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2006 Sustainable Development Action Plan Progress Report

Veterinary Medicines Directorate
With SDC Commentary
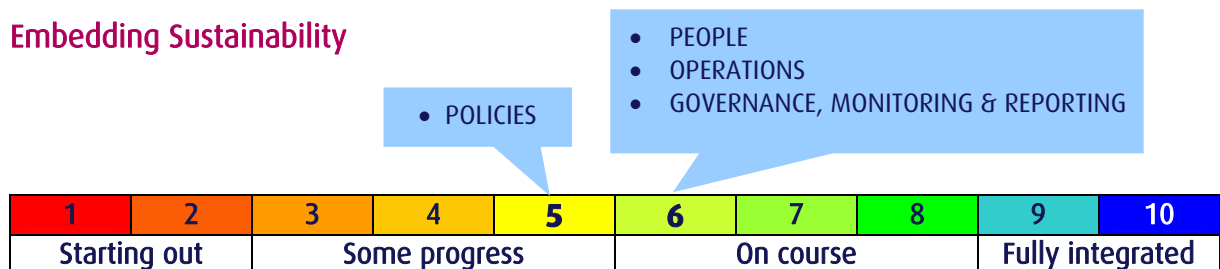
November 2007

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VETERINARY MEDICINES DIRECTORATE'S SELF-ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

This is a summary of VMD's progress report; the full version begins on page 6.
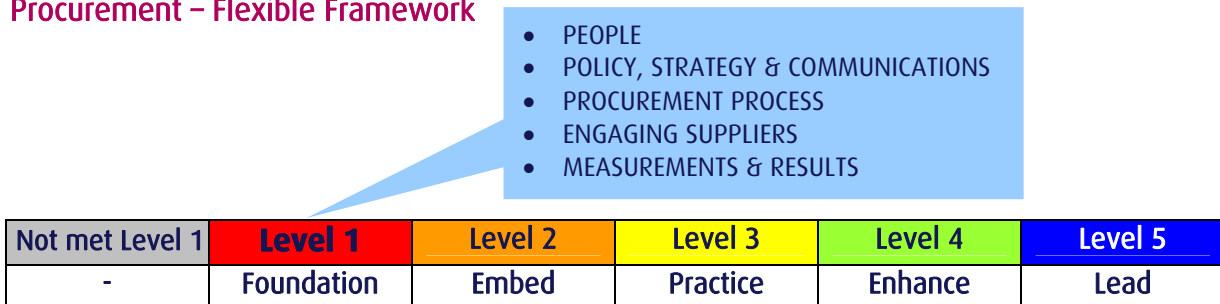
The Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). It aims to protect public health, animal health, and the environment by assuring the safety, quality and efficacy of veterinary medicines. VMD incorporates SD through its aim to promote a sustainable, but competitive and safe, food supply chain which meets consumers' requirements.

Progress against actions: 78% of actions were reported as complete or on target.

Embedding Sustainability

- PEOPLE
- OPERATIONS
- GOVERNANCE, MONITORING & REPORTING

- POLICIES

1	2	3	4	**5**	6	7	8	9	10
Starting out		Some progress			On course			Fully integrated	

Procurement – Flexible Framework

- PEOPLE
- POLICY, STRATEGY & COMMUNICATIONS
- PROCUREMENT PROCESS
- ENGAGING SUPPLIERS
- MEASUREMENTS & RESULTS

Not met Level 1	**Level 1**	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
-	Foundation	Embed	Practice	Enhance	Lead

SDC'S SUMMARY COMMENTS

This is a summary of SDC's commentary; the full version begins on page 4.

VMD indicated good progress against its SDAP commitments, but less progress on embedding sustainable development into the organisation in terms of its policies, people and operations.

Strengths:

- Track record on completing Environmental Impact Assessments and Regulatory Impact Assessments
- Commitment to set out improvement plans for embedding SD in its next SDAP.

Weaknesses:

- Lack of rationale to show how it had assessed the impact of its actions, and to support its ratings on embedding SD
- Very limited assessment of how it was performing on procurement
- Lack of internal capacity to deliver the plan.

Challenges for next year's SDAP progress report:

- Provide more rationale to support progress ratings
- More detailed assessment of progress on procurement.

