SDC Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP) assessment

Organisation: Department for Work and Pensions
Title of SDAP: Sustainable Development Annual Report 2007 + Action Plan 2007-10

SDAP Publication date: October 2007
SDC Assessment date: March 2009

(This assessment also takes into account DWP's Sustainable Development Annual Report 2008 which includes DWP's annual progress report and an update on their 2007-2010 SDAP, published in December 2008.)

Please see "SDAP assessment methodology paper" for background to the assessment process, and for full details of how the Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) has assessed, scored and rated this SDAP at the following webpage: http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/pages/sdap-tracker.html.

SUMMARY

	Score	Rating
Coverage	3/4	
Strategic planning	10/12	
Actions	9/12	
Ownership, engagement and delivery	4/6	
Monitoring, review and reporting	5/6	
OVERALL	31/40	

ISSUES AND RISKS

The actions set out in this SDAP clearly indicate a strong, ongoing commitment from DWP to mainstream sustainable development into its people, policies and working practices. In particular, the DWP is clearly seeking to drive progress and become a leader on sustainable procurement. Initiatives here include the development of its Sustainable Procurement Implementation Group (SPIG).

The DWP needs to build on such initiatives with far stronger measures to engage staff on sustainable development in general and the SDAP process in particular. Actively increasing staff understanding of sustainable development and encouraging them to input directly into their team's contribution to the SDAP process is vital in gaining their buy-in, and in ensuring that they consider how their everyday work impacts on, and can contribute to, sustainable development. DWP should explore and pilot a variety of approaches for developing its staff engagement strategy, including through the Trade Unions and the intranet.

DWP'S RESPONSE

"DWP remains committed to sustainability and welcomes the feedback on its 2007-10 Action Plan. The Department's policies are integral to a strong, healthy and just society, and the scale of our operations impact a number of environmental areas. We have made significant progress since the plan was completed, detailed within our SD Annual Report for 2008. For example, our revised governance arrangements are working well and giving the impetus for real improvements, our Sustainable Procurement Risk Assessment Methodology is widely used within tendering exercises and contract management, and we have embedded sustainability within the new European Social Fund. The introduction of the Carbon Reduction Commitment and carbon budgets reinforce the need to embed sustainability into all we do. We continue to focus on engagement and awareness raising with staff as one of our priorities. Communicating to such a large audience remains a challenge, however we are working with communications professionals and all our businesses to deliver key messages in an engaging way to the wide variety of audiences within the Department. We aim to publish our next SD Action Plan by April 2010, building on our achievements to date and developing them for the future". (DWP, May 2009).

COVERAGE			
Score	**0**	**1**	**2**
1. Does the SDAP state clearly the period of time that it covers?			X
2. Is it clear how the SDAP relates to the wider departmental family, and is SDAP coverage of the departmental family adequate?		X	

STRATEGIC PLANNING			
Score	**0**	**1**	**2**
3. Does the SDAP set out the organisation's strategy for contributing to the aims, objectives and commitments of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy?			X
4. Does the SDAP articulate the relevance of the five sustainable development principles to its core business, and set out how they are/will be mainstreamed and inform work?		X	
5. Is it clear how the SDAP will contribute to the organisation's high-level strategic objectives, including any Public Service Agreements (PSAs) and Departmental Strategic Objectives (DSOs)?		X	
6. Does the SDAP have clear objectives, and does it articulate clearly how these objectives were selected and provide a rationale for any gaps e.g. in the coverage of core business areas?			X
7. Does the SDAP link to other corporate plans or strategies?			X
8. Does the SDAP include any commitment to work with other organisations or government bodies to deliver joint commitments, actions or initiatives?			X

ACTIONS			
Score	**0**	**1**	**2**
9. Does the SDAP articulate how the sustainable development principles and priorities are/will be integrated into its policy and decision making, set out specific actions to achieve this, and explain how these actions have been selected?			X
10. Does the SDAP include explicit actions to improve the sustainability of the organisation's procurement activity (linking to SPAP commitments where relevant), and explain how they have been selected?			X
11. Does the SDAP contain specific actions which demonstrate how the organisation will drive forward the sustainability of its operations (linking to SOGE commitments where relevant), and explain how they have been selected?			X

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		Score	0	1	2
12.	Does the SDAP contain actions relating to people, such as actions to engage staff in sustainable development, develop their skills and capability to support delivery of the SDAP, and to improve their general well-being in the work place?			X	
13.	Are the actions outcome-focused?			X	
14.	Are the actions SMART?			X	

OWNERSHIP, ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY					
		Score	0	1	2
15.	Is it clear how the SDAP will be communicated to staff and stakeholders, and how the organisation will ensure they have the capability to put the SDAP's key messages to work?			X	
16.	Are the governance arrangements for supporting delivery of the SDAP clearly identified (e.g. boards, working groups), and is it clear who has overall responsibility for its delivery?			X	
17.	Has the SDAP been signed off by a Minister, Permanent Secretary or Chief Executive, and has s/he provided a foreword?				X

MONITORING, REVIEW AND REPORTING					
		Score	0	1	2
18.	Does the SDAP present links to the previous SDAP (where relevant) or to the historical context of sustainable development in the organisation (if this is the first SDAP that the organisation has produced)?				X
19.	Are the methods and structures for monitoring and reviewing the SDAP clearly identified (e.g. boards, working groups, stakeholder engagement), and is it clear who the findings will be reported to?			X	
20.	Is it clear how the outcomes of internal SDAP monitoring/review will feed back into the SDAP process, including a commitment to update the SDAP within its period of coverage, where required?				X

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