 and C4), either because these targets do not apply to certain departments or because the departments have not monitored this area.

Figure 5: Departments' performance against water targets

Depts	Performance against targets			
	C1	C2 (interim)	C3	C4
	Watermark participation (office sites)	Water consumption 11m <sup>3</sup> per person per year by March 2002	Identify non-office sites with water reduction opportunities	Provide non-office sites data to Watermark
C&E	✓	✓	X	n/a
CO	✓	?	n/a	n/a
DCMS	✓	?	X	n/a
Defra	✓	✓	✓	✓
DfES	✓	X	X	n/a
DfID	✓	?	X	n/a
DfT	✓	✓	X	n/a
DoH	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
DTI	?	X	X	n/a
DWP	✓	✓	X	n/a
ECGD	?	?	n/a	n/a
FCO	✓	X	✓	✓
HMT	✓	X	n/a	n/a
HO	✓	X	✓	✓
IR	✓	?	n/a	n/a
LCD	?	X	✓	✓
LOD	✓	X	n/a	n/a
MoD	✓	?	✓	✓
ODPM	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
ONS	✓	✓	X	n/a

**Departments' performance against water targets is generally weak, although for office sites monitoring processes are more extensive than for non-office sites.**

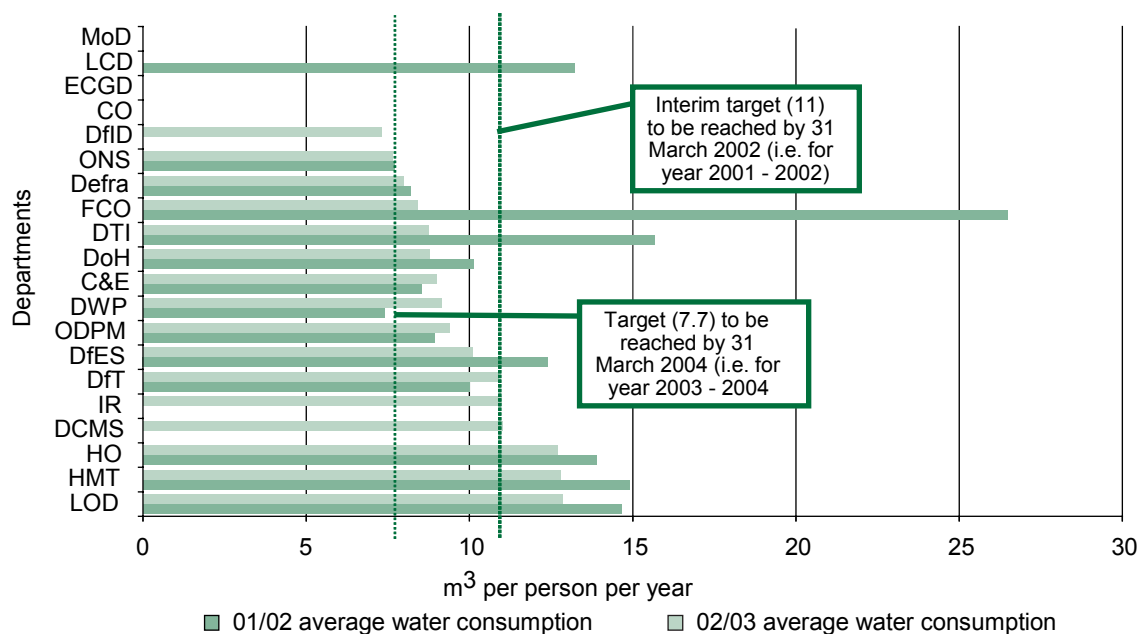
Note: - Department has met target; □- department has missed target; n/a – not applicable; ? – data not provided or ambiguous.