INTRODUCTION

Government has made it clear that it wants the public sector to be a leading exponent of sustainable development (SD). The UK SD strategy, *Securing the Future*,[1] requires all central government Departments and their Executive Agencies (EAs) to produce Sustainable Development Action Plans (SDAPs) and report progress on them regularly. An SDAP sets out the strategic actions that the organisation intends to take to integrate sustainable development into its decision-making and everyday operations. It thereby helps the organisation make its required contribution to the delivery of the Government's commitments and goals set out in *Securing the Future*.

Securing the Future also empowers the Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) to act as the Government's watchdog for sustainable development. This includes "scrutinising and reporting on Government's performance on sustainable development".

Most Departments published their first SDAP in 2006. These plans contained commitments for 2006/07, and the SDC is now reporting on progress made by Departments against those commitments.

The purpose of progress reporting is three-fold:

1. To see what progress had been made against the first plans
2. To encourage Departments and others to evaluate the quality, purpose and contribution of their SDAPs, as well as the individual actions and policies, in regards to the UK's SD goals
3. To strengthen the quality of future SDAPs and reporting by identifying strengths, weaknesses and priority areas for improvement.

To help Departments and EAs produce quality progress reports, the SDC designed a self-assessment guidance tool. The tool covers the following areas:

- **Progress against actions:** Report progress against 2006/07 commitments and against any significant actions that did not feature in the original SDAP
- Consider the impact of actions and the contribution these actions would make to the SD "shared priorities for immediate action"[2] (from here on referred to as the "SD shared priorities")
- **Embedding sustainability:** Consider how well SD had been embedded into policies, people, operations and reporting mechanisms
- **Procurement:** Gauge progress on sustainable procurement against the criteria in the Flexible Framework[3] or a suitable alternative
- **Taking stock:** Identify what had helped and hindered the organisation in delivering its SDAP.

This report comprises the SDC's commentary, followed by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate's (VMD's) full progress report.[4]

The SDC's commentary evaluates the progress reported by VMD, as well as the quality of its self-assessment.[5] All ratings/levels reported are the organisation's own judgement of performance, and there was no process of external verification by the SDC.

The commentary does not review the content of the original SDAP. As such, comments should not be taken as an endorsement of actions and policies pursued. The SDC has already commented on Departments' first SDAPs and provided summarised assessments in the 2006 report *Off the Starting Block*.[6]

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[1] *Securing the Future – Delivering the UK Sustainable Development Strategy*, HM Government, March 2005.

[2] The SD shared priorities for immediate action, as outlined in *Securing the Future,* are: sustainable consumption and production, climate change and energy, natural resource protection and environmental enhancement, and sustainable communities.

[3] *Procuring the Future*, Defra, June 2006 – see Section 2 for more details.

[4] Reported progress against: *Sustainable Development Action Plan,* VMD, December 2005.

[5] Please see SDAP Progress Report methodology paper – www.sd-commission.org.uk.

[6] *Off the Starting Block*, Sustainable Development Commission, November 2006.

SDC'S COMMENTARY

Progress against actions

The Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) reported good progress against the actions in its 2006 SDAP.

- 78% of actions were complete or on target
- Evidence of progress was provided against all the SDAP actions, and was readily available in all instances
- All of the high impact actions were reported as either complete or on target.

VMD considered that its actions as a whole made a good contribution to the SD shared priorities. However, no rationale for any impact rating was provided for the actions. **The SDC would like to see how VMD is considering the impacts of its actions.**

For actions which were behind target, information was provided on what had been done, but there was no explanation of why the target was missed.

Embedding sustainability

VMD considered it was "on course" for embedding SD into *people*, *operations*, and mechanisms for *governance, monitoring and reporting*. On the latter:

- Progress against the plan was reviewed quarterly by the Management Board. The SDC would be interested to see how this worked in practice, and whether it had helped with the delivery of the plan
- Progress was reported in the Annual Report and Accounts
- Operational aspects were reviewed at fortnightly Core Services work-plan meetings.

