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Deputy Prime Minister

Creating sustainable communities

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PLANNING

Regional Spatial Strategy Monitoring:
A Good Practice Guide



Office of the
Deputy Prime Minister

Creating sustainable communities

Regional Spatial Strategy Monitoring: A Good Practice Guide

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Chapter 1 How to use this guide

- 1.1 This guide has been produced in order to assist Regional Planning Bodies (RPBs) and others involved in the revision of Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) develop a robust framework for performance review and monitoring of RSSs. It replaces the guide issued by ODPM in November 2002 '*Monitoring Regional Planning Guidance*' and elaborates on the advice set out in chapter 3 of "*PPS11 Regional Spatial Strategies*" published in September 2004. It sets out a step by step approach to developing appropriate monitoring frameworks and provides advice on the use of objectives and formulating targets and indicators. The structure of this guide is set out in the box below.
- 1.2 At the beginning of the longer chapters of this guide a summary of the key points is set out. The guide is illustrated with examples of good practice. If readers are in doubt about a term they should refer to the Glossary at page 34.
- 1.3 The national RSS and Local Development Framework (LDF) core indicators should be read alongside this guidance. Given the dynamic nature of policy development and monitoring requirements, the core indicators will be updated as a separate document on ODPM's website so that users can turn immediately to them without having to access this guide.

Application of this guidance to the preparation of current annual monitoring reports (AMR)

- 1.4 This new guidance adds to rather than substantively changes the earlier guidance. RPBs are expected to follow this guidance in any further monitoring work unless it is impractical for them to do so because of the consequences of having been following the earlier guidance up to the issue of this new guide. It is appreciated that this guidance is too late for the AMRs being prepared for 2004/05.

STRUCTURE OF GUIDE

- **Chapter 2** sets out the national and regional monitoring context.
- **Chapter 3** outlines requirements and format for annual monitoring reports including the relationship with the RSS project plan.
- **Chapter 4** outlines the importance, use and development of partnerships and the role they play in monitoring.
- **Chapter 5** describes key stages of developing a monitoring structure as part of an RSS revision including the relationship with the statement of public participation and sustainability appraisal.
- **Chapter 6** sets out the objectives led approach to monitoring and review and the policy context within which it operates.
- **Chapter 7** advises on the development of targets, how to develop 'SMART' targets and examples of good practice.
- **Chapter 8** advises on the development of indicators, including local output indicators, contextual indicators and significant effects indicators. It also sets out the regional core indicators for monitoring RSSs.
- **Chapter 9** outlines analytical techniques to support the monitoring process.
- **Glossary of terms**
- **Potential data sources** highlighting the list of sources available on the CLIP website.
- **Objective, target and indicator examples** a range of illustrative examples of objectives and related targets, indicators, contextual indicators, significant effect indicators and implementation notes.

Chapter 2 Introduction and policy context

Why monitor?

- 2.1 Monitoring is essential to establish what is happening now, what may happen in the future and then compare these trends against existing policies and targets to determine what needs to be done. Monitoring helps to address questions such as:
 - are policies achieving their objectives and in particular are they delivering sustainable development?
 - have policies had unintended consequences?
 - are the assumptions and objectives behind policies still relevant?
 - are the targets being achieved?
- 2.2 It represents a crucial feedback loop within the cyclical process of policy-making. It provides information on the performance of policy and its surrounding environment, taking a future orientated approach by identifying the key challenges and opportunities and enabling adjustments and revisions to be made if necessary.
- 2.3 In the context of the new planning system, with its focus on delivery of sustainable development and sustainable communities, monitoring takes on an added importance in providing a check on whether those aims are being achieved. An important aspect of the new arrangements is the flexibility to update components of the RSS to reflect changing circumstances, reinforcing the new plan, monitor and manage approach. The ability to focus on specific sub regional policy areas and to be able to undertake partial reviews, as opposed to revising the entire RSS, allows RPBs to respond quickly to changing priorities for development in their areas. Monitoring will play a critical part in identifying these. That is why part of the test of soundness of a RSS is whether there are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring.

The need for spatial monitoring

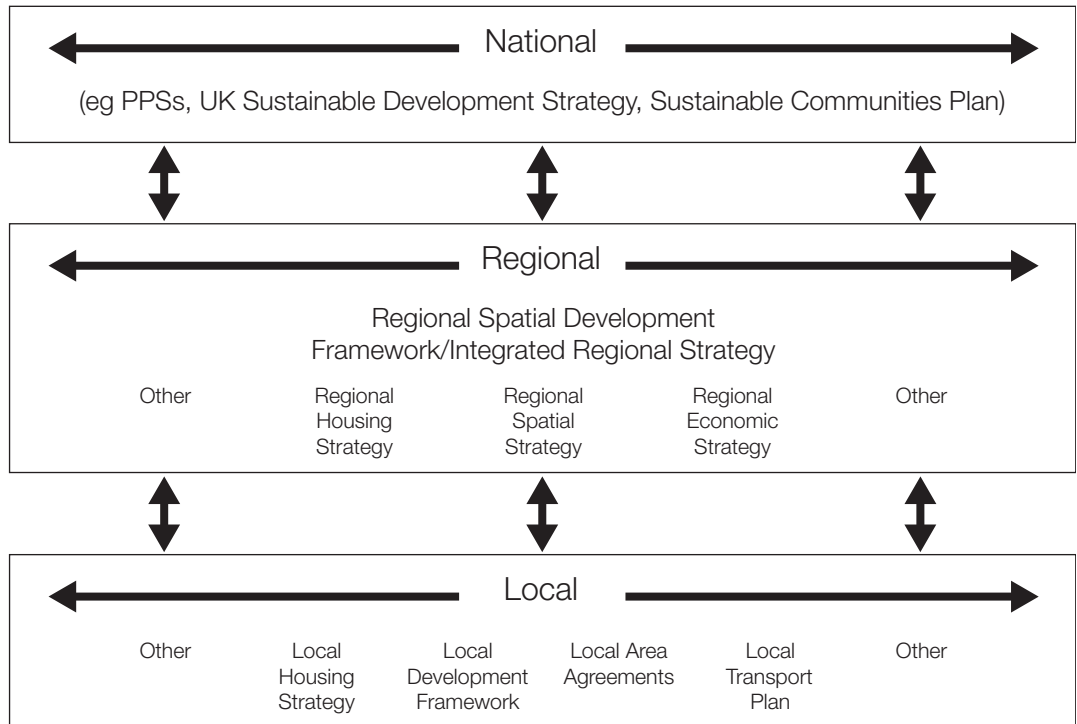
- 2.4 A key objective of the new planning system is that RSSs and Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) will be 'spatial'. PPS11 (see para 1.6) defines spatial planning as going "...beyond traditional land-use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function." Rather than being purely land-use these plans should embrace wider social, environmental, economic and physical objectives and:
 - provide a mechanism for delivering sustainable development objectives by addressing social, economic and environmental issues and relating them to the development and use of land;
 - consider the needs, issues and aspirations of communities and the key spatial drivers of change within an area;

- adopt an integrated approach which informs and takes account of other strategies and policy;
- facilitate and encourage new forms of partnership with a range of bodies including communities, stakeholders and commercial interests; and
- focus upon implementation, setting out agreed delivery mechanisms that have regard to the investment and operational plans of relevant infrastructure and service providers. A RSS must therefore include or have as a separate document cross-referenced in the RSS, an implementation plan which sets out for each policy and priority proposal how, by whom and when it is to be implemented (see chapter 3 of PPS11).