Source: SDiG 2003 report/NAO

31. Departments' performance against the C2 targets for water consumption in office buildings is generally poor (Figure 6), although improvements are being made in some areas:

- 7 departments met the interim target by the due date, another 7 did not and the other 6 did not provide data;
- 2 departments—DfID and ONS—already have met the target to reduce average water consumption to 7.7m<sup>3</sup> per person per year, a year ahead of schedule, and another 7 have consumption at 10m<sup>3</sup> or less. But 3 departments have levels at around 12.5m<sup>3</sup>. The worst-performing department, the Law Officer's Department, consumed more than 12.8 m<sup>3</sup> per person in the financial year 2002-03; over 16 per cent more than the interim target and 65 per cent more than the target for 31 March 2004;
- Three departments provided no data, while one (ECGD) was exempt from the target.

Figure 6: Departments' performance versus water consumption target, for April 2002-March 2003



**Most departments had not yet achieved the water consumption target, although there is a year to go.**

Note: DTI's large performance improvement is described in paragraph 34 below. FCO's data for 2001-2002 refers only to its Hanslope Park offices near Milton Keynes (including a refurbished 17<sup>th</sup> century house), while the 2002-2003 figures refer to FCO's London offices.

Source: SDiG 2003 report /NAO

32. The Watermark scheme, a centralised service operated through the Office of Government Commerce, collects water data from departments and compares their performance against each other and other organisations in the public sector. The project is an interesting example of an innovative, centralised approach to sustainable development issues, which allows departments to learn from each other. There may be scope to extend this model into other areas such as energy management.

33. Most departments (17) report that they are members of the Watermark scheme, but interpretation of what “membership” means is variable. Watermark reports, for example, that only two departments—DfES and DCMS—currently have water services contracts with Watermark’s subcontractor. Other departments may manage their water reduction measures through their own service contracts or facilities management companies, but this is unknown to Watermark.

34. Another example of good practice, at DTI, is highlighted in the Report narrative and the measures DTI has taken to reduce water use, such as installing waterless urinals in major buildings, are described. Given the scale of improvement – 44 per cent – further background information or contact details for the department would have been helpful here.

## Waste

35. At the time of publication of the SDiG 2003 report, Framework targets for waste had not yet been published. The report therefore monitors progress against previous targets which were set by the Ministerial Sub-Committee of Green Ministers:

- All departments should recover a minimum of 40 per cent of total office waste by March 2001, with at least 25 per cent of that recovery by recycling or composting.
- All departments should have recycling and minimisation schemes in place, in all offices with over 50 staff, by 31 March 2002<sup>42</sup>.

36. Waste is one of the less informative areas of the SDiG Report 2003, due to the relative complexity of the topic and the number of different waste streams, departments’ failure to provide full data and some weaknesses in the SDiG Report itself.

37. The Report does not give a clear picture of departments’ waste management achievement. Progress appears to be patchy and generally departments have a long way to go (Figure 7). On the positive side, there are indications of several departments moving in the right direction:

- Most departments have recycling schemes in place to some extent;
- Nine departments met the 40 per cent recovery target, and one (ONS, with 38 per cent) was close to meeting it. Two departments (DTI and HMT) have significantly improved the amounts of waste that they recover;
- A further three departments that did not record their waste in the previous period have supplied information this year.

38. On the other hand there are departments who have made no progress or have moved in the wrong direction:

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42 stated in the Greening Government Second Annual Report 2000.

- Six departments had no records of the amounts of waste they recovered. Of these, two—DCMS and LCD—reported on their waste generation in 2001-02 but did not do so in 2002-03;
- According to our calculation from the data given (expressed in terms of waste tonnes rather than percentages), seven departments met the 25 per cent recycling target in 2002-03, down from ten in the previous year.

