

VOSA Sustainability Strategy

2011-2015

V.1.7 January 2012

Introduction

VOSA is an Executive Agency for the Department for Transport (DfT). We contribute to saving lives, making roads safer, cutting crime and protecting the environment through ensuring compliance with regulations of drivers, operators, vehicles, MOT garages and maintainers. We deliver compliance through licensing, testing and education services and where necessary, take enforcement action against non-compliance.

In February 2011, the Government announced its Mainstreaming Sustainable Development Package¹ which outlines the Government's vision for Sustainable Development by leading by example. To do this, the Government has developed a new set of measures, the Greening Government Commitments², for delivering this vision in the Government's operations and procurement activities over a five year period from 2010-2015 against a 2009-2010 baseline. The commitments apply to all of the Government Estate.

In addition to the Greening Government Commitments, there are a number of other sustainability commitments that complement the Greening Government Commitments in their aims. These include the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) Energy Efficiency Scheme and the exhibition of Display Energy Certificates (DEC) at all qualifying buildings.

This strategy outlines how VOSA is going to mainstream sustainable development into every aspect of our business and how we are going to meet the Greening Government and other sustainability commitments. It will pull together the work we have undertaken on sustainable development to date and will communicate our commitment to the Government's vision.

VOSA's vision is to be a sustainable organisation which positively engages with our staff and communities and protects and enhances the environment.

We recognise that this strategy will evolve over time which is why it will be updated every year to reflect changes in our business objectives and performance. We are committed to greater transparency and accuracy in our performance monitoring and reporting, sharing best practice and lessons learned with our staff, stakeholders and wider community.

¹ Mainstreaming Sustainable Development (February 2011): <http://sd.defra.gov.uk/2011/02/embedding-sustainability-in-government/>

² Greening Government Commitments (February 2011): <http://sd.defra.gov.uk/gov/green-government/commitments/>

VOSA's Strategic Direction

VOSA is committed to mainstreaming sustainable development into every aspect of our business activities. As an organisation we test vehicles for their emissions levels as part of the MOT test and have been involved in issuing certificate tests for the London Low Emissions Zone.

This strategy has been developed to fully compliment the VOSA business plan for 2011-12. The VOSA business plan for 2011-12 can be found by clicking [here](#).

The business plan sets out VOSA's strategic direction to achieve a future where drivers, operators, vehicles, MOT garages and maintainers are fully compliant with regulations, whilst tackling the fiscal deficit to ensure that VOSA is a business that is financially and environmentally sustainable. It is a clear demonstration of VOSA's commitment to the sustainability agenda in particular those that reduce VOSA's impact on the environment in the following ways;

- Increase the number of communications distributed digitally rather than in hard copy.
- Deliver low emissions certificate tests to relevant vehicles to ensure they meet the standards to drive in the London Low Emissions Zone by January 2012.
- Increasing the uptake of key digital services to 60% by March 2012.

Testing Transformation Programme

VOSA is currently in its third year of its Testing Transformation Programme (TTP) which will change the way that VOSA carries out its testing operations.

It seeks to increase the number of tests carried out at third party Authorised Testing Facility sites by VOSA staff. This will take testing closer to the customer and to the point of vehicle maintenance and repair, increasing customer choice and reducing the operational 'downtime' of vehicles. This will also reduce the negative environmental impact caused by vehicles travelling to VOSA sites for testing.

The programme has already seen the opening of around 40 new non-VOSA testing sites during 2010-11 and as a result VOSA plans to reduce the overall size of its current testing estate. We will ensure that the retained core estate is managed in a sustainable manner.

High Risk Traffic Initiative

In addition to rationalising our testing estate, we will also look at our enforcement estate, reducing our overall footprint and opening four new enforcement sites (subject to planning approval). This is part of our High Risk Traffic Initiative (HRTI) to focus our enforcement activities in the areas of highest risk ensuring we are strategically placed to do so. These new sites will be constructed to ensure energy efficiency and to minimise the carbon and waste produced in both the construction phase and during use.

VOSA's Sustainability Objectives

In line with the above, VOSA has developed the following objectives to outline what we intend to achieve over the current and future years to achieve the Greening Government and other sustainability commitments in our estates, travel management and procurement activities.

1. Improve the accuracy of all sustainability data that VOSA collects and reports.
2. Reduce VOSA's carbon emissions from energy consumption.
3. Reduce our carbon emissions from transport.
4. Reduce our water consumption.
5. Reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill.

These objectives are developed in more depth below. In achieving the Greening Government Commitments we aim to reduce our carbon emissions and waste production as follows;

- Reducing our carbon emissions by;
 - Estates Rationalisation (14%)
 - Install energy saving/efficiency technology (6%)
 - Install renewable energy technology at the new HRTI sites (1%)
 - Procurement of new vehicles (3%)
 - Fleet Strategy (1%)
- Reducing our waste by;
 - Estates Rationalisation (19%)
 - Move to electronic systems (2%)
 - Work with suppliers to reduce waste (3%)
 - Communications campaign (1%)

These are figures will be amended and new initiatives added as the TTP station closure programme and other initiatives develop. We will regularly analyse our data to check our progress and savings made.