The wider policy context and links to other monitoring activities

- 2.5 The RSS has a critical interface with national policy, other regional strategies and LDFs and programmes as shown in Figure 2.1 below. RPBs are increasingly exploring how to coordinate RSS monitoring with the national, regional and local monitoring of these strategies, plans and programmes. This should help to promote the exchange of information, achieve some degree of consistency between different planning and monitoring activities and reduce overall resource requirements. It should also assist RPBs in gaining a greater understanding of the changes taking place in their regions. ODPM is playing its part through collecting national data, where it exists, on the core indicators and by facilitating national agreement on data specifications (see chapter 8).

Figure 2.1 the wider policy and monitoring context



Statutory requirements for RSS monitoring

- 2.6 In view of the importance of monitoring, section 3 of the **Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004**¹ (hereafter referred to as ‘the Act’) requires every RPB to make an annual report to the Secretary of State containing information on the implementation of the RSS and the extent to which the policies set out in the strategy are being achieved. Further details of this requirement are set out in Regulation 5 of the **Town and Country Planning (Regional Planning) (England) Regulations 2004**² (‘the Regulations’) including when the AMR should be submitted to the Secretary of State, and what it must include.
- 2.7 Key requirements include the need for the RPB to highlight any policy that in its opinion is not being implemented as planned or is not having the desired effect, identify reasons why, and determine if the policy is appropriate or can be successfully modified to achieve its objective/target. RPBs also need to submit a statement outlining the number of dwellings built in the region during the period covered by the AMR, and since the policy or policies concerned were first published by the Secretary of State.

¹ *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004* (HMSO: May 2004).
See <http://www.legislation.hms.gov.uk/acts/acts2004/20040005.htm>

² *The Town and Country Planning (Regional Planning) (England) Regulations 2004* (HMSO, September 2004), see <http://www.hms.gov.uk/si/si2004/20042203.htm> and *The Town and Country Planning (Transitional Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2004* (ODPM: September 2004) <http://www.hms.gov.uk/si/si2004/20042205.htm>.

Sustainability Appraisal Monitoring

- 2.8 RSSs are required by section 5 of the Act to be subject to sustainability appraisal (SA). RPBs will need to consider how to ensure there is one monitoring process which incorporates SA monitoring. ODPM have issued guidance on ‘*Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks*’³. The guidance emphasises the need to integrate SA monitoring with the statutory monitoring of RSS and LDFs in order to meet the monitoring requirements of the European Directive on strategic environmental assessment⁴. SA monitoring can help to interpret longer-term outcomes of the RSS strategy as outlined in chapter 5.

LDF Monitoring

- 2.9 The Act requires monitoring for both RSSs and LDFs. It is particularly important that these monitoring activities are closely coordinated. Further advice on partnership working arrangements to facilitate this can be found in chapter 4.
- 2.10 The Act and Regulations for LDF monitoring parallel those for the RSS set out above. However:
- Section 48 (6) of the Local Development Regulations⁵, makes clear that an AMR should report on “dwellings built” in the form of “net additional dwellings”. The RSS AMR should work to the same definition; and
 - the date of submission of the AMR is 31 December, two months earlier than that for the RSS. This is to allow time for the LDF monitoring findings to feed into the RPB’s AMR.

Complementary guidance

- 2.11 Chapter 3 of ‘*Planning Policy Statement 11: Regional Spatial Strategies*’⁶ (PPS11) emphasises the importance of monitoring implementation of the RSS, and outlines the new statutory requirements. In addition RPBs may find it helpful to have regard to the following:
- **Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks**,⁷ (paragraphs 4.45 to 4.52) which outlines the key policy requirements in terms of local development document monitoring and annual monitoring reports;
 - **Local Development Framework Monitoring: A Good Practice Guide**,⁸ which expands on the above to provide detailed guidance on how local planning authorities should monitor local development documents.

³ *Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks*, (ODPM, November 2005), see <http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1161341>

⁴ *Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment*

⁵ *The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004* see <http://www.hmso.gov.uk/si/si2004/20042204.htm>

⁶ PPS11: *Regional Spatial Strategies* (ODPM: September 2004) see <http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1143839>

⁷ PPS12 ‘*Local Development Frameworks*’ (ODPM: September 2004). See http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_control/documents/contentstemplate/odpm_index.hcst?n=5038&1=2

⁸ *Local Development Framework Monitoring: A Good Practice Guide* (ODPM: March 2005) see <http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1143905>

Chapter 3 Annual Monitoring Reports

What the AMR should cover

- 3.1 In accordance with the requirements of the Act, the Regulations, and associated Government guidance, the main purposes of the monitoring and review of RSS implementation are to reveal:
- (i) whether policies and related targets in the RSS have been met or progress is being made towards meeting them or, where they are not being met or not on track to being achieved, the reasons why;
 - (ii) whether numbers of net additional dwellings built in the region during the period covered by the AMR and since the policy or policies concerned were first published by the Secretary of State are on target. To assist this RPBs are encouraged to produce a regional housing trajectory, and sub-regional trajectories where appropriate, of completions and conversions to demonstrate how the policies will deliver the housing provision required by the RSS;
 - (iii) what significant effects implementation of the policies is having on the social, environmental and economic characteristics of the area and whether these effects are as predicted by the SA of the RSS;
 - (iv) whether the policies need adjusting or replacing because they are not working as intended;
 - (v) whether the way the RSS is being implemented needs to be changed to ensure delivery; and
 - (vi) whether the policies need changing to reflect changes in national policy or because circumstances have changed since the preparation of the existing RSS and new issues need to be addressed.

The above purposes may overlap.

Whether the project plan for a RSS revision is on track

- 3.2 Although it is not a statutory requirement, as it is for the LDF AMR, it is good practice for the RSS AMR to report on whether the preparation of any RSS revision is on track (as set out under its project plan) and if not to summarise what actions will be taken to bring it back on track. Authorities are encouraged where possible to provide an assessment of progress beyond the annual 1st April to 31st March reporting period as far as is practically possible as longer time periods may be needed in order to ensure that any discerned trends are established.

Follow-up actions

- 3.3 The AMR should set out what actions the RPB, Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and/or other stakeholders responsible for the implementation of the RSS need to take where policies need adjusting, new policies need to be developed or where implementation needs to be brought back on track. Where it has not been possible to monitor implementation of a policy or group of policies in the RSS, the AMR should give reasons for this (e.g. too early for meaningful assessment, lack of data) and outline what needs to be done to facilitate future monitoring (e.g. need for more suitable indicators). It is also good practice for the AMR to identify any issues which need to be monitored more closely in the future and how the monitoring framework needs to be changed to enable such monitoring (e.g. need for new/changed indicators and data requirements).

The structure of AMRs

- 3.4 The structure of the RSS AMR is for each RPB to decide and should be adapted to the specific needs in the region. However, the RPBs may find the following advice helpful. In terms of the overall structure of an AMR it could broadly follow the topic or thematic policy chapters of the RSS. For each of these topics or themes the AMR chapters would show what the data on the indicators used to monitor the implementation of the policies reveals about implementation. It would help ensure that all RSS policies are monitored, including the objectives/policies in the overarching core strategies which have not always been monitored in the past.

Suggested structure of the AMR

- Executive summary.
- An introduction, setting out key characteristics, issues, challenges and opportunities in respect of the region (including sub-areas).
- Main chapters in the AMR structured around the topic or thematic policy chapters of the RSS. Each chapter provides a summary of the relevant RSS objectives and policies and an analysis of what the indicators, including the regional core indicators and the significant effect indicators derived from the SA, reveal about the implementation of these objectives and policies. Where necessary or relevant, summary and analysis should cover policies which might link across topic or thematic areas (see Chapter 5.8).
- The topic or thematic chapters would also highlight any policies that are not being implemented, identify reasons why, and determine if the policies are appropriate in which case implementation arrangements need to be improved, or can be successfully modified to successfully achieve its objective. These chapters would also identify any new issues which need to be addressed in a future review of the RSS.
- A chapter on whether the preparation of any RSS revision is on track with the project plan and if not to summarise what actions will be taken to bring it back on track.
- Each chapter should identify any required actions.
- Appropriate use of illustrations (e.g. charts, graphs and maps) and presentation of data in a consistent format year on year.
- Presentation should be user friendly, with the purpose, findings, and proposed actions highlighted. Brevity is important although this should not be at the expense of thorough analysis and interpretation of monitoring information.