Figure 7: Departments' waste recovery and recycling performance

	2001-02		2002-03		
	% of waste recovered % (40% target)	Met 25% recycling target?	% of waste recovered % (40% target)	Met 25% recycling target?	Waste recycling schemes in place?
DTI	41%	Yes	79%	Yes	Partly
HMT	35%	Yes	79%	Yes	Yes
DoH	81%	Yes	78%	Yes	Yes
DfID	n/k	n/k	75%	n/k	Yes
DWP	55%	Yes	58%	Yes	Yes
DfT	51%	n/k	53%	n/k	Yes
CO	n/k	n/k	51%	No	Yes
Defra	47%	Yes	47%	No	Partly
ODPM	n/k	n/k	46%	n/k	Yes
ONS	29%	Yes	38%	Yes	Partly
DfES	34%	Yes	32%	Yes	Yes
FCO	31%	Yes	31%	No	Yes
HO	n/k	n/k	25%	Yes	Yes
LOD	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	Yes
MoD	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	Yes
C&E	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	Partly
DCMS	98%	Yes	n/a	n/k	Yes
LCD	34%	Yes	n/k	n/k	n/k
IR	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k	n/k
ECGD	n/k	n/k	0%	n/k	Yes

**Progress on waste recovery and recycling is patchy.**

Note: Shading indicates departments that have not met the targets.

Note: No details are given in the Report of how departments have achieved significant improvements (for example, the large improvements shown by DTI and HM Treasury in the table above).

Source: SDiG reports 2002 and 2003, National Audit Office, Environmental Audit Committee Thirteenth Report of Session 2002-03

## Energy

39. Targets for energy under the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate had not yet been set when the SDiG report 2003 was compiled. The Framework targets for energy were set only in February 2004. The report therefore monitors progress against **interim targets** for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, making use of renewable energy sources and using Combined Heat and Power (CHP).

40. Full data on departments' carbon emissions due to energy use are being collected by the Building Research Establishment (BRE). Final data are not yet available for 2002-03, but

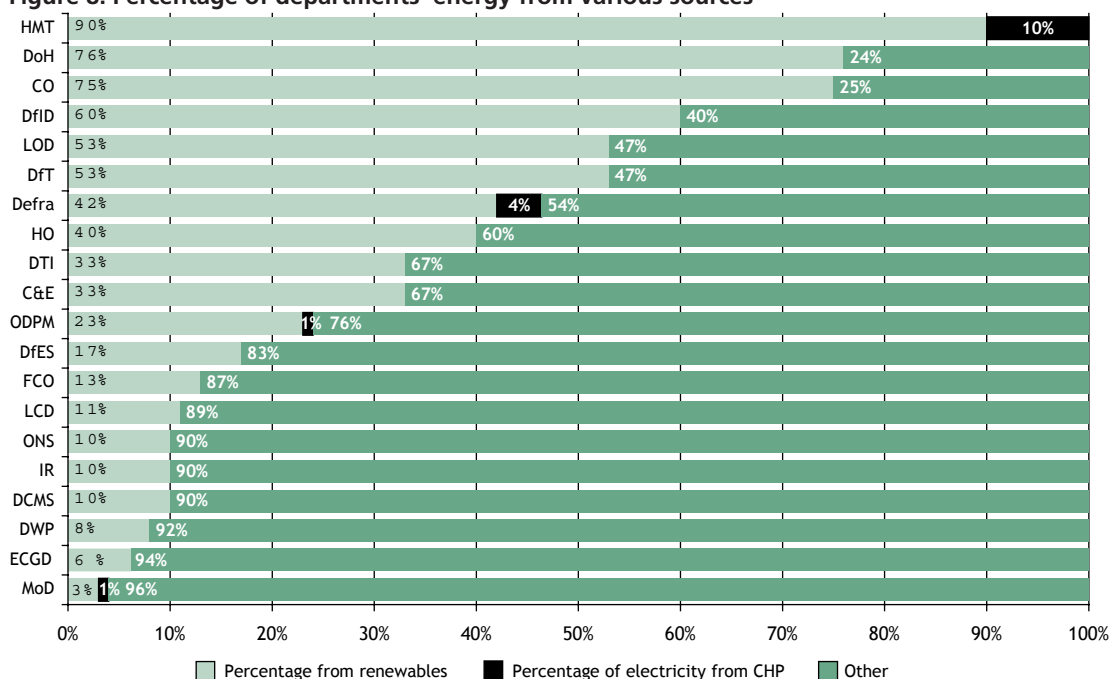
preliminary results are commented on in the narrative of the SDiG report, which notes that emissions per square metre have decreased. Total emissions, excluding those from MoD, have risen due to growth in the size of the government estate. MoD, on the other hand, has reduced emissions by seven per cent.