In terms of embedding SD into *people*, VMD reported that it had recruitment, training and development systems in place accredited under 'Investors in People' (IiP); had a range of internal communication tools; had high levels of staff satisfaction; and supported and encouraged

fundraising and volunteering activities. However, it was not reported how SD was included in these activities, or how it aimed to embed sustainable development within the organisation. **The SDC would like to see clearer links with SD in future progress reports and action plans, and evidence of more active 'engagement' of staff with the agency's SD agenda.**

On *operations*, VMD provided some evidence on recycling, procurement and travel, but this was not sufficient to support its self-assessment of "on course". **The SDC would like to see evidence of the systems in place to record, monitor and report on operational outputs, which underpin plans for improvement**. It welcomes the decision of VMD to explore how it could work together with VLA, with whom it shares the site. The SDC looks forward to hearing how both agencies work together in future to bring about operational improvements.

VMD reported that it had made "some progress" in embedding SD into *policies*, including:

- Provided advice and guidance based on sound science and risk-based decision-making
- Assessed the environmental, social and economic impacts of all new VMD policy proposals, and included these in formal Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIAs)
- Working with the Environment Agency, VMD engaged effectively with a range of stakeholders (industry, farmers' representatives and conservation groups), to develop a Pollution Reduction Programme for sheep dip.

The following 2006/07 SDAP policy commitments were not completed:

- Testing RIAs against Defra's Stretching the Web software
- Assessing new projects against the five guiding principles of *Securing the Future*. VMD reported that it did not consciously assess projects against the SD Strategy guiding principles, but that they were implicit in the way it did business. The SDC would encourage VMD to assess new projects in

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order to ensure adherence to the principles and reinforce their importance to delivering SD.

The SDC welcomes VMD's commitment to improve embedding SD into its policies, people and operations in its next SDAP. In particular, it looks forward to seeing how VMD further embeds SD into decision-making, and aligns its policies with SD Strategy priorities and objectives.

Procurement

The section of the report on procurement was poor. VMD placed itself at the "foundation" level of the Flexible Framework for all themes. However, there was no commentary to outline any of VMD's major accomplishments against the criteria, or what held it back. Instead, a short paragraph was provided, stating that it purchased recycled stationery and used local suppliers where possible, and that initiatives to deliver sustainable procurement were led by Defra, and it was working with officials there to increase capacity.

Overall, VMD seemed to be at a very early stage and would need to have more of the basics in place to move forward on sustainable procurement. For example:

- Devising its own sustainable procurement strategy
- Identifying a champion to take the lead
- Providing training to key procurement staff
- Mapping out overall expenditure with key sustainability impacts identified.

Taking stock

VMD considered that its own corporate aims, based on protecting public and animal health and the environment, dovetailed well with SD objectives. It felt that its status as an Executive Agency of Defra, given that Defra is the lead on SD, helped it to deliver its SDAP. It did not say, however, whether any support was received. VMD considered that the delivery of its SDAP was also helped by the fact that Environmental Impact Assessments were required on most applications for marketing authorisations. The SDC would be interested to see the extent to which social impacts are taken into account in market authorisations, and in the VMDs work more generally.

Staff shortages hindered delivery of the plan. The staff member leading on the action plan retired during the year, and the next person in the chain was on jury service for all of 2006. **SDC would like to see contingency measures in place to ensure continuity in the delivery of action plans** should staff problems arise in future. Delivery was also hindered by the fact that VMD is a small organisation with competing priorities. However, given that VMD already considers that its remit to fits well with SD objectives, the SDC would expect to see it to build on these foundations.

Summing up

Overall, VMD reported good progress against the actions set out in its SDAP, but had made less progress on embedding sustainable development into the organisation in terms of its policies, people and operations.

The progress report itself followed the sections of the SDC tool, but lacked commentary on the impact and status of actions, procurement, and how it was embedding sustainability.

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2006 Sustainable Development Action Plan Progress Report

Veterinary Medicines Directorate's Self-Assessment

31st May 2007

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1 EMBEDDING SUSTAINABILITY

VMD was asked to consider whether the activities arising from its SDAP enabled it to capture the opportunities of sustainable development for its customers, partners and staff and, if so, how.

Regarding the work programme outlined in its SDAP, and based on progress towards actions, VMD rated itself out of 10 for its performance on embedding sustainable development in its:

- Policies
- People
- Operations (i.e. operations policy)
- Governance, monitoring and reporting.