Chapter 4 Partnership working

- 4.1 Involving key stakeholders in the development of the RSS AMR, assisting LPAs in the preparation of their AMRs and facilitating the sharing and exchange of data and analysis will have a number of important benefits. It will be crucial to the development of successful monitoring frameworks, particularly the survey and evidence bases that will underpin RSS revisions. It should help strengthen the commitment of key delivery agencies, including the LPAs, in implementing and monitoring the delivery of the RSS. It should reduce the overall costs of monitoring in a region. It should promote a more joined up and integrated approach between strategies and initiatives at the regional level and between the RSS and LDFs.

Regional partnership mechanisms

- 4.2 Established good practice in facilitating partnership working is to:
- appoint one or more dedicated monitoring officers at the RPB while ensuring that monitoring does not depend entirely on this one person or team. It is good practice to consider whether some of the monitoring functions can be shared with the RPB policy officers/working groups on either a topic or thematic basis;
 - as above, establish good links between the RPB monitoring and RPB policy officers/working groups (e.g. through regular exchange/meetings, involvement of topic officers/groups in the preparation of the RSS AMR, especially in reflection on whether policies are working or not working, the reasons for that, what actions are required etc.);
 - establish a Regional Planning Monitoring Group, including LPAs, RDAs, Regional Observatories and other regional bodies as appropriate;
 - agree upon, through the Regional Planning Monitoring Group and any sub-groups, what is to be monitored and by whom, the resources needed and the mechanisms by which this will be achieved. Critical to this will be a clear protocol on data specification and transmission of local data to the RPB. There should also be agreement on the roles and responsibilities of local planning authorities, and sub-regional working groups in relation to RSS and LDF monitoring in view of the close links between the RSS and LDF AMRs. Much of this can be captured in an action plan;
 - hold workshops with data providers to discuss monitoring requirements; and
 - have an annual stakeholder conference to present the RSS AMR and discuss its findings.

Role of Strategic Planning Bodies

- 4.3 Strategic planning bodies have an important key sub-regional role in the development and monitoring of the RSS AMR. They are defined in section 4(4) of the Act as a County Council, Metropolitan District Council, National Park Authority or a District Council for an area for which there is no County Council. Section 4(5) of the Act enables the RPB to

enter into appropriate arrangements agreed with these bodies or district councils. The North East Regional Assembly, for example, has entered into an agreement with county councils in the region to help produce its AMR.

- 4.4 In the two-tier areas the counties can assist, for example, through taking the lead in establishing a central database and by obtaining information from the district authorities, analysing it and then feeding back the results to the districts and to the RPB. As well as their monitoring expertise in relation to their functions, including transport, minerals and waste, many counties have expertise on a wide range of other indicators ranging from employment density to labour supply and the working population. In most regions one or more counties are acting in this way. For example, in the West Midlands, Worcestershire County Council has a lead role in monitoring residential land throughout the region and Birmingham City Council has a similar lead role in relation to employment land.

Role of the Regional Observatory

- 4.5 An important regional partner in a monitoring partnership will be the Regional Observatory/Regional Intelligence Unit. There are observatories in every region and best practice emerging from these include:
- the development of regional databases. For example, the South West Intelligence Database serves as a data repository promoting the use of evidence in the development of policies in the region. This is also a valuable resource for schools, students and the general public. The system is fully searchable and provides data from regional to local level in both narrative and numerical formats. Data provided to the South West Assembly by local authorities involved in the monitoring process is uploaded to the system but data is also provided by the system for RSS monitoring purposes. The Assembly has made requests for other stakeholders to provide annual monitoring data directly to the system;
 - the establishment of online portals for regional monitoring data and intelligence. For example the South East England Intelligence Network (SEE-iN) has an online portal which signposts resources (data, information, reports, strategies and more) relevant to the region (www.see-in.co.uk). SEE-iN is a partner organisation of the South East England Regional Assembly, the South East England Development Agency, the Government Office for the South East, Skills Insight, the Environment Agency and the South East Public Health Observatory. The portal has an interactive mapping facility which the partnership is developing to include data that is made available through the portal. The success of SEE-iN is built on effective partnership working; each partner in the forum takes responsibility for the update of different parts of the site as well as for the strategic development of the site overall.

Role of the Government Office in relation to the AMR

- 4.6 The GO should be given an opportunity to comment on the proposed monitoring framework and the implementation plan in an emerging RSS revision and will be able to make representations on any remaining issues at the EIP, if necessary. Similarly it should be given an opportunity to comment on the emerging AMR. If there are problems in implementing the advice in this guide, and in particular if there are problems in collecting data on the regional core indicators, that should be discussed with the GO at an early stage.
- 4.7 The GO will want to see appropriate actions identified in the AMR where the emerging AMR finds policies are not being implemented as intended in the RSS, are having undesired effects or if the emerging AMR identifies through its contextual monitoring new spatial issues that need addressing.

Chapter 5 Key stages in the monitoring process

Summary

Monitoring and review of RSS is a continuous process, which should be integrated with the different stages of revising a RSS.

Key points of good practice for RPBs are to:

- integrate the development of the monitoring framework into the RSS revision process, taking full account of SA monitoring requirements;
- agree monitoring principles at an early stage in liaison with Government Offices and through the Regional Planning Monitoring Group (see chapter 4) and continue regular liaison meetings to discuss development and progress;
- develop options, draft policies and related targets taking account of how they are to be monitored (see chapters 7 to 9 for more detail);
- test and modify these options, draft policies and targets through the SA and participation processes, taking account of delivery mechanisms and how implementation is to be monitored;
- develop the preferred options or option, policies, targets and indicators into the submitted revision to the RSS, supported by the SA and an implementation plan;
- modify the monitoring framework and implementation plan as necessary in line with the changes made by The Secretary of State in finalising the RSS revision;
- establish a programme for reporting on RSS performance in future AMRs in liaison with the Regional Planning Monitoring Group; and
- understand the reasons why targets are not being met, decide on actions to secure delivery and consider whether mitigation is necessary because of adverse effects.

An Integrated Approach

- 5.1 Monitoring and review of RSS is a continuous process and should help inform the different stages of producing a RSS revision. This will help to ensure that the RSS meets the test of “soundness” at the examination-in-public, as it will be based on firm evidence, with its implementation measures and monitoring arrangements clearly set out.
- 5.2 The fit between the different stages of RSS production and the development of the monitoring framework is set out in the box below. It is also illustrated in Figure 5.1 at the end of this chapter.

