



## Chapter 3: Other items of interest

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### Key facts

- carbon emissions from offices have reduced by over 11 per cent;
- we launched four full public consultations in 2008-09;
- we provided about £320 million of ESF funding to projects which helped over 800,000 people improve their employability and skills; and
- we answered over 17,000 letters to ministers from members of the public.

## Sustainability

85. The Department's sustainable development strategy and targets are set out in our *Sustainable Development Action Plan 2007-2010*<sup>14</sup>. Progress against the plan was published in the *2008 Sustainable Development Annual Report*<sup>15</sup>.
86. Working with our partners, Trillium, a key priority has been to reduce carbon emissions from energy consumption. Energy-saving projects continue, such as installing under-sink water heaters and low energy lighting. We are continuing feasibility studies into combined heat and power installations, although some micro-generation options have proved not to be financially viable. In the first nine months of 2008-09 energy consumption fell by 14 per cent in our largest 300 Trillium buildings (which consume 75 per cent of total DWP energy) compared to 2005-06 and in the last year carbon emissions from offices have reduced by over 11 per cent.
87. In the past year a series of targeted internal communications to staff has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of staff using their own cars for business travel and an increase in the use of telephone conferencing by approximately 23 per cent compared to the same ten-month period of the previous year. Work continues with suppliers, seeking low emission vehicles and conversion of some air routes to rail only.
88. Procurement of sustainable goods and services is becoming firmly embedded by the application of the Department's mandatory Sustainable Procurement Risk Assessment Methodology to all new and existing contracts. Engagement with suppliers has encouraged examination of the supply chain, spreading sustainability beyond the bounds of the Department and influencing the wider community.
89. Active staff participation in management of waste and recycling has meant that the target to increase waste recycling to 40 per cent of our waste by 2010 has already been exceeded. In February 2009 our recycled figure was 66 per cent, a two percentage point increase on 2007-08.

### DWP Swap Shop

Hailed as best practice across government, the Department's intranet-hosted swap shop is helping to redistribute surplus or unwanted goods across the Department, saving money and avoiding unnecessary waste being sent to landfill. The Sustainable Development Commission has highlighted the DWP swap shop as a case study in the 2008 report *Sustainable Development in Government*<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.dwp.gov.uk/sus-dev/2007/502273\\_DWP\\_SusDev\\_AnRpt\\_AW2.pdf](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/sus-dev/2007/502273_DWP_SusDev_AnRpt_AW2.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/sus-dev/2008/annual-report-2008.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/publications/downloads/SDiG\\_REPORT\\_08.pdf](http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/publications/downloads/SDiG_REPORT_08.pdf)

## Better regulation

### Introduction

90. The Department is not a major regulatory department, and the majority of its regulation involves social security benefits. Nevertheless, the Department is committed to reducing the burdens it places on all its customers wherever possible. We develop policy and services to ensure that, when we regulate, we do so with a light touch and in a way that does not create unnecessary burdens for business, customers or staff.
91. The Department's better regulation activity is focused on:
- ensuring that new legislation, including EU legislation, strikes the right balance between avoiding unnecessary burdens and protecting the interests of citizens;
  - simplifying policies and processes as they are developed; and
  - reducing existing burdens whenever possible.

### Governance

92. The Department's Better Regulation Minister promotes the better regulation agenda at ministerial level in the Department. At board level, the Director General of Strategy, Information and Pensions oversees better regulation in the Department.
93. The Better Regulation Stakeholder Group, chaired by the Better Regulation Minister, enables the Department to work with its major stakeholders on better regulation and benefit structure issues. The Group includes representatives from employers' organisations, large and small businesses, trades unions and the voluntary sector, and engages directly with policy officials, especially on administrative burden reductions and simplification.

### Administrative burdens

94. The *2008 Simplification Plan*<sup>17</sup> shows that we have already exceeded our target to reduce the administrative burden of regulation by 25 per cent between 2005 and 2010. To achieve this target it was necessary to reduce the administrative burden of regulation by £118 million per annum, net of any increases brought about by new regulation.
95. We delivered administrative burden reductions of £69 million per annum in 2008 through changes to regulation relating to employers' liability compulsory insurance, statutory sick pay and occupational pensions. We have now delivered cumulative net reductions totalling £136 million per annum, a reduction of 29 per cent since 2005.