The following scale was used:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Starting out		Some progress			On course			Fully integrated	

VMD's response

Level: 5	Policies: Some progress	VMD's comments in support of this rating:
Criteria: • Some alignment of policy with Government SD Strategy, UK Framework and related guidance • Some joining-up of policy goals under the SD umbrella • Some signalling of SD in external partnerships and relationships • Some embedding of SD in policy approval processes / Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIAs) • Some effective stakeholder engagement • Some building of SD capacity among delivery partners.		The aim of the VMD is to protect public health, animal health, the environment and promote animal welfare by assuring the safety, quality and efficacy of veterinary medicines. We meet these aims through providing advice and guidance to our stakeholders, agreements with our service providers and regulation based on sound science and risk based decision-making. The work we do helps towards delivering three of Defra's strategic priorities: our work helps towards 'sustainable farming and food including animal health and welfare', and 'sustainable consumption and production' by • assuring that veterinary medicines are safe, high quality and efficacious, both for food producing and companion animals; Cont…

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Criteria:	• ensuring that the regulatory system is effective and contributes to protecting public health by taking risk-based action on the findings from our surveillance and monitoring programmes;
• Some alignment of policy with Government SD Strategy, UK Framework and related guidance	
• Some joining-up of policy goals under the SD umbrella	• ensuring that UK policy objectives are reflected in EC legislation and guidance and that UK legislation and guidance enables veterinary medicines to be used in the farming, food and companion animal sectors responsibly, effectively and safely.
• Some signalling of SD in external partnerships and relationships	
• Some embedding of SD in policy approval processes / Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIAs)	
• Some effective stakeholder engagement	We also help towards 'protecting the countryside and natural resource protection' by the work we do assessing the environmental impact of veterinary medicines.
• Some building of SD capacity among delivery partners.	
	In particular:
	• As part of its regulatory duties the VMD carried out over 600 environmental impact assessments relating to the authorisation of veterinary medicines in 2006/07. The purpose of the environmental risk assessment of a veterinary medicine is to ensure that the risk which the use of the product may present to the environment is acceptable and if necessary, to identify any precautionary measures which may be required to reduce such risks to an acceptable level.
	• VMD contributed to societal & personal well-being by managing two extensive surveillance programmes that monitored residues of veterinary medicines in food, Together with the VMD's other regulatory work, the surveillance programmes play an important part in ensuring that harmful residues in food are avoided.
	• Assessments of the environmental, social & economic impacts of the VMD's policy proposals were undertaken on all new

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| **Criteria:**

- Some alignment of policy with Government SD Strategy, UK Framework and related guidance
- Some joining-up of policy goals under the SD umbrella
- Some signalling of SD in external partnerships and relationships
- Some embedding of SD in policy approval processes / Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIAs)
- Some effective stakeholder engagement
- Some building of SD capacity among delivery partners. | legislation and were included in formal Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIAs). The RIAs can be viewed on the VMD's website.

With the Environment Agency, VMD developed a Pollution Reduction Programme for sheep dip and through it determined actions needed to minimise the risk of environmental pollution caused by the use of sheep dips, by effectively engaging with stakeholders including the pharmaceutical industry, farmers' representatives, conservation groups.

We will set out plans for improvement in the next version of SDAP |

Level: 6	People: On course	VMD's comments in support of this rating:
Criteria: SD is greatly reflected in: · Core vision and values · Training and development (e.g. core skills, induction, leadership development) · Performance management (e.g. competency framework) · Recruitment · Career planning and placements · Internal communications · Volunteering · Fund raising		VMD's 'Commitment to Staff' recognises the diversity of staff & enshrines behaviours designed to promote both personal well being and business performance Our recruitment, training and development arrangements are accredited under the Investor's in People (IiP) standard Our performance management is based on a well established competency framework and meets the IiP standard We have a wide array of methods of internal communications, including an intranet and regular team meetings and staff updates. We also commission an independent company to carry out a survey of our people every 2 years. We know from the last survey of staff that 81% of staff were satisfied working for the VMD and 72 % would recommend it as a place to work Cont...