Communication

Staff engagement and communication will be vital to ensure that this strategy is implemented effectively. We already communicate and engage with our staff on sustainable development but recognise there are more opportunities to promote sustainability both internally and in the wider community.

Internal communications will underpin the mainstreaming of sustainable development into the Agency and will be crucial in raising awareness, reporting and sharing best practice and improvements in areas where we are under performing.

Our communications strategy will include emails, team meetings and questionnaires. Specifically we will;

- Publish and promote this strategy amongst staff;
- Share and explain utility consumption and cost information with all sites;
- Share and explain changes in relevant legislation to all staff;
- Discuss site specific sustainability issues with all sites;
- Update the intranet with the relevant information and
- Encourage feedback and ideas from everybody

We have a sustainable development inbox which is used to capture and respond to all staff queries and suggestions on sustainability. The address is SDU@vosa.gov.uk.

VOSA's Sustainable Development Policy

We have developed a Sustainable Development Policy which can be found in Annexe A. The policy has been endorsed (when published) by the CEO and Board of Directors.

We will make all staff aware of the policy and will display it at our headquarter sites as well as publishing it on our external website and intranet. We will also ensure that all of our contractors and suppliers are made aware of the policy.

The policy will be reviewed and updated every year to ensure it is relevant to changes in legislation and our business.

Objectives

The objectives outlined above are further developed here to include our past successes in each area along with specific targets for the current financial year and future targets and aims going forward.

1. Improve the accuracy of all sustainability data that VOSA collects and reports.

Past successes

- We have installed electricity and gas automatic meter readers at 85% of our sites, allowing us to receive half hourly consumption information and accurate invoicing.
- We have improved the data we have on our hire fleet so the exact carbon emissions of each journey can be calculated without the need to use conversion factors.

2011-12 Targets

- Establish a baseline for electricity, gas, oil and water consumption for 2009-10 for the whole estate in order to measure our performance against the Greening Government Commitments by 31st August 2011.
- Amend the T&S system for recording grey fleet mileage so that the vehicle engine size bandings match the Defra conversion factors bandings by 31st March 2012.
- Achieve 100% of all sites on the pan-government framework for electricity and gas supplies by 31st March 2012.
- Improve our waste data at Berkeley House by using the total Facilities Management (FM) contractors.
- Ensure electricity and gas meter reads are received on a quarterly basis for sites without AMRs to avoid the 10% uplift added by the CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme by 31st March 2012.

Future Aims

- To introduce in 2012-13 the Central Government Travel Service to VOSA for all bookings of air and train travel providing us with accurate carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions data for these forms of travel.
- To relocate the AMRs from closed sites to sites that currently do not have AMRs to increase the coverage of half hourly data we receive.
- Add more sites to the total FM waste contract to further improve our waste data.
- Investigate the costs of installing water AMRs in the core estate to improve consumption information.

2. Reduce VOSA's carbon emissions from energy

consumption

Past successes

- We have installed renewable electricity technology at four of our Goods Vehicle Testing Stations (GVTS) including three wind turbines and a solar photovoltaic array that combined produced around 12, 715 KWh of electricity during 2010-11.
- Improved heating and lighting controls.
- Achieved estates rationalisation of four sites during 2009-10.

2011-12 Targets

- Reduce our occupation of the Ellipse by one floor by 31st August 2011.
- Consolidate VOSA's office accommodation in Bristol by moving the Office of the Traffic Commissioner from its current rented location to freehold accommodation by 31st March 2011.
- Close or cease testing at five GVTS's as part of TTP by the 31st March 2012.
- Install Voltage power optimisation (vpo) technology at Chadderton GVTS and Berkeley House by the 31st March 2012.
- Install a new heat exchanger at Carlisle GVTS to enable the heating system to work efficiently.
- Communicate the energy consumption of our headquarter and office buildings with the site staff by using existing notice boards and display bulletins.
- Gain planning permission to install solar pvs at the new HRTI

Future Aims

- Continue to rationalise the estate as a result of TTP.
- Consolidate the Bristol headquarters accommodation by vacating Berkeley House Annexe by 31st March 2013.
- Investigate the potential of retro-fitting energy efficient lighting in the test halls of the core estate.
- Install a new heating system in Berkeley House by 31st March 2013.
- Install renewable generation and other energy efficiency technology at all new HRTI sites.

3. Reduce our carbon emissions from Transport

Past successes

- Emissions limits set for the procurement of operational 'Power to Stop' vehicles.
- Undertook a full review of the VOSA fleet during 2010-11.

2011-12 Targets

- Procure 10 replacement administrative vehicles with lower CO₂ emissions than the current fleet it is replacing by 31st March 2012.
- Procure 3 new operational vans that are Euro 5 emissions standard by 31st March 2012.
- Develop the recommendations from the fleet review by submitting a paper to the Directing Board on leasing pool vehicles by 30th November 2011.

Future Aims

- Further develop the fleet review by producing a paper for the Directing Board on a private user scheme during 2012-13.
- Promote the use of sustainable methods of transport across the Agency.
- Continue to reduce avoidable journeys through the use of more video and telephone conferencing for meetings.
- Develop a plan to reduce the number of domestic flights.