<sup>17</sup> [http://www.dwp.gov.uk/aboutus/better\\_regulation/simplification-plan-08.pdf](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/aboutus/better_regulation/simplification-plan-08.pdf)

96. The Department's agencies and independent regulators and the Health and Safety Executive also follow the principles of better regulation. The Pensions Regulator was established in line with the principles of the Hampton report, *Reducing administrative burdens: effective inspections and enforcement*, and this has ensured that work-based pension regulation uses a flexible and proportionate regulatory approach.

## Impact assessments

97. The Department continues to achieve full compliance with the impact assessment process. The process has been embedded into the Department's policy development process, with increased involvement of economists, so providing an important focus on the costs and benefits of proposals.
98. During 2008-09, one Bill was introduced to Parliament and 99 orders and sets of regulations were brought forward, but not all required an impact assessment because they did not have a significant impact on business, charities or the voluntary sector. Six full impact assessments (five of which related to reduced burdens) were published by the Department.

## Working with others

99. DWP consultations, and the Government's response to the comments received, are published on the Department's website.
100. The Department launched four full public consultations in the year ending 31 March 2009, each of which complied with the Cabinet Office's code of practice on consultation<sup>18</sup>. In nine other instances, in line with best practice from the code, Ministers exercised their discretion to conduct limited consultation exercises for more specialised issues or where proposals had been subject to a previous full public consultation.
101. The Department continues to apply the Government's policy that domestic regulation which impacts on business should commence on one of two dates (6 April and 1 October) each year. It is, however, sometimes necessary to introduce legislation slightly earlier than 6 April in order to tie in with the commencement of the Pension Protection Fund's accounting year (1 April).

## International work

102. The Department plays a key role in representing the UK's interests in the European Union (EU) and the wider international community. The Department has overall budget and management responsibility for European Social Fund (ESF) programmes in England which support policies that seek to achieve employment opportunity for all in England. Policy responsibility for the programme is shared with the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, through the Joint International Unit (JIU).

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<sup>18</sup> DWP consultations: [www.dwp.gov.uk/resourcecentre/consultation\\_papers.asp](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/resourcecentre/consultation_papers.asp)

103. JIU supports the three departments in supporting and promoting the Government's policies on education, skills and employment, and social policy. It also helps to ensure that those developing new domestic policy are informed about what works in other countries. The Unit also provides advice on our EU and international legal obligations.

## Representation

104. During 2008-09 the Department has:

- worked within the EU and with other countries to share practical approaches to common challenges, such as extending working lives to manage an ageing population, tackling the causes of poverty, and responding to the economic crisis;
- negotiated EU legislation, including: Social Security Coordination, which has now been agreed in principle, changes to the European Globalisation Fund, and a directive on spouses of the self-employed;
- responded on the UK's behalf to the European Commission's renewed Social Agenda, which contributes to debate around the European economic agenda after 2010, and the EU budget post-2013;
- as part of the EU's jobs and growth strategy, secured recognition of national measures for unemployed people and the need for increasing skills levels, including a commitment to a regularly updated European Skills Assessment;
- represented the UK at International Labour Organisation (ILO) negotiations on the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation. This has now been adopted and will influence ILO activity, particularly through the Decent Work Agenda; and
- supported the UK Government's interests through the work of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Council of Europe, United Nations, G8 and G20, including organising an International Jobs Conference before the London Summit of G20 countries.

## Managing the European Social Fund (ESF)

105. During 2008-09 the Department has:

- provided about £320 million of ESF funding to projects to complete work under the 2000-2006 programme. These projects helped over 800,000 people improve their employability and skills. About 55 per cent of participants were in work or entered further training when they completed their ESF-funded provision;
- allocated about £770 million of ESF funding to 750 new projects which will operate in the first half of the 2007-2013 programme. Most of the projects are co-financed by the Department and the Learning and Skills Council. They are addressing two key priorities: extending employment opportunities to disadvantaged people, and developing a skilled and adaptable workforce; and

- made available a further £158 million of ESF funding from the current programme for projects to provide employment advice and re-training to people affected by the economic downturn.

“Becky registered with the [Seeing the Potential] project having minimal work experience. The Royal National Institute of the Blind made regular appointments with Becky to provide assistance with application forms and cover letters.”