Stages of RSS revision production and the development of the monitoring framework	
Key stages in RSS revision process	Monitoring and review framework (including the relevant Sustainability Appraisal stages)
Identify the revision issues – Evidence gathering	Use the results of previous monitoring to help inform the identification of issues. Collect baseline information for SA
Prepare Project Plan including Statement of Public Participation	Take account of monitoring findings in developing the objectives of the RSS revision and the reasons why they were chosen. The same process should be followed for developing an SA framework
Identify, appraise and consult on the options and draft policies	Develop initial options and draft policies in conjunction with stakeholders and through the participation process Agree monitoring principles in liaison with Government Offices and through the Regional Planning Monitoring Group Link the objectives through to policies, targets and indicators for monitoring Appraise the options, draft policies and targets through the SA and participation processes and in conjunction with stakeholders Identify those who are to be involved, and how, in monitoring and implementation Develop the preferred options, or option, policies, targets and indicators into the submitted revision of the RSS, supported by the SA and an implementation plan
Submission and consultation on the draft RSS revision	Possible modifications of policies and related targets and indicators
Submission of draft revision of the RSS, Examination-in-Public and issue of Proposed Changes by the Secretary of State	Possible modifications to policies and related targets and indicators, and other changes to the monitoring framework and implementation plan
Issue of final RSS	Possible further modifications to policies and related targets and indicators, monitoring framework and implementation plan
Scrutinise local development documents and other plans and programmes necessary to deliver the RSS for consistency with the RSS	Establish a programme for reporting on RSS performance in future AMRs measuring the RSS target outcomes against the SA and contextual indicators baseline
Evaluate delivery of RSS policies in terms of outputs and outcomes	Continuous monitoring and review and production of AMRs in accordance with the Act and regulations
If there are problems with delivery or policies need to be revised or new policies developed consider what actions need to be taken, including a future RSS revision and whether any mitigation is necessary because of adverse effects	

Integration of monitoring throughout the stages of RSS review

- 5.3 The text below elaborates on some of the key points in the box above.

Defining the brief/issues

- 5.4 Before defining the brief/issues it is good practice, if this has not been done already, to establish a Regional Monitoring Group as recommended in chapter 4. This Group is likely to prove invaluable in securing agreement between all those responsible for developing the monitoring and review framework. The role and benefits of having such a Group are set out in paragraph 4.2 above. As well as this group's advice, the results of previous monitoring of existing RSS policies and implementation mechanisms can help inform the identification of the brief and issues for the RSS review.

Identify and develop options and policies

- 5.5 PPS11 emphasises the importance of identifying strategic options and developing preferred policy solutions that are integrated around key sustainable development objectives taking account of cross-cutting issues, including cross-boundary matters. It is important that options developed for the RSS are capable of monitoring and review.
- 5.6 It is good practice for the targets and indicators to be summarised by policy/topic area or within a separate implementation and monitoring chapter at the end of the document and indexed by topic, as is becoming standard practice. The RSS for the South West, issued in September 2001, the RSS, for Yorkshire and Humber, issued in October 2001, and the RSS for the West Midlands issued in June 2004, are all examples of this practice.

Consultation on Submitted RSS

- 5.7 This provides the public and stakeholders with an opportunity to make a representation on any draft RSS revision matter, including those concerning the implementation plan and the monitoring framework, before it is tested for soundness at examination.

Examination-in-Public & Proposed Changes to RSS

- 5.8 At the Examination-in-Public the RPB should ensure that the monitoring framework and the implementation plan are clearly outlined, allowing the panel to consider if any improvements are needed. Following the publication of the Panel Report the Secretary of State will consider changes to the draft RSS revision. This provides the Secretary of State with an opportunity to, amongst other things, modify the monitoring framework and the implementation plan in accordance with the recommendations of the Panel Report and national policy.

Issue of final RSS

- 5.9 By the time the RSS revision is issued it should have clear and interrelated objectives, policies, targets and indicators with a clear indication of how each policy is to be implemented, by when and by whom with output and process targets and indicators identified where appropriate.

Continuous monitoring and review

- 5.10 Measuring the progress of RSS towards its stated objectives and targets is an annual process as referred to in chapter 2. However, the scale of the monitoring process in any year needs to take account of the resource requirements of monitoring a large number of indicators. It may not be practicable to measure all indicators every year and instead it may be sensible to undertake a systematic cycle of indicator monitoring. It is best practice for RPBs to measure 'key' indicators annually and others at least every three years as part of a more comprehensive monitoring process. In considering the indicators to be measured at any one time among the factors to be considered are:
- nationally determined objectives and targets;
 - nationally determined reporting requirements;
 - target time scales;
 - cost, reliability and relevance; and
 - data collection routines.
- 5.11 Naturally, it is particularly important that targets with specified milestones and time periods are measured at the dates specified as well as during the normal monitoring process. Consistent with the RSS as issued by the Secretary of State and the advice in this guide, each RPB should also include within its 'key' set of indicators the regional core indicators. One of the purposes of annual monitoring is to act as an 'early-warning' of emerging issues. This key set of indicators should cover all the topic areas of RSS but weighted towards those which the RPB considers, having consulted stakeholders, are the most important indicators. Further and more detailed advice on setting targets and indicators is set out in chapters 7 and 8.
- 5.12 This assessment of RSS progress should evaluate whether the original assumptions upon which the RSS was developed remain valid and examine overall progress towards all the policy objectives set out in RSS. This review is likely to draw upon a wide range of contextual and baseline monitoring information and consider whether the RSS is having its anticipated effects by reference to significant effects indicators (see text below).
- 5.13 The annual monitoring reports should contain details of trends over time with respect to the key targets and indicators and also set out those indicators for which information is not being collected in a particular year. Any significant changes in the regional context should be taken into account including information derived from monitoring the contextual indicators. If the RSS is not being implemented as indicated or having the desired effect, the RPB will find it helpful to discuss what actions to take with the GO, LPAs and other stakeholders involved in delivery of the RSS.

Integration with Sustainability Appraisal Process and Monitoring

- 5.14 The SA process is part of the RSS revision preparation process (see para 2.8 above) and can help interpret longer-term outcomes of the RSS strategy. SA monitoring should be an integral part of monitoring the RSS and is outlined below. More detailed information is set out in the Sustainability Appraisal Guidance of November 2005.

Developing the Scope of the SA

- 5.15 Monitoring should be considered as part of the SA scoping exercise, as outlined in the SA guidance, particularly in relation to the collection of baseline information. Baseline information provides a basis for predicting and monitoring effects and helps to identify sustainability problems and alternative ways of dealing with them. This stage of the SA process can be done as part of the evidence gathering of the RSS revision.

Developing and refining options

- 5.16 The emerging RSS revision options will undergo an iterative process of appraisal involving the testing against sustainability objectives, targets and indicators and the prediction and assessment of effects. Proposals for monitoring and mitigation measures will be developed as part of this assessment. This will include developing indicators to monitor the significant social, environmental and economic effects of RSS implementation.