41. Most departments had already met the new target to obtain 10 per cent of electricity from renewable sources by 2008, before it was set in February 2004:

- By March 2003 only three departments had not yet met the 2008 target of more than 10 per cent of their electricity from renewable sources.
- Six departments buy more than half of their energy from renewable sources, and a further four get more than 30 per cent of their electricity from such sources;
- The only department for which this target appears to pose a real challenge is MoD, which only gets 3 per cent of its energy needs from renewable sources.

42. Only four departments (Defra, HMT, LOD and ONS) report any progress against the interim target on the use of CHP, and only one of these (HMT) reports any significant progress towards the target of 15 per cent of energy use from this source by 2010.

**Figure 8: Percentage of departments' energy from various sources**



**Most departments obtain more than 10 per cent of their electricity from renewable sources, but CHP use is very limited.**

Source: SDiG report 2003

## Procurement

43. Framework targets for sustainable procurement are not yet published. In the absence of these, the SDiG report 2003 monitors departments' procurement practices and/or achievements for timber, paper, electrical products and food. The four areas monitored are

a limited selection of the goods and services which could be included in a sustainable procurement strategy. The rationale for their selection and the exclusion of other areas is not stated.

44. **Timber** procurement appears to be the area where sustainable development policies are most highly developed. Departments' spending on timber products was highly variable in 2002-03, from £16,000 at LOD to £6.46 million at LCD, although no explanation is provided for these variations and it is possible that not all timber procurement is being reported. Most departments report that they buy timber that is either certified or that has some evidence of sustainable and legal sourcing:

- Five departments have already achieved 100 per cent purchasing of timber and timber products from certified sources.
- All other departments who provide data are obtaining timber mainly from sustainable sources, but their sources are not necessarily certified; they merely have 'some evidence' of sustainable sourcing and it is not clear what is meant by this.
- A small percentage of timber procured (less than 1 per cent) has no evidence at all of sustainable and legal sourcing.
- The only departments that purchased 10 per cent or more of their timber with no evidence of sustainable sourcing were MoD (17 per cent of spending or £40,180), DoH (12 per cent or £5,570) and DTI (10 per cent or £353,300).<sup>43</sup>

45. For **paper**, departments are not achieving as much success as for timber. This is surprising given that paper is a product which all departments will need to purchase regularly and in quantity, and that use of recycled paper is well-established in the UK:

