

Our policy statement on sustainable development

Introduction

- 1 We have developed this statement on sustainable development (see note 1 below) after consulting the industry on 11 October 2006 (see note 2 below). We published our policy conclusions on 20 April 2007 (see note 3 below).
- 2 This statement sets out our approach to delivering our specific duties in section 4 of the Railways Act 1993 (as amended). These are to:
 - “contribute to the achievement of sustainable development”; and
 - “have regard to the effect on the environment of activities connected with the provision of railway services”.

You can find a full list of our duties on our website at <http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.5056>.
- 3 We will review this statement at appropriate intervals to make sure that it is still relevant.

Background

- 4 We know how important sustainable development is to the UK Governments, as shown in:
 - a guidance issued to us by the Secretary of State and Scottish Executive; and
 - b the Government’s strategy – ‘Securing the future: delivering UK sustainable development strategy’ published in March 2005 (see note 4 below).

Our policy on sustainable development

- 5 We will use our regulatory powers and influence to work to develop a more sustainable railway as part of a sustainable transport system.

¹ Sustainable development is defined in the UK Government’s 2005 strategy as:
“to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising future generations.”

This means development that provides benefits for society now and in the future without harming the environment for future generations.

² *ORR’s Sustainable Development and Environment Duties – a consultation document*, ORR, October 2006 (<http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/upload/pdf/304.pdf>).

³ *ORR’s sustainable development and environment duties: conclusions*, ORR, April 2007 (<http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/upload/pdf/324.pdf>).

⁴ This is available on Defra’s website at http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/publications/pdf/strategy/SecFut_complete.pdf.

Putting our policy into action

- 6 We will put our policy on sustainable development into practice according to regulatory best practice. This will involve:
 - a reflecting our sustainable development policy in our other policies; and
 - b taking action if we can add value in terms of benefit to the public, and after we have assessed the likely effect our involvement will have.

Aims of the policy

- 7 We will set up and put into practice procedures to make sure we consider the environmental, social and economic effect of delivering our and the rail industry's activities, alongside our other duties under section 4.
- 8 The railway industry should better understand its performance in terms of sustainable development by effectively measuring and improving it. This will involve:
 - a developing and maintaining effective ways of measuring performance that help the industry understand its effect on sustainable development; and
 - b measuring the performance of individual organisations within the industry and across other industry sectors and forms of transport.
- 9 We will encourage the industry to contribute to sustainable development by making sure that arrangements are in place to allow the industry to identify and share best practice.
- 10 We will make sure that the industry, its customers and anyone with an interest has access to relevant information relating to the industry's role and responsibilities in dealing with the effect on the environment of its activities so they can tackle any concerns.
- 11 We will work with the rail industry, and anyone with an interest, to identify research topics to improve how the industry can best contribute to sustainable development. We will encourage the rail industry to carry out this research.
- 12 We will review the need to introduce new targets and incentives to make sure we manage sustainable development effectively so we can speak to people in the industry, anyone with an interest, and the Government on the best way that the industry can contribute to sustainable development. We will review, as appropriate, any existing targets or incentives to make sure that they continue to provide the right encouragement to promote sustainable development.