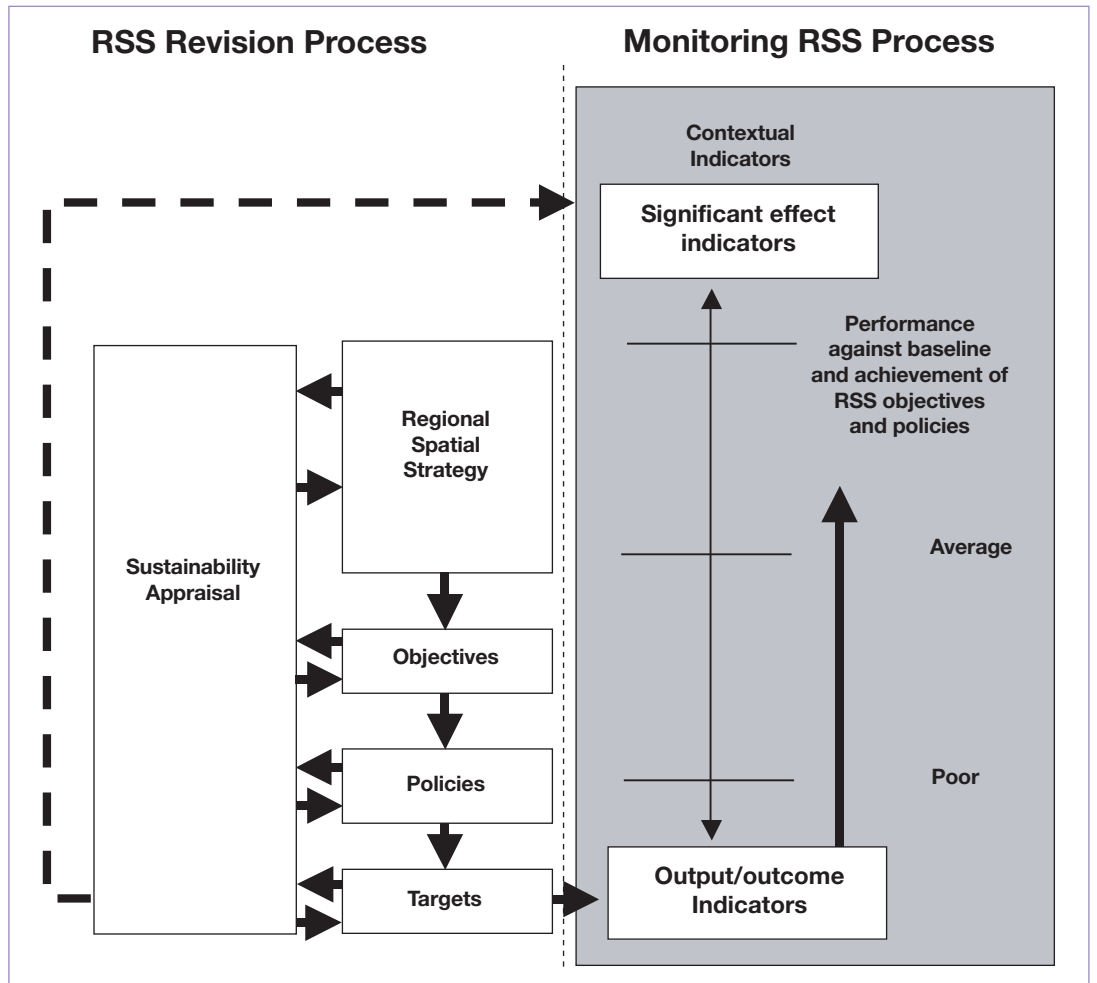
Finalising the SA report on the submitted RSS revision

- 5.17 The SA report accompanying the RSS revision should outline how SA monitoring is to be carried out and make clear that it will be an integral part of RSS monitoring. This close integration between the RSS and SA processes will make the best use of common data and other resources.

Monitoring the significant effects of RSS implementation

- 5.18 Following issue of the RSS in its revised form, work can then start on comparing the actual significant effects of implementing a RSS revision against those predicted by the SA. Significant effects indicators will be used for this process as described in chapter 8.
- 5.19 SA monitoring is intended to identify adverse effects and to enable mitigating action to be taken. The SEA Directive specifically requires monitoring to identify such effects although it does not itself create requirements for remedial action. Further information is provided in the SA guide.

Figure 5.1 Map of RSS monitoring structure, process and performance



Chapter 6 The Objectives led approach to monitoring and review

The objectives-led policy formulation and monitoring approach

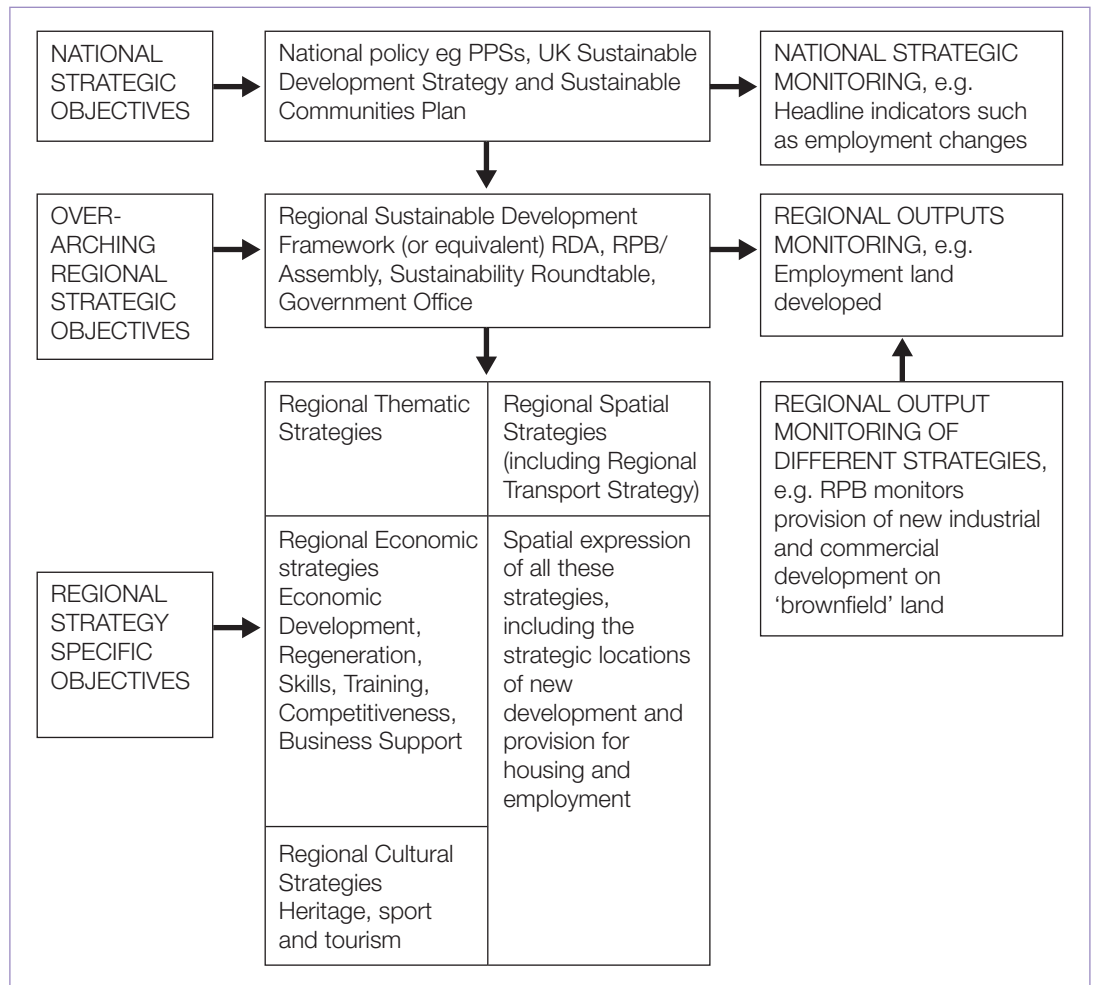
- 6.1 The objectives-led approach is fundamental for effective monitoring. Policies are the mechanism by which an objective is delivered through the RSS. In a well-prepared RSS, policies are clearly linked to the specified objectives, with targets that, wherever practicable, are quantified and supported by an implementation plan to facilitate monitoring.
- 6.2 The benefits of the objective led approach for the RSS are that:
 - focusing on policy objectives helps to cut through ‘indicator led’ approaches which monitor and evaluate a wide range of information which is not relevant to the performance or specific contribution of a RSS;
 - monitoring and evaluating the specific role and impact of the RSS leads to more transparency and accountability as it becomes clear what the RSS is delivering and what the barriers are to its performance;
 - the feedback loop helps to provide more relevant information on specific performance, which leads to more informed policy and decision making; and
 - the policy objectives and means of implementation help inform the choice of relevant indicators.

Defining Objectives

- 6.3 Over-arching objectives are set out in the Regional Sustainable Development Framework or equivalent (some regions have developed an Integrated Regional Strategy) and the sustainability appraisal objectives. The RSDF or equivalent provides a high level statement of regional vision for achieving sustainable development and provides an essential part of the background against which all regional strategies are prepared. The RPBs will need to develop more specific objectives and targets for RSS purposes and, as part of the SA, sustainability appraisal objectives will be developed against which the RSS objectives can be tested and refined.
- 6.4 It is good practice in the formulation and review of RSS objectives to take account of monitoring findings on past policy performance. It will help the assessment of whether existing RSS objectives are still appropriate or need to be changed.
- 6.5 Additionally RSS objectives should also both shape, and be shaped by, other regional strategies. The RSS and other strategies need to be aligned in their key objectives and vision, and support one another, in order to ensure that the region can successfully deliver its sustainable development objectives.

