A REVIEW OF GOVERNMENT TRAVEL

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL ENGAGING THE PUBLIC SECTOR

JMP

forward thinking

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3   SCOPE AND CONTEXT

INTRODUCTION

3.1   This report is a high level summary of the government travel landscape with recommendations on: (a) how government could build the structures and capacity to deliver sustainable travel in its own operations; (b) where further research is necessary to create the evidence base; and (c) the 'first steps' and 'quick wins' that could be taken to catalyse action.

RESEARCH PARAMETERS

3.2   JMP was tasked with mapping out the key issues for sustainable travel in the central government and executive agency estate in England. We were also requested to identify:

↗   up to three opportunities for demonstration projects by government departments which could catalyse best practice across the rest of central government as well as in the wider public and private sectors;

↗   whether there are further areas for future in-depth research (no more than 5) to fill gaps in the evidence base, including an assessment of the priorities; and

↗   forthcoming policy opportunities where key issues might be taken forward.

3.3   Information on potential demonstration projects and areas of further research can be found in Appendices 1 and 2.

RESEARCH METHODS

3.4   In the course of this study we reviewed government's transport, sustainability and carbon policies. We then engaged with a wide range of stakeholders from the public, private and third sector through interviews, a travel questionnaire and a half day seminar to ascertain how policy was delivered in practice.
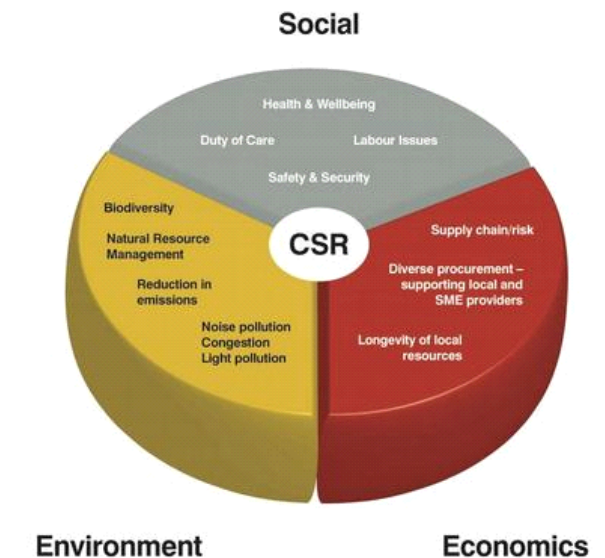
WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL?

3.5   There appears to be no accepted definition of sustainable travel within government's own operations. Sustainable travel is a challenging concept and the private sector has also struggled to establish an all embracing definition.

3.6   We acknowledge the work of Defra, the DfT and Buying Solutions in the public sector, and the Institute of Travel Management (ITM) when attempting to define sustainable travel. Figure 3.1, graphically represents ITMs definition of sustainability for business travel.

3.7   The ITMs definition of sustainable travel focuses on business travel and does not consider commuting or the design of the office estate. Although the Buying Solutions Guidance Note on Travel Policy (ref 2) briefly considers staff commuting its main focus is business travel.

Figure 3.1   Institute of Travel Management: The ICARUS Wheel

Source: Institute of Travel Management

WHY IS SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL IMPORTANT TO GOVERNMENT?

3.8   A move towards sustainable operations and travel will support a range government policies including:

Climate Change Commitments – Transport is the only sector of the economy where carbon emissions have increased since 1990, and is the only sector where carbon emissions are predicted to increase up to 2020(ref 3). A shift towards sustainable and active travel in government's own operations will support the UK's international and national commitments on reducing carbon emissions. Government also has the opportunity to demonstrate that a reduction in carbon emissions and high quality services are not mutually exclusive.

Health and Wellbeing – Sustainable travel has an important role to play in tackling obesity and improving the health of the nation. Nearly one in four adults in England is obese and rates have trebled since 1980. Projections of current trends show that nearly 60% of the UK population could be obese by 2050 which would result in a seven-fold increase in direct healthcare costs. Wider costs to society could reach over £45.5 billion (at 2007 prices) (ref 4).

Sustainable Transport Strategy – Take up of sustainable and active travel will reduce pressure on transport infrastructure. This will reduce maintenance costs and increase the residual value of the transport asset. This will in turn raise the level of service on existing infrastructure and reduce the demands for disproportionate further investment to create additional capacity.

Reducing Congestion - It is estimated that congestion costs the economy £23.2 billion per year (ref 5). Smarter working practices and sustainable travel has the potential to reduce congestion and costs to the economy.

A VISION FOR SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS AND TRAVEL

3.9   Establishing a vision for sustainable travel provides a framework for action. The vision could take a number of forms, but as a starting point it could be:

'To implement an operations, estates and travel policy across central government in a cohesive manner that supports objectives to deliver government services in the most efficient and sustainable way. Sustainable and active modes of transport will be the default option for staff, suppliers and visitors when travel is necessary.

3.10   If government adopted this vision it may lead to the delivery of services under a new ethos:

'The modus operandi of government has changed markedly but the aspiration remains the same - the delivery of high quality services to citizens in the most efficient way. Government employees access their workstations and deliver their objectives without moving and citizens engage with government officials from a 'space' of their choice. Government officials, suppliers and citizens engage with one another using sustainable and active modes of transport when travel is necessary.

As the sphere that government operates in has expanded, the environmental and social impacts of operations beyond the estate walls are measured and monitored to ensure continuous improvement. Government has taken ownership of carbon emissions from all areas of its operations – employee business and commuter travel along with supplier and visitor travel.'

