

Audit Scotland's annual statement on sustainable economic growth for 2010/11

The Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010, section 32(1)(a) requires listed public bodies to publish a statement on sustainable economic growth as soon as possible after the end of the financial year.

The following statement sets out the steps that Audit Scotland has taken in 2010/11 to promote and increase sustainable growth through the exercise of its functions. Further information on this and our audit work is contained in our annual report 2010/11 which is on our website at www.audit-scotland.gov.uk

Introduction

Audit Scotland is a statutory body that supports the Auditor General and the Accounts Commission in making sure public money in Scotland is used properly, efficiently and effectively by undertaking audits and investigations of Scottish public bodies. To ensure objectivity in our work, Audit Scotland is independent of the Scottish Government and ministers.

Sustainable economic growth and contribution to the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework

Audit Scotland contributes to sustainable economic growth in Scotland by holding public bodies to account and helping them to improve. This is achieved by carrying out performance, Best Value and financial audits of public bodies to provide assurance that money and resources are being used properly, efficiently and effectively and to highlight areas for improvement.

We audit public bodies, with a total spend of £45 billion a year. In 2010/11, we completed 212 financial audits and 26 national and Best Value performance audits.

Our annual financial audit reports cover the full range of audit work done in the year, providing the audited bodies and stakeholders with a comprehensive and independent view of financial management, governance and performance in public bodies. Auditors review the financial position and sustainability of public bodies and promote good financial management and planning.

We carry out performance audits across the public sector to help public bodies improve the quality of their services, do more with their money, and find more efficient and effective ways of working to the same or better standards. Our audit reports carry recommendations for public bodies to help them improve, and we publish good practice checklists and case studies. They also identify potential savings.

All our reports are published on our website at www.audit-scotland.gov.uk

Audit Scotland also contributes to sustainable economic growth and the Scottish Governments National Performance Framework as an employer. For example:

- Following an Equality Impact Assessment of our project management framework, we revised our booklet *Building diversity into our work* to support our staff in making sure that equality and diversity are considered during our national performance audits.
- In January 2011, we received 'Two Ticks' accreditation from Job Centre Plus. This is given to employers that make a commitment to supporting people with disabilities.

- This year staff received an average of nine days training and personal development to increase knowledge, skills, efficiency and effectiveness. We also have 26 trainees and staff working towards professional qualifications thereby increasing the skills base of Audit Scotland, and Scotland in general.
- More focused management and professional medical support was devoted to staff well-being and attendance this year, resulting in a reduction in our staff sickness absence. In 2010/11, our sickness absence was on average 4.89 days per employee, down from 8.82 days in 2009/10 and compared with a public sector average of 9.6 days.

In addition to the above we have contributed to the national performance framework by implementing a wide range of measures to reduce our impact on the environment, including promoting the use of public transport and increased recycling. With the support of the Carbon Trust we have set an ambitious target of reducing our carbon footprint by 20 per cent by 2014.

Not all of the work that we do is carried out by Audit Scotland staff. We contribute to economic activity by appointing firms of accountants to carry out audits on behalf of the Auditor General and the Accounts Commission and specialists to contribute to performance audits. This amounts to about £6.5 million a year.