The following diagram sets out the context in which regional objectives are formulated, leading to policy and implementation outcomes:

Figure 6.1 Policy context within which RSS is operating



Chapter 7 Developing Targets for RSS

Defining targets

- 7.1 Targets can provide yardsticks for assessing the extent to which RSS objectives and policies are being achieved and implemented respectively. Within the monitoring process, targets are the starting point for data analysis and interpretation. For example, targets can be used to highlight areas where planned objectives are not being achieved and thus trigger more detailed investigation of the reasons for this and possible solutions.
- 7.2 Targets can be broadly distinguished into process, policy and those concerned with longer-term impacts, including those predicted by the SA.
- 7.3 **Process targets** are concerned with the inclusion of policies in LDFs, local transport plans, and other plans and programmes that are in accordance with the RSS. They form part of the RSS implementation plan.
- 7.4 **Policy targets** linked to indicators, are concerned with the outputs of the RSS such as provision for housing, and can also cover intended real world outcomes such as housing completions. These need to be given high priority as they provide clear benchmarks against which to measure implementation of the RSS.
- 7.5 **Sustainability appraisal targets** linked to the SA objectives and related indicators provide a benchmark for measuring the significant economic, environmental and social impacts of implementing policies. These will be developed as part of the SA process. Where policy targets are expressed in final outcome terms they may also serve as sustainability appraisal targets. Often, however, the SA will identify separate sustainability appraisal targets.

Matters to consider when setting targets

- 7.6 In developing targets it is good practice for a RPB to:
- define targets for each policy objective, and associated policy or policies, quantifiable wherever practical, or at least indicating a direction of change, in a specified time period. It is against the policy objectives and these targets that the performance of RSS can be measured;
 - consider how targets fit with the national and regional context, including the Regional Sustainable Development Framework;
 - ensure that targets are clearly expressed and, as far as possible, are based on a realistic assessment of what is achievable within the timescales and resources available (see SMART definition and example below);
 - consider how targets can be apportioned sub-regionally or by local authority area where appropriate. Sub-regional variations in issues and pressures can mean that it is useful to identify some targets which only apply to specific parts of the region, or different targets relating to different sub-regions reflecting different circumstance. Sub-regional apportionment of targets can also improve the monitoring and review process as responsibility and accountability may be more clearly defined;
 - take account of whether the regional targets are capable of aggregation to give a national picture. It is helpful if the definitions used, and the methods for measuring the target, are on a consistent basis with those in other regions. The regional core indicators (see chapter 8) which have been developed with the help of the RPBs should help here and further work is in hand through OPDM;
 - commission baseline studies to assess potential impacts and consider the need for new impact studies;
 - be clear about who the implementation agencies are; and
 - ensure that stakeholders are consulted. Involving a wide range of interested bodies in the development of targets helps ensure that there is wide ownership of the result and assists the smooth passage of RSS preparation and review. Advice on stakeholder involvement is set out in PPS11.

SMART Targets

Wherever possible RSS should set process and policy targets which are ‘SMART’, that is each target should be:

Specific	be clearly related to a specified policy objective;
Measurable	be measurable in order that progress can be assessed;
Achievable	be achievable within the specified time period with the resources and delivery programme available. Aspirational targets may be desirable to move agendas forward but are not helpful when trying to measure the operational performance of RSS;
Realistic	be based upon an assessment of what is realistic in the context of regional circumstances; and
Time bound	specify the date by which it will be achieved. This will enable true progress to be monitored and is crucial for understanding how implementation of RSS relates to a changing regional context.

An example of a ‘SMART’ target is:

By year X, LPA’s to have allocated X% of their total housing supply to meet affordable housing needs within the Region. In sub-region A, B and C, X% of total housing supply to be allocated to meet affordable need. Affordable housing will be measured as part of the total completed net additional dwellings.

An explanation of why the target is SMART is provided below.

Specific	The target is specific as it relates to local authority’s completed net additional dwellings that are affordable developed for affordable housing.
Measurable	The target is measurable in terms of the number dwellings allocated in development plan documents and those which have been granted planning permission, so it can be monitored.
Achievable	The target explicitly relates to what the RSS can deliver through the planning system. Apportioning the target to sub-regions enhances the ‘achievability’ of this target. This makes it clearer as to who has the responsibility within the region for the delivery of the target.
Realistic	The realism of this target will depend on the ability of the market to deliver the need and of the planning system to provide the required level of permissions. A baseline value, based on say the level of consents and those which have provided affordable housing in the past x years, would improve the judgement as to what is realistic.
Time bound	The target specifies the date by which it will be achieved and that progress will be monitored on an annual basis.

- 7.7 In the event that the implementation agency or measures are unclear or ambiguous in effect, then setting a 'SMART' target may be inappropriate.

Developing targets in practice

- 7.8 The following box provides an example of two different targets which could be contained in a RSS. The analysis below attempts to pull out some key differences between two superficially similar targets. It shows that careful wording is crucial in defining good targets. Further examples of targets are included within the illustrative examples found at the back of this document.

Good and Bad Practice in Target Setting

The following example contrasts two regional targets relating to the issue of renewable energy generation.

Region A

The RSS supports the Government commitment for 10% of electricity production to be from renewable sources by 2010.

The chosen target is poorly defined for the following reasons:

- it is unspecific since it does not imply what contribution the region will make to meeting the target, it is possible to interpret this as 'we think renewable energy is a good idea, but it should all be located in other regions';

Even if the target is taken to mean that 10% of energy generation capacity in the region should be from renewables, there are still issues. For example:

- the target is not closely linked to what the RSS can deliver through development plans etc. The level of renewable energy production in a region is dependent on issues such as the availability of finance to develop such schemes and NFFO contracts from the DTI as well as receiving planning consent;
- there is no apportionment within the region, for example there is no indication as to the relative split in types of renewable energy technologies that could be developed. Wind energy development has very different spatial and planning implications to energy crops. Also it provides no guidance to Local Planning Authorities as to their potential contribution;
- it is not clear how measurable the target is. No data is provided in the supporting text as to the amount of generation capacity currently in the region, so as to indicate what sort of new capacity 10% of production may entail. Without this, it is even less clear to local authorities the amount of generation capacity that they should accommodate; and

- transposition of the national target to the region may not be sensible. Supposing that the renewable energy potential of the region is high, given a large wind resource, a long coastline suitable for wave power and large agricultural potential for biomass. It may be more realistic for this region to generate a higher proportion of energy from renewables than other regions. Furthermore, given current patterns of energy generation, the region could be a net importer of energy from large generation plants in another region. Current levels of generation capacity in the region could therefore be quite small. Based on actual generation capacity, the target could imply that the region would take a smaller than might be expected contribution of renewable energy development, and inhibit the achievement of the national target.

Region B

The region will work initially towards a target capacity of 400 MW by 2005 from grid – connected renewable installations and will support smaller scale local initiatives that promote self-sufficiency for a diverse capacity. This target capacity is to be achieved through each of the following sub-regions [specify] contributing [x MW] capacity by 2005.

This renewable energy target is much better defined than the target for Region A. For example the target:

- sets a quantified level of capacity to be installed for the region as a whole and by sub-region. Though the RSS may still have a limited impact on whether the capacity gets installed (due to market factors), it can be deduced that the target means that the region should aim to have planning consents in place for 400MW of generation capacity by 2005. Though the target could be more specific to the planning system if phrased in relation to planning consents, it is still readily measurable;
- is based on a resource capacity study so is achievable;
- is built up from assessment of a range of different generation technologies so should also be realistic; and
- includes a 2005 deadline which makes it time-bound.