4   FINDINGS

TRAVEL MANAGEMENT IN GOVERNMENT

OWNERSHIP OF THE SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL AGENDA

4.1   There appears to be a policy vacuum with a lack of leadership and management of sustainable travel in government. It is not clear which department is the policy lead for sustainable travel, the management of business travel or employee commuting.

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL TARGETS AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

4.2   The SOGE targets focus on reducing carbon emissions from administrative vehicles. There are no other government targets to reduce carbon emissions from travel, or performance measures on social or wider environmental sustainability. We understand that the current SOGE targets are under review and future performance indicators may consider other modes of travel and wider sustainability issues.

4.3   The DfT has encouraged departments to develop voluntary targets for operational vehicles in addition to the SOGE administrative vehicle target. However, we have not been able to identify a department that has established a voluntary target specifically for operational vehicles.

4.4   A number of departments are combining administrative and operational vehicle mileages and emissions for the SOGE return. We understand this is because departments find it difficult to separate administrative and operational emissions rather than being a deliberate attempt to reduce total vehicle emissions.

4.5   It is not clear which departments are submitting mileages and carbon emissions from administrative vehicles, and those that are submitting administrative and operational mileages and emissions in the SDiG return.

4.6   Recommendation 1 – The OGC should provide advice to departments on how operational and administrative mileage can be separated. The SDC should clearly identify departments that are reporting administrative and operational mileages and emissions in the SDiG return.

BUSINESS TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

4.7   There appears to be little consistency in the way business travel is defined and managed across government. We found that it was common for a number of business areas to share responsibility for managing travel including procurement, finance, sustainability teams, HR and estates.   This has resulted in a silo mentality which makes data on travel hard to source and change difficult to implement.

4.8   There was no evidence of a government wide travel policy. There are no minimum government standards and departments design their own travel policy.   We commend the work of Buying Solutions in developing a Travel Guidance Note and checklist, but this is not a cross government travel policy.   There is also no requirement for departments to adopt the 'model text' in the guidance note or complete the checklist.

4.9   Recommendation 2 - Defra, DfT and the Cabinet Office should develop a cross government travel policy building on the work of Buying Solutions Travel Policy Guidance Note.

4.10   We found that officials do not always follow travel policy and book business travel outside agreed travel contracts. This prevents the collation of management information on travel patterns, financial expenditure and carbon emissions.

4.11   Government needs to improve its management information systems to understand why and how officials travel to deliver its business. To improve management information government needs to ensure that: travel policy is informative, accessible and up to date; staff book travel through approved suppliers and there are penalties for non compliance and; internal and supplier management reporting suites capture information on the traveller, the business unit, the reason for travel and the costs of the trip.

4.12   Recommendation 3 – Buying Solutions Travel Policy Guidance Note should provide further guidance on the types of travel data that should be captured and how data can be analysed to identify opportunities for sustainable operations and travel. The Guidance Note should also highlight where management information is likely to be held in departments.

4.13   Recommendation 4 - Departments should re-issue travel policy to all members of staff to increase awareness of policy and compliance.

4.14   Recommendation 5 – New members of staff should be made aware of travel policy, and booking and authorisation processes, during the staff induction process.

4.15   The efforts of Buying Solutions Travel Collaborative Category team in aggregating government spend and management information on air and rail travel is recognised. We also note that Buying Solutions has requested departments formally 'sign up' to the Government Air Program (GAP) to demonstrate their commitment to framework contracts for the first time.

4.16   Recommendation 6 - Buying Solutions should review the success of formal 'sign up' to the GAP. If this approach increases collaboration and supports sustainability future pan government travel contracts should have 'sign up' clauses.

4.17   Apart from Buying Solutions and DfT guidance there appears to be little other information or resources available to support departments move towards sustainable operations and travel.

4.18   Recommendation 7 - Defra should raise awareness by developing a cross government publicity campaign for sustainable travel. The campaign should include business travel, commuting and flexible working. The campaign should also promote Buying Solutions Guidance Note on Travel Policy.

TRAVEL PLANS: MANAGING COMMUTER TRAVEL

4.19   There is little evidence to suggest that departments are influencing employee travel choices or accounting for carbon emissions from commuter travel. The DfT leads on national policy, but we have been unable to identify the lead department for promoting and managing travel plans within government's own operations.

4.20   Recommendation 8 - Buying Solutions Guidance Note on Travel Policy should be enhanced with 'model text' on commuter travel plans and monitoring.

4.21   Recommendation 9 - DfT should lead on travel plans within government's own operations and establish a reporting framework to enable departments to monitor the uptake of sustainable and active modes of travel.

4.22   Recommendation 10 - The review of the SOGE targets should investigate whether performance measures on staff commuting would enable government to manage its operations in a sustainable way and reduce carbon emissions.

4.23   A significant body of research now exists for travel planning in the UK. DfT research evidence has shown that an average travel plan can achieve a reduction in car driver trips of between 15 and 20 per cent (ref 6).   An Area Travel Plan was developed at Cambridge Science Park in order to influence the daily commute of 5,000 employees who worked for the 50 companies on the park. To date, the travel plan has removed an estimated 88 trips in the peak and independent consultants have demonstrated cost savings in the region of £350,000 per annum (A benefit to costs ratio of 13:1)

4.24   Recommendation 11 - HM Treasury should clarify whether the recommendations of the King Review on travel plans in the public sector have been accepted.

4.25   Recommendation 12 - DfT, Defra and the OGC should engage with the National Business Travel Network (NBTN) to seek advice on travel plans and whether there are any practical tools available to assist departments develop and implement travel plans.