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Criteria:	We also support a range of fund raising activities from national events like 'Red Nose' day & Comic Relief, to on site bring & buy sales. At the moment one of our senior managers is being supported with extended leave to fulfill a life long ambition to run across America and raise money for a local hospice.
SD is greatly reflected in: • Core vision and values • Training and development (e.g. core skills, induction, leadership development) • Performance management (e.g. competency framework) • Recruitment • Career planning and placements • Internal communications • Volunteering • Fund raising	The VMD supports staff who volunteer as mentors at a local school and who act as school governors. **We will set out plans for improvement in the next version of SDAP**

Level: **6**	**Operations:** On course	**VMD's comments in support of this rating:**
Criteria: Much structure around the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate including elements such as: • Management systems (e.g. EMS) • Energy, water, waste (resource efficiency, recycling etc.) • Travel • Sustainable procurement (e.g. efficient, green, fair, local, healthy) • Construction and refurbishment. • Biodiversity • Positive social and community impact.		The VMD has recycling facilities for plastic cups and bottles in all kitchens; & recycles toner and printer cartridges Waste paper is taken for incineration and the resulting energy used for heating 99% of the paper used for photocopying and printing was recycled We purchase stationery from a provider that supplies stock made from recycled material where possible & and are working with Defra to increase this by using suppliers vetted by core department We purchase from local suppliers where possible We require trips to Brussels to be made using Eurostar where possible, to help contribute to reducing carbon emissions and cost We require staff to travel in GB via train where possible Cont...

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Criteria:	We calculate carbon emissions for air travel on a quarterly basis and will be comparing figures year on year to monitor reductions in emissions
Much structure around the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate including elements such as: • Management systems (e.g. EMS) • Energy, water, waste (resource efficiency, recycling etc.) • Travel • Sustainable procurement (e.g. efficient, green, fair, local, healthy) • Construction and refurbishment. • Biodiversity • Positive social and community impact.	We dispose of electronic equipment in accordance with the EC Directive on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and the EC Directive on Restricting the use of Certain Hazardous Substances in Electrical and Electronic Equipment. We will set out plans for improvement in the next version of SDAP

Level: 6	Governance, Monitoring and Reporting: On course	VMD's comments in support of this rating:
VMD rated itself based on how it felt it is progressing on creating and embedding the appropriate mechanisms and processes to record and report progress of SDAPs, and sustainable development generally. This was a subjective assessment, with no pre-defined criteria.		The aim of the VMD to protect public health, animal health, the environment and promote animal welfare by assuring the safety, quality and efficacy of veterinary medicines is well established. The SDAP was prepared by our Director of Corporate Business who also acted as a SD 'champion'. Progress against the plan is reviewed each quarter by the Management Board Operational aspects of the SDAP are reviewed at fortnightly Core Services work-plan meetings Progress on SD issues in general is reported annually in our Annual Report and Accounts We liaise on SD issues with colleagues from the Veterinary Laboratories Agency, who are the main site occupants, and with whom we share many site services.

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2 PROCUREMENT

Procurement is an area of key importance to delivering sustainable development. Sustainable procurement (policy, processes and operations) should be embedded into all areas of organisations, and should be incorporated in the whole SDAP process.

The Flexible Framework (detailed in *Procuring the Future*[7]) identifies 5 key themes which are, in effect, the key behavioural and operational change programmes that need to be delivered in each public sector organisation to deliver sustainable procurement. For each theme, compliance criteria for five levels are detailed.

For each theme in the Flexible Framework, VMD identified the level it had reached.

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[7] *Procuring the Future*, The Sustainable Procurement Task Force National Action Plan. Defra, June 2006.

VMD's response

For all of the following criteria: as a very small agency we currently purchase stationery from a provider that supplies stock made from recycled material where possible & use local suppliers where possible. Initiatives to deliver sustainable development via procurement are lead by Defra. We are working with them to increase our capacity in each of the criteria.

PEOPLE	
Level 1: FOUNDATION	
<u>Criteria</u>: Sustainable procurement champion identified. Key procurement staff have received basic training in sustainable procurement principles. Sustainable procurement is included as part of a key employee induction programme.	

POLICY, STRATEGY & COMMUNICATIONS	
Level 1: FOUNDATION	
<u>Criteria:</u> Agree overarching sustainability objectives. Simple sustainable procurement policy in place endorsed by CEO. Communicate to staff and key suppliers.	