Chapter 8 Developing Indicators for the RSS

Summary

Targets and indicators are the key to monitoring the performance of RSS in effecting the desired outcomes. These will include the indicators generated by the sustainable development appraisal to monitor the economic, environmental and social impacts of the RSS.

ODPM has published national sets of regional core indicators for RSSs and Local Development Documents which are complementary and designed to achieve a cost-effective approach to data collection by the RPBs and local planning authorities for their respective annual monitoring reports. The lists of regional core indicators are not intended to be exhaustive. They will be updated as a separate document on ODPM's website so that users can turn immediately to them without having to access this guide. Additional indicators will need to be identified by the RPB to capture regional diversity and to reflect the particular requirements of each RSS.

The key points in the setting of indicators are that:

- the selection of indicators follow after objectives, policies and targets have been agreed;
- RPBs will want to select the minimum number of indicators necessary to monitor effectively;
- indicators should cover the breadth of the RSS but focus on those spatial policies which are central to its delivery. Indicators for the policy targets are the key to monitoring performance of a RSS;
- the indicators should include the ODPM's regional core indicators, derived from national objectives for sustainable development. They will enable inter-regional comparisons to be made;
- sustainability appraisal indicators need to be developed as part of the sustainability appraisal framework. This forms part of the sustainability appraisal baseline information. It can be used for monitoring the significant economic, environmental and social impacts of the RSS, regardless of whether they are intended or not; and
- regionally specific output/outcome indicators for the policy targets which are specific to the region need to take account of the regional core, contextual and sustainability appraisal indicators.

Defining and selecting indicators

- 8.1 The definition and selection of indicators should follow after objectives and targets have been produced. The main focus of indicator development should be on indicators linked to the policy targets, and, where no targets have been defined, linked to the policy objectives. Although the indicators should cover the breadth of the RSS they will need to focus on those policies which are central to its delivery. These are the key to monitoring the performance of a RSS.
- 8.2 When selecting and developing indicators, as with objectives and targets, those already developed by other statutory agencies and bodies that have a spatial dimension should be considered and incorporated by the RPB where appropriate. This is beneficial in helping to use and align indicators and the information that underlies it, along with the objectives and policies. Additional indicators should be identified for policy objectives that are regionally specific and which cannot be monitored by the regional core indicators.

- 8.3 Additional information on the selection and development of indicators can be found in the Cabinet Office report '*Choosing the Right Fabric*' of March 2001. In addition to these quantitative indicators effective monitoring is likely to require the use of qualitative information. The ODPM report '*Guide to Improving the Economic Evidence Base Supporting Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies*' (ODPM: September 2005) provides guidance on using qualitative as well as quantitative information.
- 8.4 The rest of this chapter concerns the different types of indicators that a RPB needs to consider monitoring.

Output/outcome indicators

- 8.5 These are used to assess the performance of RSS policies through the measurement of the quantifiable outputs and outcomes of the RSS. The direct planning outputs of RSS policies are measured by output indicators, such as land allocated for housing in Development Plan Documents. The intended real world outcomes of RSS policies in terms of regional trends and conditions which are in large part attributed to the RSS and measured against strategic objectives, include housing completions and impact on housing affordability.
- 8.6 There are two types of output/outcome indicator:
- (i) *Regional core indicators (set nationally)*
The regional core indicators for RSS are closely aligned with the LDF core indicators. This is to help to ensure a consistent and cost-effective approach to data collection and in monitoring the implementation of key national sustainable development objectives across the regional, sub regional and local levels. The regional core indicators are explained further below (paragraph 8.7).
 - (ii) *Regionally specific output/outcome indicators (set by the RPB)*
These are developed by RPBs to reflect the policy targets which are specific to the region. This will ensure that RPBs are also monitoring regionally specific objectives which cannot be monitored by the regional core indicators, and will ensure diversity and innovation in developing monitoring indicators. They need to take account of the regional core, contextual and sustainability appraisal indicators.

Regional Core Indicators

- 8.7 National planning policy statements and guidance specify certain objectives that RSSs should meet, such as sufficient housing provision at regional, sub-regional, and local authority levels, promoting development on previously-developed land, maintaining the vitality and viability of town centres, ensuring that Development Plan Documents allocate sufficient land for employment and protecting and enhancing biodiversity. These sustainable development objectives require related regional targets and indicators. In order to monitor regional policy at a national level it is important to have some degree of

comparability across regions. A common set of shared indicators helps to promote a cost-effective approach to data collection to monitor whether these national objectives for sustainable development are being achieved.

- 8.8 Shared indicators do not mean that either the policies selected and implemented (and which influence the indicator score), nor the targets set, will be the same between regions. The targets and policies will reflect, and respond to, the difference in spatial issues around the country and the different ways that national and regional policy can be delivered.
- 8.9 The regional core indicators are closely aligned with those for Local Development Documents to help ensure a consistent and cost-effective approach to monitoring national objectives for sustainable development.
- 8.10 Please note that the regional core indicators may be revised in the light of new Planning Policy Statements and related documents. RPBs should refer to the latest version of the core regional indicators which will be maintained on the OPDM website.
- 8.11 The use of thresholds in the collection, analysis and reporting of indicators should only be an interim measure with an intention to phase their use out. Where thresholds have been used these should be clearly set out in the annual monitoring report.
- 8.12 At present there are no agreed national data specifications for these indicators. However, phase 2 of the Planning and Regulatory Services On-Line (PARSOL) land-use monitoring project aims to develop a national specification and associated XML schema for the collection and transfer of planning monitoring data, in particular the core indicators used in the RSS and LDF AMRs. The consultants' brief is very clear that the data specification includes all the core indicators required for these AMRs. The consultants are due to report on this new national specification by the end of 2005. Following the completion of this project, PARSOL and ODPM will work with the back office planning application system suppliers to develop amendments to their systems to enable them to store and export the relevant data.

Housing trajectories

- 8.13 One of the key regional core indicators that it is important for RPBs to monitor relates to housing delivery. Housing trajectories support the 'plan, monitor and manage' approach to housing delivery by showing past and estimating future performance. They should consider past rates of housing completions and conversions and projected completions and conversions to the end of the remaining RSS period or ten years from the publication of the RSS by the Secretary of State, whichever is the longer.

- 8.14 As above, a robust housing trajectory will set out the:
- net additional dwellings provided over the previous five year period or since the start of the RSS period, whichever is the longer;
 - net additional dwellings for the current year;
 - projected net additional dwellings up to the end of the RSS period or over a ten year period from its publication, whichever is the longer;
 - annual net additional dwelling requirement; and
 - annual average number of net additional dwellings needed to meet overall housing requirements, having regard to previous years' performances.

In the light of the above the RPB can:

- review what changes in RSS housing policies may help delivery of the required amount of housing;
 - reflect the outcome of discussion with stakeholders, including LPAs and the development industry; and
 - demonstrate how the RSS will help deliver the housing provision.
- 8.15 It is good practice for RPBs to develop housing trajectories as part of the supporting evidence base underpinning RSS revision. Once established, the trajectory should then be updated annually as part of the annual monitoring report to demonstrate progress towards meeting the housing provision figures in the RSS.