AIR TRAVEL

4.26   Government will need to use air travel to deliver its operations and a flight may be the only viable option.   Although there are no SOGE targets to support a reduction in departmental air travel emissions, Defra, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and Department for International Development (DfID) have all established air travel reduction targets in their Sustainable Development Action Plans. Unfortunately we have not been able to review the performance of these departments in the course of this review.

4.27   Despite no sustainability performance measures on air travel, government procurement teams and departmental travel policy should promote alternatives to air travel such as rail travel and video-conferencing. In the private sector companies of the calibre of PricewaterhouseCoopers, Barclays and KMPG have committed to air travel reduction targets through the ITMs Project ICARUS initiative. We commend the ITM for the work of Project ICARUS and also recognise WWF-UK for the One in Five Challenge.

4.28   The One in Five Challenge has been designed to help companies and government agencies reduce the environmental impact of their business travel. WWF-UK is challenging businesses and the government agencies to cut one in five business flights over a five year period.

'I would like to compliment WWF's campaign... the 'One in Five Challenge' is an extremely effective and practical way for organisations round the world to be part of the solution.'


Nobel Laureate Rajendra Pachauri, Chair, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

4.29   WWF-UK found that businesses could fly less and still be productive. WWF-UK have highlighted that there were many reasons why businesses would wish to fly less and make greater use of audio and video-conferencing including: cost savings from avoided flights and accommodation; improved work life balance for employees; increased levels of productivity; improved collaboration and communication with global clients; and faster decision making (ref 7).

4.30   Recommendation 13 - The OGC, Defra and the SDC should engage with departments that have established an air travel reduction targets to learn from their experiences.

4.31   Recommendation 14 - The OGC and Defra should engage with ITMs Project ICARUS and WWF-UK to learn from their experiences.

4.32   A number of departments are using domestic air travel when rail travel or alternatives such as video-conferencing may be appropriate. Figure 4.1 and 4.2 is a small sample and shows the number of flights three selected departments undertook between London and Manchester, and London and Newcastle in financial year 2007/08.
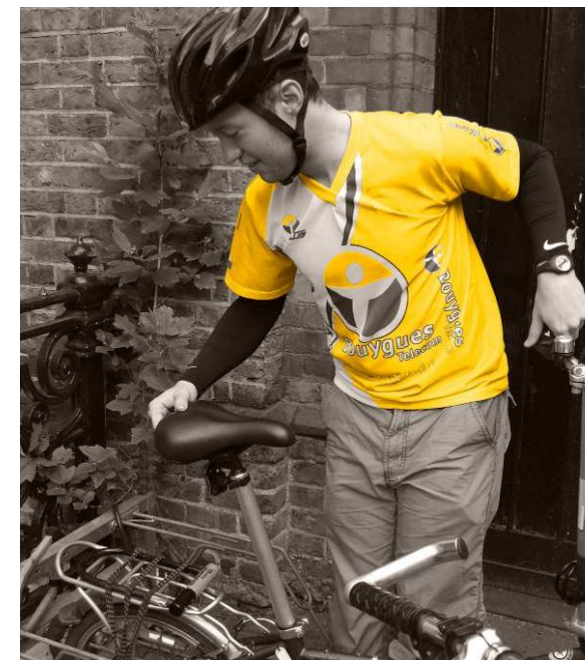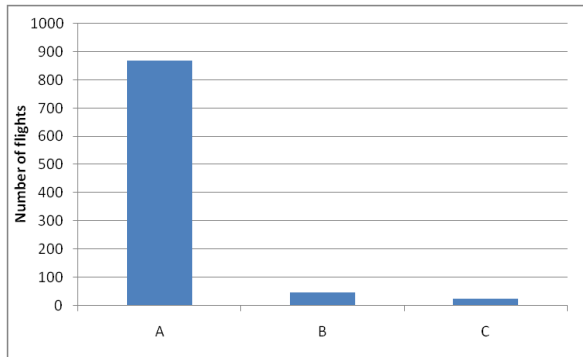
Figure 4.1   Departmental Air Travel between London and Manchester
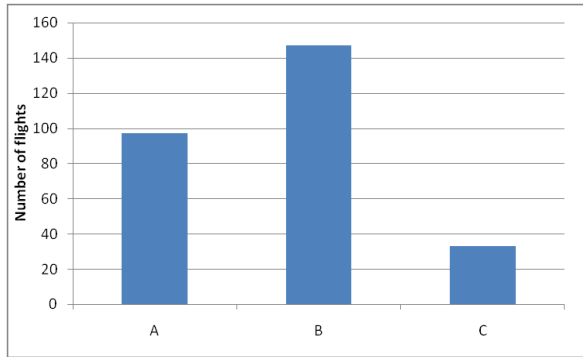
STEPS Questionnaire

Figure 4.2   Departmental Air Travel between London and Newcastle

STEPS Questionnaire

4.33   Recommendation 15 - Defra and Buying Solutions should identify the total number of flights between domestic airports in Financial Year 2007/08 and investigate whether trips could be switched to rail travel or video-conferencing.

VEHICLE TRAVEL

4.34   Government reported that it undertook 792.5 million kilometres of road travel in 2006/07 (ref 8) using a variety of different 'types' of vehicles including: Private Use Scheme (PUS) and Acquired Car Scheme (ACS) cars; pool cars; hire cars; and individuals using private cars on official business (also known as the Grey Fleet).

4.35   The Government Car and Dispatch Agency (GCDA), an Executive Agency of the DfT, is recognised nationally and internationally as an example of best practice in sustainable fleet management. The GCDA has achieved the SOGE targets ahead of schedule and has developed a driver training programme to promote smarter driving. However, the vast majority of departments that responded to the STEPS travel questionnaire knew very little about the make-up of their fleets, financial expenditure or how vehicles were being used.