PROCUREMENT PROCESS	
Level 1: FOUNDATION	
<u>Criteria:</u> Expenditure analysis undertaken and key sustainability impacts identified. Key contracts start to include general sustainability criteria. Contracts awarded on the basis of value-for-money, not lowest price. Procurers adopt Quick Wins.	

ENGAGING SUPPLIERS	
Level 1: FOUNDATION	
<u>Criteria:</u> Key supplier spend analysis undertaken and high sustainability impact suppliers identified. Key suppliers targeted for engagement and views on procurement policy sought	

MEASUREMENTS & RESULTS	
Level 1: FOUNDATION	
<u>Criteria:</u> Key sustainability impacts of procurement activity have been identified.	

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3 TAKING STOCK

SDC asked VMD a series of questions designed to reflect on the success, barriers and progress of its SDAP, and to identify what helped or hindered progress. VMD's responses to these questions are detailed below.

1.   What has helped your organisation to deliver its SDAP? e.g., capacity, funding, culture, leadership, policies, procedures and/or organisational arrangements.

We have been helped in the area of policy delivery by having a corporate aim which is predicated on protecting public health, animal health and the environment etc. Helped by a regulatory procedure that requires an environmental impact assessment to be carried out on most applications for marketing authorisations. Helped by being an agency of Defra which is leading on these issues

2.   What has hindered the delivery of your SDAP? e.g., capacity, funding, culture, leadership, policies, procedures and/or organisational arrangements..

We are a small agency with many competing priorities. We lost our Director of Corporate Business to retirement in November 2006 - he had taken the lead on the action plan. We also lost his next in line in the management chain to jury service for 12 months from December 2005.

3.   What information do you hold and collect relating to the sustainable development impact of your organisation's overall policies/projects/activities? e.g., Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIAs).

RIAs, and progress reports to management board on operations

4.   Were there any key updates/changes to your 2005/06 SDAP? Please briefly list.

None

4 PROGRESS AGAINST ACTIONS

The tables that follow report VMD's progress against specific actions in its 2006 SDAP. The table was designed by the SDC as part of the self-assessment tool for Departments, and encourages critical assessment of the value of each action, as well as the progress achieved.

Progress is represented using a RAG+ Analysis (red, amber, green, +blue) (column E), and provides a subjective indication of the completion of an action towards its stated objectives:

- Complete indicates that an action is complete, and the associated output/outcomes fully realised
- On target indicates the action is incomplete in one or more aspects, but is still on target
- Recoverable indicates that an action is behind target, but recoverable
- Behind target indicates that an action is far behind target and that recovery is unlikely.

Column F details evidence to verify the reported progress made, such as:

- Published strategies, policies, Bills, guidance, literature
- Objective performance measures, indicators and associated sources of data
- Reports of events, particularly outcomes and next steps
- Auditable correspondence
- Auditable activities.

In column G, VMD reported whether this evidence is readily available for scrutiny by the SDC.

While each action is important in itself, the aim of the SDAP is to help organisations fulfil their contributions to the Government's wider sustainable development priorities for immediate action, as set out in its 2005 strategy, *Securing the Future*.[8] These are:

- Sustainable consumption and production
- Climate change and energy
- Natural resource protection and environmental enhancement
- Sustainable communities.

Column H contains VMD's critical assessment of how each action impacts on these priority areas, using a scale of 1-4 (see table below).

Column H Level	Contribution of action to one or more of the priority areas
1	Zero or small
2	Fair
3	Good
4	Outstanding

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[8] *Securing the Future – Delivering the UK Sustainable Development Strategy*, HM Government, March 2005.

Veterinary Medicines Directorate's self-assessment of progress towards SDAP actions

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Ref	Action	Target	Responsibility	Progress (RAG analysis)	Evidence/ crosscheck used to measure action	Readily available?	Impact (1-4)	Comments
1	Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIAs) will be undertaken on all new legislation being developed. Each RIA will be tested against Defra's 'Stretching the Web' software to ensure that environmental, economic and social impacts are minimised.	31/3/07	John FitzGerald Director of Policy	On target	RIAs on VMD website under 'publications'/ 'consultations'	Yes	2	VMD prepared RIAs on all new legislation including an assessment of the sustainable development impacts. However, we did not test them against the Defra software
2	All new project work being undertaken within the VMD will be assessed against the five Guiding Principles set out in the Government's Sustainable Development Strategy.	31/03/07	VMD Directors	Recoverable	VMD internal project documentation	Yes	1	We did not consciously assess projects against the guiding principles. However, the principles of *inter alia*, using sound science responsibly, promoting good governance, promoting well being & inclusion are implicit in how VMD does business