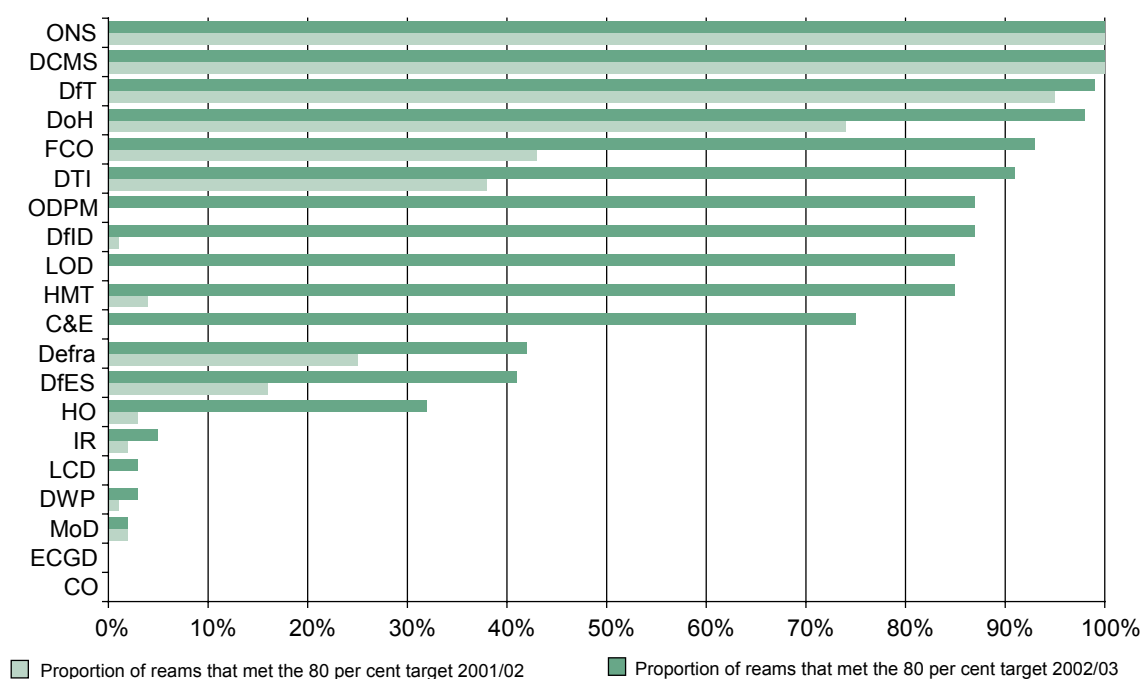
- Less than 25 per cent of the 8 million reams of desk-top paper purchased during 2002-03 met the requirements for recycled content. This is mainly due to the fact that two departments with large paper requirements, MoD and DWP (together accounting for 52 per cent of all desk-top paper bought), buy only small amounts of paper which meets the specification.
- The proportion of desk-top paper meeting the recycling requirements that each department uses is highly variable (Figure 9), ranging from 0 per cent (CO, ECGD) to 100 per cent at DCMS.
- However, many departments have made progress since the previous year and seven have improved significantly (by 50 percentage points or more).

Generally departments are less able to provide data about the paper purchased for printed publications, and data show a less positive picture.

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<sup>43</sup> For DoH, special hardwood panels were required by the department's landlord. DTI explained that its spending on non-certified products was 'purchased because of operational requirements.'

Figure 9: Departments' use of recycled desk-top paper in 2002-03 versus 2001-02



**Some departments make extensive use of recycled paper, but several major departments use very little.**

Source: SDiG reports for 2001-02 and 2002-03

46. Most (15) departments report that they take account of the EU energy-labelling scheme for **electrical products** in procurement decisions, although they do not report on the outcome of their purchasing decisions. DCMS and ONS do not provide a response to this question. CO, ECGD and MoD do not use the scheme but do not say whether they use any alternative guidelines.

47. The majority (15) of departments have action plans for sustainable **food** procurement. Such plans may include, for example, a commitment to increase opportunities for small and local suppliers to compete for catering contracts. FCO and ODPM do not provide a response to this question and ECGD, IR and LOD do not have such action plans.

### **Estates management**

48. Framework targets for estates management are not yet published. In the absence of these, the SDiG report 2003 monitors departments' environmental assessments of construction projects, use of polluting substances in air conditioning systems, and use of so-called 'quick wins' for energy efficient products.

49. For **construction projects**, departments are required to apply an environmental assessment such as the Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) to new build and refurbishment activities. Most departments' new construction projects have met this target and achieved the required BREEAM approval rating:

- 11 Departments have used BREEAM and nine of those have achieved a rating of 'excellent' or 'very good'. The other two departments are awaiting results.
- The target for this area requires that all new build projects achieve an 'excellent' rating and all refurbishment projects achieve 'very good'. Due to the lack of distinction in the questionnaire between new build and refurbishment projects, it cannot be confirmed if all nine departments have achieved the target. However, given the ratings reported, at least five departments have definitely met the target, and the remaining four may have also met the target or are very close to doing so.