4.36   Recommendation 16 - The OGC should engage with the GCDA and devise a government wide fleet management policy.

THE GREY FLEET

4.37   We found that departments often rely on individuals using their own cars (the grey fleet) when travelling on government business. Grey fleet miles are more expensive, harder to manage and pose greater duty of care risks than other modes on vehicle travel. In addition, a grey fleet vehicle is more polluting than a PUS or ACS car, or hire car (ref 9).
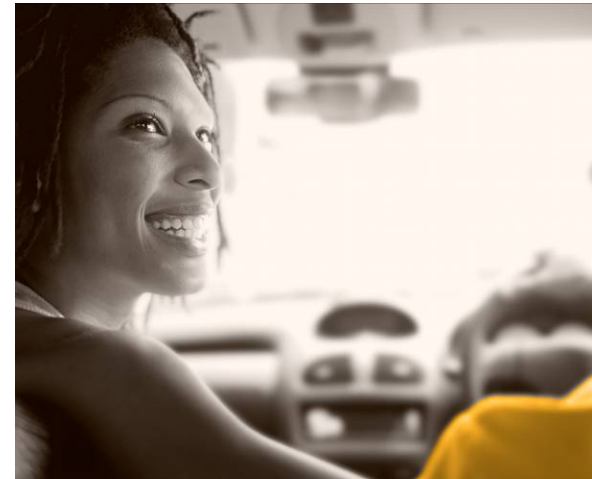
4.38   The OGC Grey Fleet Best Practice Forum has developed guidance notes and tools to assist departments reduce their dependence on the grey fleet. Some departments are making progress, but the management of grey fleet miles remains an issue. We understand that departments would welcome additional 'hands on' support to help drive change in fleet management.

4.39   The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) has demonstrated what can be achieved by devising a holistic approach to travel and fleet management. One of many notable achievements is a 20% reduction in the DWPs grey fleet mileage. The DWP has achieved the reduction in grey fleet mileage by analysing management information, updating travel policy, reviewing the allocation policy for company vehicles and ensuring comprehensive checking of legal documents.

4.40 The DWP has experienced an increase in the use of alternatives to travel, such as tele-conferencing and video-conferencing, since the introduction of its new travel policy. The DWP experience suggests that officials are able to deliver their business objectives effectively without travelling.

4.41 Recommendation 17 - The OGC should invest further resource in the Grey Fleet initiative and offer 'hands on' support to departments who wish to reduce dependence on the grey fleet.

GOVERNMENT VEHICLES: PRIVATE USE SCHEME AND ACQUIRED CAR SCHEME

4.42 Government offers employees who need to travel the option of a 'company' vehicle. We found that departments operate two vehicle schemes: the PUS and ACS Schemes. However, we understand that employees who need to travel are not required to use a PUS or ACS car and can opt to use their private vehicle on official business.

4.43 HM Treasury has acknowledged that the CO_2 based tax scheme introduced in 2002 has created a generally neutral position in terms of whether a company car represents an employee benefit. Yet, under Government's PUS and ACS schemes, which are based on personal use contributions and a taxable benefit, civil servants pay considerably more for a company vehicle than an equivalent private sector employee.

4.44 It is unclear why departments do not mirror the HM Treasury CO_2 based tax scheme. This may be one reason why government employees choose their own vehicle over a PUS or ACS vehicle. If departments are successful in reducing grey fleet mileages there may be a requirement to source different 'types' of vehicles. Whilst it may be possible to 'remove' vehicle mileage through smarter business planning, the use of alternatives to travel and transfer of trips to other modes of travel, some officials will require the use of a dedicated vehicle to deliver their objectives.

4.45 If government was able to 'transfer' mileage from the grey fleet into PUS and ACS vehicles it would reduce expenditure, improve the carbon efficiency of the fleet and reduce duty of care risks. The sourcing of additional volumes would also enable government to leverage additional financial efficiencies and promote sustainability in the vehicle supply chain.

4.46 Recommendation 18 - HM Treasury should ascertain the issues and reasons why departments do not follow HM Treasury guidance for PUS and ACS schemes.

SMARTER OR ECO-DRIVING

4.47 Smarter Driving is a style of driving that reduces fuel costs, collisions and carbon emissions. We found that many departments advertise the benefits of smarter driving in travel policies, but there was little evidence to suggest that departments offered training to their drivers.

4.48 We commend the promotion of smarter driving but believe that departments have an opportunity to do a lot more. The Energy Saving Trust (EST) has shown that drivers are able to reduce their fuel consumption by approximately 15% after tuition. For a driver covering 12,000 miles per year this equates to annual savings of £200 - £250 and more than half a tonne of CO2 (ref 10).

4.49 Recommendation 19 – OGC and DfT should work with the EST to develop a cross government smarter driving programme.

### MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

4.50 A government armed with robust management information and granular data on travel will be able to identify opportunities for sustainable operations and travel, and evidence the benefits of changing working practices.

DATA AVAILABILITY

4.51 We found that management information on all forms of travel was hard to source and limited in scope when it was available. This has prevented departments undertaking detailed data analysis of the impacts of departmental travel and assessing opportunities for sustainable operations.

4.52 Departments were asked to provide information on their travel expenditure as part of the STEPS travel questionnaire. Figure 4.3 shows the percentage of departments that were able to provide financial expenditure on different modes of business travel.