**Diane Sullivan, employment officer on Becky Kenton**

“I started a voluntary placement in an office and three months later, I had gained the skills and confidence to secure a full-time job as a trainee administration assistant.”

**Becky Kenton, 19 years old and visually impaired, in August 2008 enrolled in the ESF-funded Seeing the Potential project**

## Citizen redress and complaints to the Ombudsman

### DWP complaint resolution

106. The Department’s agencies have well-developed processes for dealing with complaints, but continue to work towards improving awareness and accessibility of the complaints process. Details of how to complain and arrangements for redress are included on agency websites and in leaflets which are available from Jobcentre Plus, the Pension, Disability and Carers Service and local Citizens Advice Bureaux. Agency websites explain how customer feedback is being used to improve service delivery.
107. In 2008-09, the Department recorded 87,760 complaints (of which 16,386 relate to the Child Support Agency which, from 1 November 2008, has come under the authority of the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission). Most complaints are quickly resolved at a local level but where this does not prove possible they can be escalated. The most common categories of complaints were<sup>19</sup>:

For the Pension, Disability and Carers Service:

1. You take too long (1,209)
2. You got it wrong (921)
3. You haven’t given me the information for my needs (311)

For Jobcentre Plus:

1. Follow up – this is when the customer is not satisfied with the initial response to the complaint or will not accept the initial response (826)
2. Incapacity Benefit (412)
3. Benefit entitlement (general, all benefits) (395)

<sup>19</sup> Jobcentre Plus complaints categories are not comparable with PDCS ones. For 2009-10 both agencies are recording in the same way and this will be reported next year.

108. A customer who remains dissatisfied after receiving a final response from the Agency can ask the Department's independent complaints reviewer, the Independent Case Examiner (ICE), to investigate.
109. In 2008-09 the ICE dealt with 1,686 complaints including 1,251 complaints about the Child Support Agency. In 1,086 (64 per cent) of those cases, the ICE brokered an agreement between the parties, removing the need to carry out a full investigation. Of the remaining 600, ICE fully or partially upheld 247 (41 per cent).
110. Each Agency compensates customers for additional costs, losses or other effects of maladministration. In 2008-09, 27,305 ex gratia compensation awards totalling £7 million were made under these arrangements.

## Complaints to the Ombudsman

111. In her annual report published in October 2008, the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman reported that in 2007-08 her office had received 2,574 complaints about the Department for Work and Pensions. Not all complaints referred to the Ombudsman are investigated: for example because they are referred prematurely, are outside the Ombudsman's jurisdiction, show no evidence of injustice resulting from maladministration or were resolved without recourse to full investigation. In 2007-08 the Ombudsman investigated and reported on 118 complaints about the Department.

**Figure 6: Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman's Annual Report 2007-08**

Department or Agency	Complaints reported on by the Ombudsman	Percentage of complaints fully or partly upheld
Jobcentre Plus	52	67
Child Support Agency	28	90
The Pension Service	13	69
Debt Management	8	88
Independent Case Examiner	7	14
Disability and Carers Service	6	66
Department for Work and Pensions	2	50
Health and Safety Executive	2	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>71</b>

The Ombudsman's report provides further detail<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> [http://www.ombudsman.org.uk/improving\\_services/annual\\_reports/index.html](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk/improving_services/annual_reports/index.html)

## Consultancy and staff substitutes

112. The Department's consultancy and interim personnel spend reduced steadily between 2003-04 and 2007-08. Reported expenditure increased in 2008-09 because figures for Directgov and Government Connect, previously attributed to the Cabinet Office, are included, as are one-off costs associated with setting up the Personal Accounts Delivery Authority and the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission.

**Figure 7: Departmental expenditure (including VAT) on externally acquired staff resources**

Description	2003-04 (million)	2004-05 (million)	2005-06 (million)	2006-07 (million)	2007-08 (million)	2008-09 (million)
Management Consultancy	223.4	98.6	77.6	116.8	47.4	72.8
IT Consultancy	83.4	69.7	52.7	45.9	29.1	22.4
Interims (Staff Substitutions)	51.5	53.0	53.0	62.0	30.3	57
Professional Services	54.3	104.7	7.7	31.2	18.9	18.9
Casuals/Temps		19.6	19.6	14.7	6.5	3.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>412.6</b>	<b>345.6</b>	<b>210.6</b>	<b>270.5</b>	<b>132.2</b>	<b>174.8</b>

## Sponsorship

113. Government departments are required to publish details in their annual reports of any sponsorship received which exceeds £5,000. During 2008-09 the Department received sponsorship of around £6,900 from Royal British Legion Industries and around £7,000 from Work Directions. Both organisations contributed towards the costs of a number of launch events for provider-led Pathways to Work programmes.