50. For **air conditioning systems**, departments are required to eliminate the use of ozone depleting substances and substances that contribute to climate change, wherever possible. There is a moderate level of success in this area:

- Of the 15 departments who installed new air conditioning systems or refurbished existing systems,
  - Eight have confirmed that such systems were free of HCFCs or HFCs<sup>44</sup>.
  - The remaining seven have provided varying degrees of explanation. For example, DfID said that the refurbishment of its East Kilbride office involved using an HFC product because "...the only available alternatives carry their own hazards and were not deemed viable."

51. '**Quick wins**' refer to a list drawn up by the Government of products which meet minimal environmental standards, such as energy saving personal computers and lightbulbs and biodegradable detergents. All departments, with the exception of HMT and HO have made some progress in implementing 'quick wins'. The progress made varies, from providing contractors with details of the potential quick wins on the one hand, to incorporating quick wins directly into departments' procurement processes on the other.

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<sup>44</sup> Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) were introduced as a replacement for chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) for use in aerosol cans, refrigerators and air conditioners, since CFCs had been shown to contribute to the breakdown of the Earth's ozone layer, which protects us from harmful ultraviolet rays from the sun. Although HFCs have no impact on the ozone layer, they are relatively potent 'greenhouse gases' which contribute to climate change. Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) are similar to CFCs but have a lower potential for depleting ozone and in some cases are being used as transitional replacements.

## Annex A: Abbreviations

### *Department names*

C&E	Customs and Excise
CO	Cabinet Office
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DfID	Department for International Development
DfT	Department for Transport
DoH	Department of Health
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
ECGD	Export Credits Guarantee Department
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
HMT	HM Treasury
HO	Home Office
IR	Inland Revenue
LCD	Lord Chancellor's Department (now the Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA)).
LOD	Law Officer's Department
MoD	Ministry of Defence
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
ONS	Office of National Statistics

### *Other abbreviations*

BRE	Buildings Research Establishment
BREEAM	Buildings Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method
CHP	Combined Heat and Power
EMS	Environmental Management System
Framework	the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate
HCFC	hydrochlorofluorocarbon
HFC	hydrofluorocarbon
NAO	National Audit Office
NDPB	Non-departmental Public Body
LPG	liquefied petroleum gas
SDiG	Sustainable Development in Government
SDU	Sustainable Development Unit (within Defra)

## Formal minutes

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**Wednesday 7 July 2004**

Members present:

Mr Peter Ainsworth, in the Chair

Mr David Chaytor

Mr Malcolm Savidge

Sue Doughty

Mr Simon Thomas

Mr Paul Flynn

Joan Walley

Mr Mark Francois

The Committee deliberated.

Draft Report (Greening Government 2004), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

*Ordered*, That the Chairman's draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 47 read and agreed to.

*Resolved*, That the Report be the Eighth Report of the Committee to the House.

*Ordered*, That the Chairman do make the Report to the House.

A paper was ordered to be appended to the Report.

*Ordered*, That the provisions of Standing Order No. 134 (Select Committees (reports)) be applied to the Report.

*Ordered*, That the Appendix to the Report be reported to the House.

[Adjourned till Wednesday 21 July at 10am.]