Figure 4.3   Percentage of departments able to provide financial spend by Travel Category for FY 2007/08
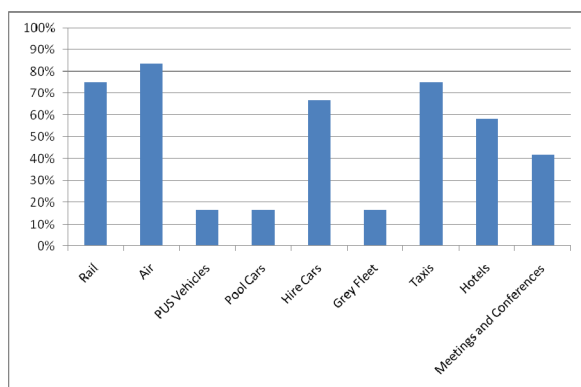
JMP Research

4.53   The responses to the STEPS questionnaire highlight the difficulties departments currently experience in managing business travel. There was limited information on travel expenditure, the frequency and types of business trips undertaken, and environmental impacts. Government and departments should consider how management information systems and reporting can be enhanced to improve travel management and facilitate sustainable procurement.

4.54   However, there is some evidence of individual departments making progress. For example, Buying Solutions has designed an access database to consolidate management information from all modes of business travel. The database has enabled Buying Solutions to start the processes of assessing its key environmental impacts and identifying where there may be opportunities to change business operations and travel patterns.

4.55   Recommendation 20 – Buying Solutions Guidance Note on Travel Policy should include information on its travel database. It is further recommended that Buying Solutions makes the database available to other departments.

4.56   The utilisation of the OGC's Electronic Property Mapping Service (ePIMS) database for SOGE data appears to be step in the right direction. The database will enable government to consolidate departmental data and disseminate high level findings to stakeholders. However, departments will only be mandated to submit travel data for administrative vehicles and air travel.

4.57   JMP has been advised that departments will not be required to submit information on other modes of travel if it would require disproportionate effort.   We recognise the need for government to reduce the administrative burden of data collation, but believe information on financial expenditure, distance travelled and carbon emissions should be readily available.

4.58   Departments need to be able to access this type of information to effectively and efficiently manage travel, procure travel services and identify opportunities for sustainable operations.

4.59   Recommendation 21 - Defra should mandate the collation of management information from all forms of business travel and employee commuting. Collection of travel data will assist government understand its current travel patterns, the impacts of operations and where there are opportunities to improve performance.

4.60   JMP notes the work of Buying Solutions and the OGC Collaborative Category teams and the improvements that have been made to management information systems. We recognise the culture of continuous improvement and the work that is being undertaken to improve the scope and quality of centralised travel data.

4.61   The OGC and Buying Solutions Collaborative Category teams indicated during STEPS interviews that they would welcome greater involvement from government policy teams when procuring travel services and fleets. The Collaborative Category teams felt that policy experts would offer valuable advice and help to embed sustainability criteria in pan government travel contracts.

4.62   Recommendation 22 - Policy teams in DfT, Defra and DECC should work more closely with the OGC and Buying Solutions to ensure that sustainability criteria is embedded in travel contracts.

4.63   Departments let a regular cycle of contracts for travel services and are often supported by the OGC and Buying Solutions Collaborative Category teams. There is a continual opportunity for departments, whether working independently or in collaboration with the OGC or Buying Solutions, to design services that support the move towards sustainable operations and travel.

4.64   Recommendation 23 - Departments should work collaboratively when procuring travel services and engage with the OGC and Buying Solutions.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN GOVERNMENT RETURN: HIGH LEVEL DATA ANALYSIS

4.65   We wanted to understand the SDIG administrative vehicle travel return in more detail and undertook a high level review of the data. We reviewed mileage and emissions information provided by departments to the SDC for financial years 2006/07 and 2007/08.

4.66   We divided a department's carbon emissions by its vehicle mileage. This calculation presented a carbon dioxide emissions figure per mile which could then be compared Defra's, 'Guidelines to Defra's greenhouse gas conversion factors, annexes 2008'.(ref 11)

4.67   We would have expected a department's carbon emissions figure per mile to be within the range of 0.2435 kg CO_2 (a small diesel car up to 1.7 litres) to 0.4760 kg CO_2 (a large petrol car above 2.0 litres).

4.68   The analysis highlighted a number of anomalies. For example, between 2006/07 and 2007/08;

↗   The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) mileage decreased by 51% and emissions increased by 16%;

↗   HMRC's mileage increased by 1.7% and emissions decreased by 18%; and

↗   The Ministry of Defence's (MOD) mileage increased by 9% and emission decreased by 5.5%.

4.69   When reviewing the carbon emission figure per mile driven we found that;

↗   The lowest carbon emissions figure per mile was 0.0051 kg (Department for Culture Media and Sport in 2006/07.)

↗   The highest carbon emissions figure per mile was 0.9388 kg (DCSF in 2007/08.)

↗   HM Treasury carbon emissions per mile were 0.4654 kg in 2006/07, which is broadly equivalent to each mile being driven in a large petrol car with an engine size of over 2.0 litres. In 2007/08 the carbon emissions per mile were 0.2904 kg, which is broadly equivalent to each mile being driven in a small petrol car with an engine size of up to 1.4 litres.

↗   The MOD's carbon emissions per mile were 0.2891 kg in 2006/07, which is broadly equivalent to each mile being driven in a medium sized diesel car with an engine size between 1.7 – 2.0 litres. In 2007/08 carbon emissions per mile were 0.2502 kg, which is broadly equivalent to each mile being driven in a small diesel car with an engine size of up to a 1.7 litres.