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A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Ref	Action	Target	Responsibility	Progress (RAG analysis)	Evidence/ crosscheck used to measure action	Readily available?	Impact (1-4)	Comments
3	The UK's negotiating position in Brussels on changes to EU legislation will be based on the five Guiding Principles set out in the Government's Sustainable Development Strategy.	31/3/07	John FitzGerald Director of Policy	On target	Consultation papers on the Veterinary Medicines Regulations on VMD website under 'publications'/ 'consultations'	Yes	3	We did not consciously negotiate against the guiding principles. However, the principles of *inter alia*, using sound science responsibly, promoting good governance, promoting well being & inclusion, a sustainable economy and the environment are implicit in VMD's negotiating position
4	Carry out an audit to determine how much waste the VMD generates, the amount already recycled and what could be re-cycled in the future.	31/3/07	Chris Bean Director Of Corporate Business then from Nov John FitzGerald Director of Policy & Core Services	Complete	Internal Management Board papers	Yes	2	VMD shares our site with major occupant: VLA. They are responsible via Defra Estates for site waste management. We have built links with them & reviewed how we can work together. Waste paper is taken for incineration by VLA and the resulting energy used for heating. The VMD has its own recycling facilities for plastic cups and bottles in all kitchens; & recycles toner and printer cartridges.

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A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Ref	Action	Target	Responsibility	Progress (RAG analysis)	Evidence/ crosscheck used to measure action	Readily available?	Impact (1-4)	Comments
5	Carry out an audit to determine how much of our office supplies is produced from sustainable resources and what action could be taken year on year to increase the amounts of office supplies produced from such sources.	31/3/07	Chris Bean Director Of Corporate Business then from Nov John FitzGerald Director of Policy & Core Services	Complete	Reported in 2006/07 Annual Report & Accounts published in June 2007	Yes	2	We reviewed our stationary options & 99% of the paper used for photocopying and printing was recycled

We purchased stationery from a provider that supplies stock made from recycled material where possible

We purchased from local suppliers where possible

We continue to seek options to increase the amounts of office supplies produced from such sources |
| 6 | Investigate feasibility of offsetting carbon emissions from our travel. | 31/3/07 | Chris Bean Director Of Corporate Business then from Nov John Fitzgerald Director of Policy & Core Services | Behind target | Management Board papers | Yes | 2 | We have not offset carbon emissions from our travel but we require trips to Brussels to be made using Eurostar where possible, to help contribute to reducing carbon emissions and cost |

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A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Ref	Action	Target	Responsibility	Progress (RAG analysis)	Evidence/ crosscheck used to measure action	Readily available?	Impact (1-4)	Comments
								We require staff to travel in GB via train where possible

We calculate carbon emissions for air travel on a quarterly basis and will be comparing figures year on year to monitor reductions in emissions |
| 7 | Dispose of all unusable electrical and electronic equipment in accordance with the provisions of the EC Directive on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and the EC Directive on Restricting the use of Certain Hazardous Substances in Electrical and Electronic Equipment. | 31/3/07 | Chris Bean Director Of Corporate Business then from Nov John Fitzgerald Director of Policy & Core Services | Complete | Internal papers | Yes | 3 | We dispose of electronic equipment in accordance with the EC Directive on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and the EC Directive on Restricting the use of Certain Hazardous Substances in Electrical and Electronic Equipment. |

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A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Ref	Action	Target	Responsibility	Progress (RAG analysis)	Evidence/ crosscheck used to measure action	Readily available?	Impact (1-4)	Comments
8	Continue, in discussion with Defra HR, to develop procedures to improve the quality of life and work-life balance for our staff.	31/3/07	Chris Bean Director Of Corporate Business then from Nov John Fitzgerald Director of Policy & Core Services	Complete	VMD's 'Commitment to Staff' published in VMD Annual Reports