## Ministerial correspondence from members of the public

114. When a member of the public writes to one of the Department's Ministers, the letter may be replied to by an official on their behalf. Between January and December 2008, 17,331 replies were sent on behalf of Ministers, of which 72 per cent were sent within the target of 20 working days.

## Communications and marketing

115. The Department's communications strategy centred on four key challenges:

- supporting people back to work;
- planning and saving for later life;
- ensuring our customers claim the benefits they are entitled to and are discouraged from making fraudulent claims; and
- engaging employers, staff and stakeholders in support of our DSOs and how the Department is changing.

116. In 2008-09 the strategy was delivered through marketing campaigns, publication of magazines, reports and White Papers that supported delivery of the Department's strategic objectives, and conferences, including a major Jobs Summit in January 2009, hosted by the Prime Minister and attended by over 125 employers, business representatives and skills providers.

117. Other major achievements in 2008-09 include:

- persuading more of our customers to seek, progress and stay in work, through our Lone Parent and Job Search campaigns;
- challenging the attitudes of employers towards disabled people or those with health conditions through our Employability campaign;

- delivering a groundbreaking, multi-media 'Find your way back to work' campaign, which is helping people acquire the training and support they need to move from benefits back into work. The campaign recognises the need to communicate with a new set of customers because the current downturn affects people who have not traditionally been customers of Jobcentre Plus;



- supporting the launch of the new Employment and Support Allowance, ensuring our staff and customers understand the new benefit;
- continuing the successful campaign to target benefit fraud and abuse by re-launching the campaign – 'We're closing in'; and
- improving communications with our staff. Year on year the percentage of staff who feel they are well informed continues to increase; this year alone there was a 14 percentage point increase. Our security awareness campaign proved to be a significant success with 94 per cent of respondents being aware of security policies and how to put them into practice.

Figure 8: Major publicity campaigns costing over £500,000 during 2008-09

Campaign	Aim	Expenditure
We're closing in	Targeting benefit thieves	£5.9m
Local Employment Partnerships	Tackling the increasing recruitment and skills challenges of our labour market and economy	£1.8m
Find your way back to work	Getting people back into work quickly, even in the economic downturn	£2.3m
Employment Support Allowance	Helping customers understand the new benefit	£1.7m
Employability	Assisting people with disabilities into employment	£2.6m
Pensioners' Entitlements Take Up	Increasing pensioners' take-up of benefits	£0.8m

## Information security

118. In the last year the Department has introduced significant additional measures to further improve information security. Many of the measures stem from the Cabinet Office review *Data Handling Procedures in Government: Final Report*<sup>21</sup> in June 2008, which introduced an associated framework of new minimum mandatory requirements for all departments.
119. During 2008-09, we introduced new controls over the physical transfer of data on removable media. These controls were extended to service providers as well as the Department's own staff. All laptops issued to staff have been encrypted, and non-encrypted devices are prevented from connecting to the Department's infrastructure.
120. The Department's Senior Information Risk Owner is a member of the Executive Team who has particular responsibility for information risk across the Department. The Department has also designated Information Asset Owners (IAOs), senior managers who are responsible for information assurance in their respective business areas. IAOs understand risks to the information held and moved in their area, and are working with the Senior Information Risk Owner to ensure that a co-ordinated approach on improved assurance is taken across the Department. The Information Security Committee, a sub-committee of the Department's Executive Team, drives forward this activity and other continuing improvements in the security of information.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/65948/dhr080625.pdf>

### Security awareness

The Department has developed security awareness training courses and conducted a high-profile campaign to raise awareness of security among all staff. Basic messages such as using secure courier services to move personal data and handling electronic data securely have been promoted in a co-ordinated series of communications which have been received positively by staff. In our recent internal survey, 94 per cent of staff said that they were aware of and were putting into practice DWP's data security policies, and 84 per cent had received training in data handling and security.