4.70   The findings from this high level review draw into question the commentary in the SDiG Report 2008 on the 2007/08 data, namely that:

"Pan-government figures have improved dramatically this year from last year. Specifically, performance has gone from an increase in carbon emissions against the baseline last year (1.5%) to making good progress in reductions this year (-10.3%). This target area shows the greatest improvement from last year and it is now on track to meet the target."

4.71   It appears that some departments are unable to provide robust data to the SDC on vehicle emissions. The Framework for Sustainable Development in Government, launched in financial year 2002/03 and the predecessor to the SOGE Targets, required departments to collate information on vehicle mileages and emissions. It appears that five years later some departments are unable to accurately capture data on carbon emissions from vehicles.

4.72   Recommendation 24 –The OGC should undertake a study specifically on how travel data is collated by departments.

4.73   Recommendation 25 – OGC should work with departments to ensure that SOGE data is accurate. If data is inaccurate the SDC should be provided with revised data.

DESIGNING A GOVERNMENT ESTATE TO ENCOURAGE SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS AND TRAVEL

4.74   When planning the government estate there is a potential to influence staff travel choices and departmental travel patterns.   As an example, estate managers may ask questions such as: Where are employees likely to live? What will be the likely inter-office travel patterns? Will information and communications technology allow tele-conferencing, as well as flexible and home working patterns to emerge?

4.75   A framework based on such criteria would allow sites to be ranked and compared to one another in terms of travel and transport. This would ensure that transport criteria forms part of the site assessment process, thereby embedding sustainable travel into the development of the government's estate.

4.76   We are led to believe that departments are encouraged to consult 'The Sustainability Appraisal Handbook for the Ministry of Defence Estate (ref 12) and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister consultation, 'Choosing locations for Government business' (ref13) when managing their estate.

4.77   These documents provide government officials with an outline of sustainable travel issues that should be considered in estate development. However, we found limited evidence of practical implementation tools that government officials can use to put policy into practice. This makes it difficult for officials to ensure that sustainable travel forms part of the decision-making process when deciding on the location of the estate.

4.78   When planning for office developments, transport professionals draw on a range of documents including Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) (2005) PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development; DCLG (1992) PPG4: Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms; DCLG (2001) PPG13: Transport; and DCLG / DfT (2007) Guidance on Transport Assessment.

4.79   Together these documents convey the messages that development planning should: reduce the need to travel; reduce the environmental impact of travel; encourage sites that are highly accessible by public transport; and promote sustainable travel.

4.80   Departmental estate managers could draw on a set of implementation tools to assess the accessibility of sites when designing the government estate to improve accessibility and promote sustainable modes of travel. The DfT accessibility planning software tool, ACCESSION, could be used in conjunction with population data to identify the likely office catchment by public transport and other sustainable modes (walking and cycling). Figure 4.4 shows a graphical output from ACCESSION.

4.81   Recommendation 26 - The government estate should be benchmarked by the OGC to assess the extent to which sustainable travel principles are embedded within the government estate strategy.

4.82   Government could use the results from ACCESSION as part of a site comparison and appraisal framework that covers government's five key objectives for transport: accessibility, safety, economy, environment and integration .(ref 14)

Figure 4.4 An example of a graphical output from ACCESSION
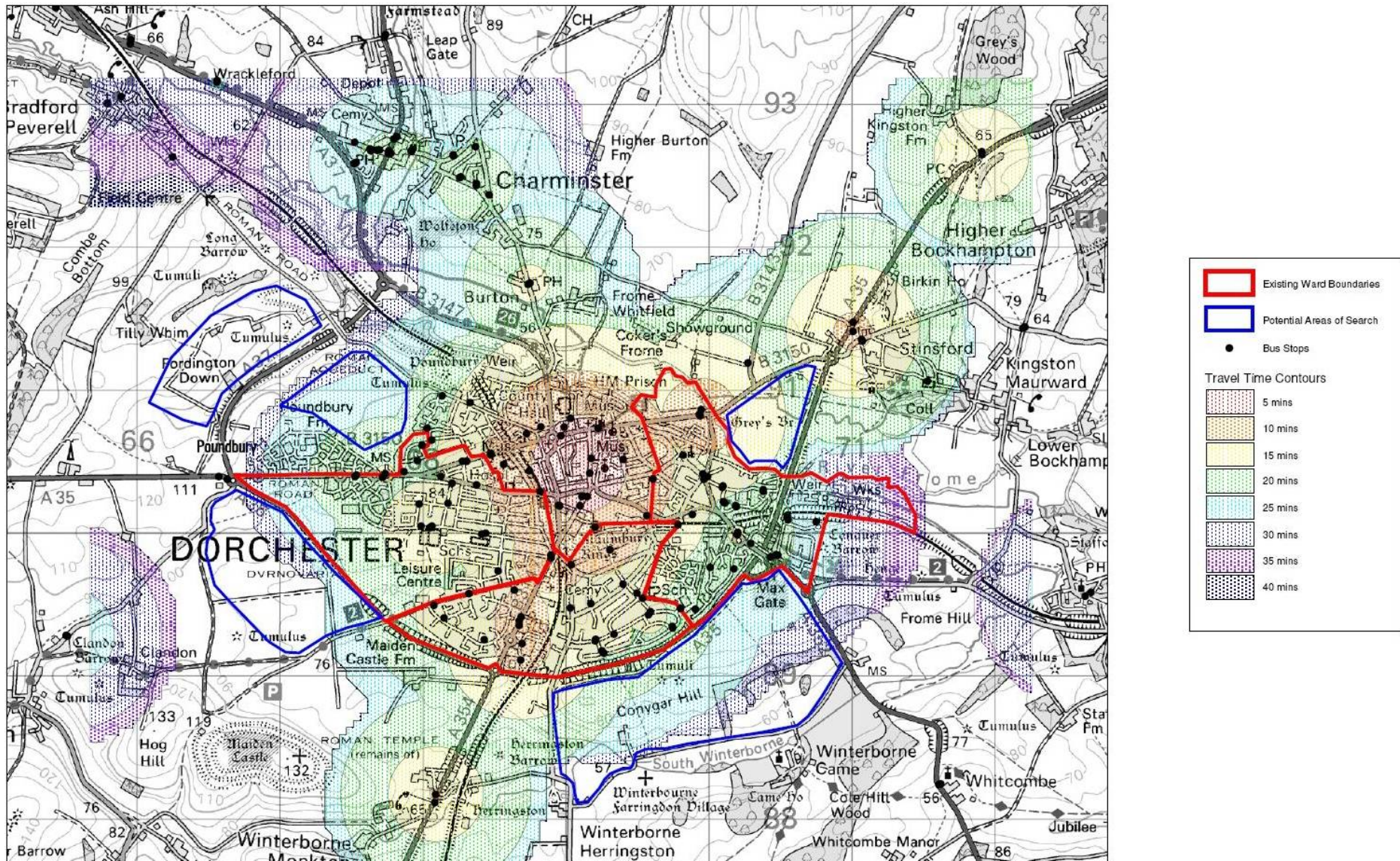
SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