Business Plan available via website | Yes | 4 | The VMD continuously strives to improve in this area. An independent survey of staff in 2006 found that 81% of staff were satisfied working for the VMD and 72 % would recommend it as a place to work. Key to this was quality of life and work-life balance arrangements |
| 9 | Give VMD staff the opportunity to comment on the SDAP before it is finally agreed and published. As part of this process they will be invited to view the Defra DVD 'The Bigger Picture – Putting Sustainable Development into Practice' and suggest ways we can limit our use of material resources. | 31/3/07 | Chris Bean Director Of Corporate Business then from Nov John Fitzgerald Director of Policy & Core Services | Complete | Internal Office notices | Yes | 2 | Staff had the opportunity to comment on the SDAP before it is finally agreed and published. As part of this process some viewed the Defra DVD 'The Bigger Picture – Putting Sustainable Development into Practice' and suggested ways we could limit our use of material resources, as set out in 5 above |

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A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Ref	Action	Target	Responsibility	Progress (RAG analysis)	Evidence/ crosscheck used to measure action	Readily available?	Impact (1-4)	Comments
10	Place a copy of the SDAP on the VMD Internet site once agreed, and invite stakeholders to comment on it. Stakeholders will be advised that the VMD is producing an Action Plan at its annual open meeting in November 2005. Copies of the Action Plan will be circulated to stakeholders attending the meeting if it is developed in time.	31/3/07	Chris Bean Director Of Corporate Business then from Nov John Fitzgerald Director of Policy & Core Services	Complete	VMD website	Yes	2	We posted a copy of the SDAP on the VMD Internet site once agreed, and invited stakeholders to comment on it. Stakeholders were advised that the VMD was producing an Action Plan at its annual open meeting in November 2005. We received no comments from them on it.
11	When the first Action Plan is being revised the VMD will take account of any comments received from stakeholders in preparing a revised Plan.	28/9/07	John Fitzgerald Director of Policy & Core Services	On target	N/A	No	N/A	VMD will be revising its plan as part of Defra 2007 initiative. It will work closely with Defra as part of a newly formed Agency stakeholder group & will seek comments from its stakeholders as part of this process

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Ref	Action	Target	Responsibility	Progress (RAG analysis)	Evidence/ crosscheck used to measure action	Readily available?	Impact (1-4)	Comments
12	Sustainable Development will be included as a standing agenda item at each, quarterly, meeting of the VMD's Management Board. The Board will review progress being made on the Action Plan and formally agree to any changes proposed to it.	31/3/07	Chris Bean Director Of Corporate Business then from Nov John Fitzgerald Director of Policy & Core Services	Complete	Management Board papers	Yes	3	Sustainable Development has been included as a standing agenda item at each, quarterly, meeting of the VMD's Management Board. The Board reviewed progress being made on the Action Plan.
13	The VMD's performance in delivering the commitments made in this Action Plan will be reported in the VMD's Annual Report for 2006/07 that will be published in July 2007. Subsequent Sustainable Development Action Plans will be reported on annually.	15/6/07	John Fitzgerald Director of Policy & Core Services	Complete	Published Annual Report via website June 2007	Yes	2	The headlines of VMD's performance in delivering the commitments made in this Action Plan is reported in the VMD's Annual Report for 2006/07 that will be published in June 2007, though not explicitly by reference to the Action Plan.

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Ref	Action	Target	Responsibility	Progress (RAG analysis)	Evidence/ crosscheck used to measure action	Readily available?	Impact (1-4)	Comments
14	Any specific training needs identified will be incorporated within the VMD's Training Strategy for its staff.	31/3/07	Chris Bean Director Of Corporate Business then from Nov John Fitzgerald Director of Policy & Core Services	Recoverable	Training Strategy	Yes	1	No specific training needs were identified but our purchasing team are working with Defra to ensure we are trained to exploit opportunities of scale via core department

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VMD response signed by:

SD Reporting Officer: David Lewsey, 09-05-07

SD Responsible Officer: John FitzGerald, May 2007

SDC review and commentary:

Commentary by: Claire Monkhouse, Watchdog Team

Peer reviewed by: Rachel Hurle, Watchdog Team

Authorised by: Tim Lang and Becky Willis, SDC Commissioners

Sign-off date: 28-09-07