

## DECC report on surveys of businesses, local authorities and households - 2013/14

### Introduction

All survey activities in the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) are monitored by the Survey Control Unit (SCU) in the department. Burdens imposed by surveys on respondents are measured in terms of compliance costs. In 2013/14 DECC imposed an estimated total burden of £128,000 on its businesses and local authorities data respondents, down 2 per cent on 2012/13. Additionally burdens on households and individuals totalled 6,600 hours.

The SCU in DECC is responsible for compiling and reporting on the compliance costs of all its business and local authority surveys to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), which are then published in the annual Government Statistical Service (GSS) report available at [www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/all-releases.html?definition=tcm%3A77-210555](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/all-releases.html?definition=tcm%3A77-210555). The SCU at ONS is responsible for implementing survey controls driven by the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for statistics ([www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/quality/survey-control/index.html](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/quality/survey-control/index.html)) and for auditing DECC survey control procedures.

This article presents an overview of the survey activities in DECC and their compliance costs.

### Survey control in DECC

Survey control is applied to all surveys, conducted by or on behalf of the department. Survey control is the mechanism for the department to oversee the burden its surveys imposed on respondents. It also aims to promote good survey practice, prevents poor quality or unnecessary surveys, and minimise the burden on respondents to DECC's surveys.

DECC is committed to minimising the burden its surveys place on respondents. When a new survey is proposed, DECC assesses its need at the outset by seeking to understand

- How the information collected will be used;
- What the compliance costs will be;
- How the survey will contribute towards achieving DECC priorities, and
- Whether there are alternative ways to obtain the data.

DECC maintains an inventory of all its statistical surveys, ensures that these are systematically reviewed, and annually assesses the compliance costs of running the surveys.

### Data collection

Energy statistics published by DECC are based on regular surveys of companies as follows:

**Coal** : From the Coal Authority, Iron and Steel Statistics Bureau (ISSB) and electricity generators' returns, major coal companies and the two major distributors and from the major and smaller coal companies.

**Upstream oil and gas**: From individual companies under the Downstream Oil Reporting System (DORS) and Petroleum Production Reporting System (PPRS).

**Downstream oil and gas**: From National Grid and pipeline operators, gas suppliers and Major Power Producers for electricity generation.

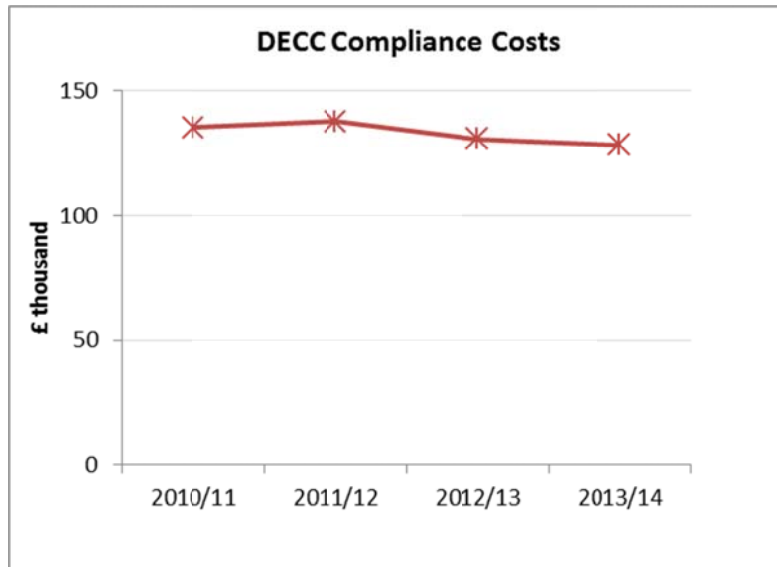
**Electricity (including renewables)**: From inquiries to companies covering generating capacity, fuel use, generation, sales and distribution of electricity and licensed suppliers, ISSB, auto-generators or auto-producers from ONS and small surveys for specific renewable technologies.

**Prices**: From energy suppliers and manufacturing industries via the ONS.

### Compliance costs

Compliance costs are a measure of the cost to respondents for complying with government statistical surveys. For surveys of businesses and local authorities, it is calculated using the product of the number of forms received, average completion time and the average hourly rates of the person compiling the return. The average hourly rates are based on the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE). For surveys of households and individuals, the compliance costs are the total number of hours dedicated to responding to the surveys.

Chart 1



In 2013/14, DECC conducted a total of 40 surveys of businesses and local authorities, 24 of which were statistical surveys which regularly contributed to official statistics (see table 1). The remaining were ad-hoc surveys conducted to provide evidence for the evaluation of policies and policy development; the compliance costs of which rose by 26 per cent. However, the costs of the regular statistical surveys fell by 6 per cent. Overall the total compliance costs in 2013/14, based on the 2013 ASHE rates, were £128,000 down 2 per cent on the previous year (see Chart 1 and table 2). In addition DECC also carried out 8 ad-hoc surveys on households and individuals with a total burden of 6,600 hours.

Burdens across government are published by ONS every year at [www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/all-releases.html?definition=tcm%3A77-210555](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/all-releases.html?definition=tcm%3A77-210555). In 2012/13, the latest year for which comparable data are available, DECC's compliance costs of official statistics of businesses and local authorities accounted for less than 0.5 per cent of the total across all government surveys. It is anticipated that a similar proportion will be achieved in 2013/14.

**Table 1- List of DECC regular statistical surveys, frequency of data collection and compliance costs in 2013/14.**

Surveys	Frequency	Compliance cost (£)
Downstream Oil Reporting System	Monthly	24,130
Liquefied Petroleum Gas Deliveries	Quarterly	100
Hypermarket Petrol and DERV	Monthly	80
Oil Stocking	Monthly	570
A: Coal Producers (Mth)	Monthly	270
B: Coal Producers (Qtr)	Quarterly	170
C: Coal Producers (Yr)	Yearly	30
A: Generators, distributors and suppliers of electricity(Mth)	Monthly	25,340
B: Generators, distributors and suppliers of electricity(Yr)	Yearly	2,110
A: Gas suppliers(Qtr)	Quarterly	1,700
B: Gas suppliers(Yr)	Yearly	90
Electricity Generators Inquiry.	Quarterly	4,940
Renewable Energy Statistics	Yearly	50
New Price Transparency Survey: Non-domestic	Quarterly	2,020
Generators Inquiry	Quarterly	1,890
Quarterly Fuels Inquiry*	Quarterly	33,870
Domestic Fuels Inquiry	Quarterly	2,290
Annual petroleum products prices inquiry	Yearly	60
Crude Oil imports	Monthly	420
Prices paid by final consumers petroleum products	Monthly	360
Weekly oil product prices	Weekly	1,170
Producer Price Index	Monthly	4,380
Social Programme reporting (Company Fuel Poverty Initiatives)	Yearly	220
New Price Transparency Survey : Domestic	Quarterly	940
<b>Total</b>		<b>107,176</b>

**Table 2- Achieved sample sizes and compliance costs**

	2012/13		2013/14		% change	
	Number of questionnaires returned	Compliance costs (£)	Number of questionnaires returned	Compliance costs (£)	Number of questionnaires returned	Compliance costs (£)
Regular surveys	6,414	113,918	6,085	107,176	-5%	-6%
Ad-hoc surveys	3,554	16,644	1,874	20,899	-47%	26%
Total	9,968	130,562	7,959	128,075	-20%	-2%

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