4.83   The Sustainable Procurement Action Plan (SPAP) identifies travel services; and hire, lease and pool vehicles as key areas of government expenditure. The SPAP commits government to establish mandatory product standards and develop a low carbon resource efficient supply chain (ref 15).

4.84   We have not been able to identify the mandatory product standards that government has specified for travel services (which we believe to mean air, rail, hotels, and conferences); and hire, lease and pool vehicles. We have also been unable to identify the measures that government has put in place to drive a low carbon resource efficient supply chain.

4.85   Recommendation 27 - The OGC should communicate to departments, procurers, policy officials and other stakeholders the mandatory product standards that exist for travel services and vehicles.

4.86   Recommendation 28 – The OGC should communicate how it is driving a low carbon resource efficient supply chain.

4.87   Recommendation 29 - Buying Solutions Travel Policy Guidance Note should reference mandatory product standards.

VEHICLE PROCUREMENT

4.88   DfT's Low Carbon Vehicle Procurement Programme (LCVPP) (ref 16) aims to assist the public sector procure innovative and low carbon vehicles, and use government's purchasing power to accelerate the introduction of low carbon vehicles into the marketplace.

4.89   The initial phase of the LCVPP focuses on low carbon vans. Phase 2 is a smaller exercise for all electric vans, a lower carbon minibus and potentially a small demonstration fleet of plug in hybrid passenger cars.

4.90   In the short term the LCVPP is unlikely to assist department's meet their SOGE targets. Nevertheless, it is encouraging that government is examining ways to influence the vehicle marketplace and support the introduction of new technologies.

VEHICLE REPLACEMENT CYCLES: LIFE CYCLE EMISSIONS

4.91   It is understood that departments generally replace passenger vehicles every 3, 4 or 5 years as this is the most financially efficient replacement cycle. We have been unable to ascertain whether a 3, 4 or 5 year replacement cycle is the most efficient replacement cycle in terms of life cycle carbon emissions.

4.92   We note that Defra is currently mapping out the life cycle emissions of vehicles. The findings of Defra's research could be used to inform fleet procurement policy and vehicle replacement cycles in government.

4.93   Recommendation 30 - Defra should work with the OGC to ascertain the most efficient replacement cycle for vehicles in terms of life cycle carbon emissions. This information should be included in Buying Solutions Guidance Note on Travel.

REDUCING THE NEED TO TRAVEL

4.94   We commend the work of Buying Solutions in seeking to reduce the demand for air and rail travel by promoting alternatives to travel such as video-conferencing. However, the travel supply chain is not currently configured to deliver travel avoidance. Government is requesting suppliers to invest time and resources encouraging employees not to travel, and if they are successful to forgo revenue.

4.95   The travel category is a challenging proposition when seeking to promote travel avoidance. Nevertheless, government has an opportunity to engage in discussion with suppliers and develop new models of reward that encourage the adoption of sustainable behaviours.

4.96 Recommendation 31 - Buying Solutions should investigate the feasibility of issuing tenders for travel services that include alternatives to travel, such as video-conferencing and tele-presence.

DUTY OF CARE

"A company can be deemed negligent, and thus could be held liable for harm that may befall an employee if the employee claims he/she was unaware of the risk associated with their specific duties"

Source: ITM, Project ICARUS, Duty of Care Toolkit, Frequently Asked Questions

4.97   There can be no greater policy driver than adherence to UK law. Government must ensure its travel policies meet statutory health and safety requirements or risk prosecution and damage to its reputation.

4.98   The review found little evidence that government was fully aware of its responsibilities to staff when they are travelling on business, or had the measures in place to advise staff of the risks that may be encountered. For example, when departments were asked how they ensured staff had the necessary inoculations for a foreign business trip the responses included:

Department A - "The onus is on the individual to make sure that the correct vaccinations are carried out."

Department B - "It is up to the traveller to ensure they have the appropriate inoculations, but the cost of obtaining them is reimbursable by claim."

Department C - "There is no policy."

Recommendation 32 – Buying Solutions Travel Policy Guidance Note should be expanded to include information and 'model text' on duty of care.