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# Past reports from the Environmental Audit Committee since 1997

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## 2003-04 Session

First	Annual Report 2003, HC 214
Second	GM Foods – Evaluating the Farm Scale Trials, HC 90
Third	Pre-Budget Report 2003: Aviation follow-up, HC 233
Fourth	Water: The Periodic Review 2004 and the Environmental Programme, HC 416
Fifth	GM Foods – Evaluating the Farm Scale Trials, HC 564
Sixth	Environmental Crime and the Court, HC 126
Seventh	Aviation: Sustainability and the Government Response, HC 623

## 2002-03 Session

First	Pesticides: The Voluntary Initiative, HC100 ( <i>Reply, HC 443</i> )
Second	Johannesburg and Back: The World Summit on Sustainable Development–Committee delegation report on proceedings, HC 169
Third	Annual Report, HC 262
Fourth	Pre-Budget 2002, HC 167 ( <i>Reply, HC 688</i> )
Fifth	Waste – An Audit, HC 99 ( <i>Reply, HC 1081</i> )
Sixth	Buying Time for Forests: Timber Trade and Public Procurement - The Government Response, HC 909
Seventh	Export Credits Guarantee Department and Sustainable Development, HC 689 ( <i>Reply, HC 1238</i> )
Eighth	Energy White Paper – Empowering Change?, HC 618
Ninth	Budget 2003 and Aviation, HC 672 ( <i>Reply, Cm 6063</i> )
Tenth	Learning the Sustainability Lesson, HC 472 ( <i>Reply, HC 1221</i> )
Eleventh	Sustainable Development Headline Indicators, HC 1080 ( <i>Reply, HC 320</i> )
Twelfth	World Summit for Sustainable Development – From rhetoric to reality, HC 98 ( <i>Reply, HC 232</i> )
Thirteenth	Greening Government 2003, HC 961

## 2001-02 Session

First	Departmental Responsibilities for Sustainable Development, HC 326 ( <i>Reply, Cm 5519</i> )
Second	Pre-Budget Report 2001: <i>A New Agenda?</i> , HC 363 ( <i>HC 1000</i> )
Third	UK Preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, HC 616 ( <i>Reply, Cm 5558</i> )
Fourth	Measuring the Quality of Life: The Sustainable Development Headline Indicators, HC 824 ( <i>Reply, Cm 5650</i> )
Fifth	A Sustainable Energy Strategy? Renewables and the PIU Review, HC 582 ( <i>Reply, HC 471</i> )
Sixth	Buying Time for Forests: <i>Timber Trade and Public Procurement</i> , HC 792-I , ( <i>Reply, HC 909, Session 2002-03</i> )

## 2000-01 Session

First	Environmental Audit: <i>the first Parliament</i> , HC 67 ( <i>Reply, Cm 5098</i> )
Second	The Pre-Budget Report 2000: <i>fuelling the debate</i> , HC 71 ( <i>Reply HC 216, Session 2001-02</i> )

### 1999-2000 Session

First	EU Policy and the Environment: An Agenda for the Helsinki Summit, HC 44 ( <i>Reply, HC 68</i> )
Second	World Trade and Sustainable Development: An Agenda for the Seattle Summit, HC 45 (Including the Government response to the First Report 1998-99: Multilateral Agreement on Investment, HC 58) ( <i>Reply, HC 69</i> )
Third	Comprehensive Spending Review: Government response and follow-up, HC 233 ( <i>Reply, HC 70, Session 2000-01</i> )
Fourth	The Pre-Budget Report 1999: pesticides, aggregates and the Climate Change Levy, HC 76
Fifth	The Greening Government Initiative: first annual report from the Green Ministers Committee 1998/99, HC 341
Sixth	Budget 2000 and the Environment etc., HC 404
Seventh	Water Prices and the Environment, HC 597 ( <i>Reply, HC 290, Session 2000-01</i> )

### 1998-99 Session

First	The Multilateral Agreement on Investment, HC 58 ( <i>Reply, HC 45, Session 1999-2000</i> )
Second	Climate Change: Government response and follow-up, HC 88
Third	The Comprehensive Spending Review and Public Service Agreements, HC 92 ( <i>Reply, HC 233, Session 1999-2000</i> )
Fourth	The Pre-Budget Report 1998, HC 93
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