4. Reduce our Water consumption

Past successes

- Water bill validation for the quick identification of leaks.
- The installation of urinal controls at all sites.
- Rainwater harvesting installed at Bristol GVTS as part of the modernisation project.

2011-12 Targets

- Analyse 2010-11 data to establish the sites on our estate that currently outside the best practice benchmarks by 30th November 2011.
- Let a new water management contract and set new baselines for every site by 31st March 2011.

Future Aims

- Carry out water surveys to identify savings at the top 5 highest consuming sites per FTE.
- Install water saving appliances in the new HRTI sites.
- Include the calculation of visitors in our FTE totals for each site following the approved methodology.

5. Reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill

Past successes

- 100% of personal waste bins removed from the Berkeley House complex during 2010-11.
- The introduction of HR Self Service across the Agency, allowing sickness absence to be recorded without the need for paper records.
- All general waste from Sheffield GVTS taken to an energy recovery facility rather than being sent to landfill.
- Introduction of recycling at Kirkham GVTS.

2011-12 Targets

- Introduce Purchase to Payment to the whole organisation to allow electronic purchase orders and invoices to be processed and paid by 30th November 2011.
- Communicate to the Agency about re-using paper wherever possible in VOSALink by 30th November 2011.
- Introduce recycling to Chadderton GVTS, using the total FM contract by 31st March 2012.
- Set up a new contract with the Disposal Services Authority to sell as much testing equipment as possible no longer required as part of the TTP closure of sites to minimise the amount that is sent to landfill.
- All surplus furniture from the TTP closure of sites will first be re-allocated to the rest of the Agency and then donated to charities/community groups if requested in order to minimise the amount that is sent to landfill.
- Construction waste from the building of the HRTI sites will be managed to best practice standards to maximise the amount of waste recycled and a waste strategy produced.

Future Aims

- Introduce recycling at more sites using the total FM waste contract.
- Reduce the number of personal waste bins across the estate.
- Work with our suppliers to reduce the amount of waste that VOSA receives through deliveries etc.
- Continue to move towards more electronic communications and procedures both internally and for our customers.

In addition to the 5 objectives above, VOSA will also look to reduce its supply chain impacts.

We have already seen a significant amount of our supply chain carbon reduced during 2010-11 through the server virtualisation programme that ATOS, VOSA's IT partners, undertook. The programme will save 146 tonnes of carbon a year at the ATOS data centre.

We will continue to look at and reduce our supply chain impacts through out the course of the Greening Government Commitments.

Transparency – Monitoring and Reporting our Progress

In addition to improving the quality and the accuracy of the data as set out in objective 1, we will also be more transparent in the way we monitor and report our progress on all sustainability targets.

We will provide an update on the targets set out in this strategy every year when it is updated. Internally we will monitor the progress against these targets every quarter to ensure any areas for concern are addressed and rectified.

Every year VOSA will publish its carbon emissions and water consumption along with our progress against the Greening Government Commitments and this strategy in our Annual Report, meeting the HM Treasury reporting requirement. Included in this will be previous year's data to allow for clear comparison on our progress.

We will also publish the amount of money we have spent on purchasing our CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme allowances in the Annual Report. The scheme also involves the publication of a league table, in terms of carbon reduction, of all participants which is available to the public. VOSA will be included as part of the DfT joint entity.

Any sustainability related business targets will be published on our external website as part of the Business Plan and will be monitored internally on a quarterly basis by the Business Delivery Board.

We will also exhibit, at all qualifying buildings, a Display Energy Certificate (DEC) in a public area to comply with current legislation. DEC's give an energy performance rating for a building based on actual consumption figures and are updated annually. They inform members of the public and visitors to our buildings about the energy use within it. The certificates show the rating given for the building for a period of up to three years allowing comparisons to be made.

Annex A

VOSA's Sustainable Development Policy

VOSA recognises that it has a significant role to play in delivering sustainable development.

This policy statement applies throughout VOSA and reflects the importance of ensuring our Business Strategy balances the needs of society, the economy, and the environment. Setting effective and challenging objectives and targets will ultimately lead to enhanced sustainability and to promote continual improvement. We will review this policy and our performance on an annual basis.

VOSA is committed to continual improvement in sustainability through:

- Complying with all relevant sustainability legislation, regulation and other relevant best practice requirements.
- Assessing its activities to identify sustainability aspects and risks, and ensuring that the impacts are managed and minimised.
- Monitoring, reviewing and reporting performance and progress against the Greening Government Commitments.
- Raising awareness of sustainability amongst VOSA employees through internal campaigns, performance information and publication of this policy.

VOSA will measure sustainability business performance against agreed business targets.

VOSA is aware that effective implementation of this policy will only be achieved through successful communication. Therefore we will:

- Ensure that all staff and suppliers work in line with this policy.
- Communicate and educate to raise awareness and enhance competency, where appropriate.
- Ensure that this policy is available to all stakeholders.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Alastair Peoples', is displayed within a white rectangular box.

Alastair Peoples