Case Study – Case Law: Palfry v ARC Offshore Limited

"The claimant was sent to work for a contractor in West Africa by his UK employers. He did not receive the necessary vaccinations for the country and contracted malaria and died. In between trips he had been to a UK travel clinic for yellow fever vaccinations, but did not ask for anti-malarial tablets. His widow sued his employer and the clinic. The court held that the employer was required to ascertain publicly available information in respect of the health hazards that the employee could face, draw these to the employees attention and give advice on the appropriate medical steps to be taken. The employer did not do that and the widow won the case"

Source: A Davies, Workplace Law Handbook, 2009

DRIVING LICENCE CHECKS

4.99   It appears that some departments are not checking the driving licence of officials who drive on official business.   The responsibility on employers when employees drive a vehicle on company business is outlined on the Health and Safety Executive website.

"Managing the risks to employees who drive at work requires more than just compliance with road traffic legislation. The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 requires employers to take appropriate steps to ensure the health and safety of their employees and others who may be affected by their activities when at work. This includes the time when they are driving, or riding at work, whether this is in a company or hired vehicle, or in the employee's own vehicle. There will always be risks associated with driving. Although these cannot be completely controlled an employer has a responsibility to take all reasonable steps to manage these risks"

Source: http://www.hse.gov.uk/roadsafety/ (last accessed 15th April 2009)

Recommendation 33 - The Health and Safety Executive, DfT and the Cabinet Office should collaborate to devise a cross government travel safety policy.

CHANGING BEHAVIOUR

4.100   The development of new policy, processes and systems will not alone enable government to meet its ambitions for sustainable operations and travel. Government employees, suppliers and visitors will need to change the way they use travel in a sustainable and low carbon world.

4.101   There is no one size fits all approach to changing traveller behaviour. Government is advised to avoid mass marketing and use targeted messages on sustainable travel to those who are most receptive to change.

4.102 Social marketing approaches are now being applied to travel policy and implementation to ensure a more effective take up of behaviour change (ref 17 and 18). In addition, psychology models of behaviour change could be considered to support the take up of sustainable travel policies. The Trans-theoretical Model of Change (TTM) has been successfully applied in health psychology and can be considered a suitable model to apply to achieve a change in travel behaviour (ref 19).

4.103 The TTM explains or predicts a person's success or failure in achieving a proposed behaviour change. It attempts to answer why the change 'stuck', or alternatively why the change was not made. The TTM is based on more than two decades of research and has found that individuals move through a series of stages — pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance — in the adoption of healthy behaviours or cessation of unhealthy ones (ref 20 and 21).

4.104 Government could apply the TTM in its own operations and target business travellers and commuters who would be receptive to changing their behaviour. It would then be possible to devise messages and actions to support other groups that are resistant to changing their behaviour.

4.105 Recommendation 34 - DfT should investigate how the TTM or equivalent can be used to change the behaviour of travellers.

JOINING UP POLICY DRIVERS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE GOVERNMENT ESTATE

HEALTH POLICY

4.106 Perhaps one of the most pressing policy objectives alongside climate change is the health of the UK population. Nearly one in four adults in England is obese and rates have trebled since 1980. Projections of current trends show that nearly 60% of the UK population could be obese by 2050 which will mean a seven-fold increase in the direct healthcare costs. Wider costs to society could reach over £45.5 billion (at 2007 prices).

4.107 The widespread adoption of workplace travel plans and the promotion of sustainable and active travel could assist government achieve its health and wellbeing policies, and reduce the financial burden on the NHS.

"Physical activity is the key to stopping this country becoming the obesity capital of the world - and it makes us feel better. People of all ages can gain from doing more exercise but not enough of us do the magic 30 minutes, five days a week"

Minister for Public Health, Dawn Primarolo MP

4.108 The NHS aims to become an exemplar for promoting physical activity in the workplace and government could support this policy initiative by promoting workplace travel plans.   We echo our earlier recommendation for government to examine how workplace travel plans can be used to deliver sustainable operations and travel.

PUBLIC SECTOR SUSTAINABILITY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

4.109 The sustainability and carbon impacts of government operations stretch beyond the walls of the estate. A government that is leading by example on sustainable operations and travel will therefore support other public sector bodies achieve their own sustainability, transport and carbon targets.

4.110   For example, local authority performance on transport, sustainability and carbon reduction is measured through a series of National Indicators (NI). Departments operate within local authority reporting boundaries and could influence performance on a range of NI, including:

↗   National Indicator 167 - measures the average journey time per mile, during the morning peak, on major routes in the authority.

↗   National Indicator 185 - measures the progress of local authorities in reducing carbon dioxide emissions from buildings and transport used to deliver their functions.

↗   National Indicator 186 - measures the percentage change in carbon dioxide per capita in each local authority.

↗   National Indicator 188 - measures preparedness in assessing and addressing the risks and opportunities of a changing climate.

↗   National Indicator 194 - measures local air quality, concentrating on emissions of primary PM_{10} and NO_x from local authority estates and operations.

4.111   A government that takes a holistic approach to sustainable operations and travel in its own operations, and aligns performance measures and targets across the public sector, will catalyse action across the public sector.

4.112   The relocation of civil servants from London to the regions is an opportunity for government to show how public sector sustainability objectives can complement one another. Government could use the relocation exercise to support Smarter Choices commitments in Local Transport Plans or Sustainable Demonstration Towns.

4.113   Recommendation 35 – The OGC should assess how the High Performing Property strategy could support wider public sector sustainability and carbon reduction targets/initiatives.

4.114   There is a reputational risk for government if its own sustainable operations and travel targets are not as ambitious as performance measures in the wider public sector. The review of the SOGE targets is the perfect opportunity for government to address this issue and demonstrate that it is serious about sustainable operations and travel.

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