Contextual indicators

- 8.16 These indicators relate to real world variables on which an RSS has only indirect influence or indeed no impact, such as water quality or unemployment rates. They help to provide information on the wider social, economic, environmental, physical and demographic background, against which the RSS is being implemented. These indicators may reveal changes which have been caused in minor part by the RSS. This information constitutes an important input into the formulation, implementation and assessment of the effects of an RSS. Contextual indicators are also important in identifying any issues which need to be addressed in an RSS. For example, monitoring of population and migration patterns may reveal the need to revise RSS policies or implementation mechanisms.
- 8.17 In monitoring contextual indicators careful consideration needs to be given to the level of influence an RSS has on the issues which the indicators help explain. In selecting and reporting on these indicators, the RPB should explain how the indicators relate to the RSS and what conclusions can be drawn from monitoring these indicators for the review and implementation of RSS objectives and policies.
- 8.18 The number of contextual indicators which are used should be kept to a necessary minimum.

The following are examples of contextual indicators which may be used to inform RSS reviews:

- economy – e.g. GDP per head, jobs created; growth of SMEs and business formation rates; commercial and industrial property prices;
- housing – e.g. house prices; sharing; homelessness and vacancy rates;
- transport – e.g. overall change in traffic levels; proportions of trips by foot, cycle, cars and public transport; proportions of road, rail and water borne freight;
- air quality – e.g. expected pollutant concentrations over the longer-term; expected annual emissions reductions;
- rural development – e.g. diversification from agriculture;
- the coast – e.g. trends in marine quality;
- minerals – e.g. use of alternatives to land won aggregates, including marine dredged sand and gravel; quantities of aggregates imported into the region;
- waste – e.g. amount of waste arising from each waste sector and the amount of waste managed by waste type;
- renewable energy – e.g. trends in application of CHP technology;
- other natural resource indicators – e.g. river quality; conservation of water resources and conservation and enhancement of landscape, particularly in protected areas;
- social indicators – e.g. measures of social deprivation;
- health – e.g. morbidity and mortality rates; trends in accidents; asthma in children; mental ill-health, cancer and coronary heart disease;
- demography – e.g. trends in population, population movements, household formation.

Significant Effects Indicators

- 8.19 Significant effects indicators will be generated by the sustainability appraisal. Monitoring significant effects should enable a comparison to be made between the predicted effects and the actual effects measured during implementation of the policies. Where policies and related indicators are expressed in terms of intended real world outcomes (e.g. houses built) rather than RSS direct outputs (land allocated for housing), those indicators may also serve as significant effects indicators. Normally, however, there will be a need for separate significant effects indicators, not least because the RSS may have unintended impacts.
- 8.20 Sufficient numbers of significant effects indicators need to be developed, together with the other indicators, to ensure a robust assessment of policy implementation. Like the output/outcome indicators, the inclusion of significant effects indicators should reflect the monitoring needs of an authority, the development of monitoring experience and the availability of resources. Their choice should reflect the availability and quality of existing data sources.

- 8.21 Together with appropriate contextual indicators, significant effects indicators can help form a baseline against which potential impacts of a RSS can be appraised.
- 8.22 In the development of significant effect indicators it is possible to have one indicator that can link and feedback information on the effects of more than one policy. For example the improvement in the amount and quality of public open space in a region might be linked to the monitoring of green belt change and changes in residential densities.
- 8.23 The ODPM guidance on SA provides advice on examples of significant effect indicators and data sources. A number of significant effect indicators are included within the illustrative examples found at the back of this document.

Process indicators

- 8.24 Unlike the previously mentioned indicators, process indicators may only be needed where an RSS has process targets. Where this is the case, the RPB will need to consider process indicators to measure them. For example, an RSS may need to set indicators to measure whether the necessary Development Plan Document, Local Transport Plans, and other types of strategy and plan have been prepared by a particular target date reflecting PSA6 targets. They would form part of the implementation plan.

Other sources for indicators

Best Value Indicators

- 8.25 A potential source of indicators is the current 'Best Value' set of objectives, targets and indicators. These are being developed and used by the Government to evaluate the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of the delivery of local services by local authorities, see box below.

Best Value is an initiative designed to deliver better quality services and demonstrate real value for money. It places a duty on local authorities to secure continuous improvement in local services. This framework includes a national set of statutory Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs).

Local authorities are encouraged to develop their own additional performance indicators.

Although many of these indicators will not be relevant for RSS, the ones that are will be reported on by most local authorities and therefore, can be aggregated to a regional level.

Quality of Life Indicators

- 8.26 The Audit Commission, DEFRA and the ODPM are working together to review and combine local Quality of Life (QoL) indicators and bring together strategies and other indicator initiatives. The purpose is to develop one consistent set of indicators for use at the local level that will embrace economic, social and environmental issues, and help to deliver and monitor progress on sustainable development. The indicators will also provide a potential source of data for Local Development Documents and, therefore, help to inform RSS monitoring.
- 8.27 The QoL indicators were reviewed as part of the review of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy, published in March 2005. The final set of QoL indicators were published in August 2005.

Further data sources

- 8.28 A list of links and known data sources for RSS and LDF monitoring and implementation, is available through the Central and Local Government Information Partnership (CLIP) website www.clip.gov.uk. CLIP was set up to enable central and local government to work together to develop efficient and effective non-financial statistical information. The list of links is available under the planning subheading.

Updating Indicators

- 8.29 The need to update output/outcome, contextual and significant effects indicators will vary depending on their nature, purpose and the availability of data.
- 8.30 Where possible, output/outcome indicators should be collated and reported upon each year in the AMR. If data cannot be provided for certain indicators on this basis, it is desirable for the time period of collation, as far as possible, to reflect the reporting period of 1 April to 31 March. The regional and local core indicators for RSS and LDFs will be reviewed by the ODPM. RPBs will similarly want to revisit their own regionally specific output/outcome indicators on a regular basis.
- 8.31 As the purpose of contextual indicators is to identify wider social, environmental and economic conditions, it is unlikely that these will change radically within a short period of time. This guide recommends that authorities undertake a systematic review of their contextual indicators at least every five years. This should be sufficient time for policies to have begun to have an effect. This is not to be confused with the reporting of indicators at least every three years as set out previously in this guidance.

- 8.32 RPBs will need, where possible, to report on significant effects indicators each year in their AMRs. However, information on these indicators may be collated less frequently depending on the nature of the indicator and the length of time required for the impact of the RSS to be detected. A review of significant effects indicators will be undertaken as part of a SA for a revision of a RSS.
- 8.33 RPBs will need to consider that some spatial objectives may not be capable of quantification in terms of a policy target or be measured by an output/outcome indicator. Despite the pragmatic approach to the number of indicators set out above, RPBs will need to develop a means of assessment over the medium to long term in line with the approach to trends analysis set out in chapter 9.

Chapter 9 Analytical Techniques

- 9.1 In assessing policy implementation, RPBs will need to develop sufficiently rigorous analytical approaches so that they can understand and explain, as far as is practicable, the complex interactions determining the outcomes and impacts of the RSS.

Trend analysis

- 9.2 It may be some time before the new or revised RSS policies begin to impact. Exactly when it will be possible to have confidence in any detected patterns and directions of change and the role of RSS policies in them, will vary. However, as a crude parameter RPBs should have reasonable confidence in trend analysis over a 5 to 10 year period and may be able to reach conclusions earlier than this. Trend analysis can help assess the extent to which the baseline contextual indicators established at the beginning of the RSS period have changed, and also whether the effects predicted in the SA are occurring, using significant effects indicators. These broader trends can then be compared against changes in the output indicators and an assessment made of the impact of RSS policies.
- 9.3 In carrying out trend analysis and monitoring more generally, RPBs can use a number of techniques to assist their analysis of policy implementation. The companion guide on LDF monitoring contains advice in Chapter 7 on a number of these. Although they are designed for LDFs, they should be capable of adaptation for RSS. This is for RPBs and LPAs to consider when discussing their monitoring arrangements. For convenience they are repeated below but adjusted to the RSS context.

Contextualising Performance and Effects

- 9.4 The use of contextual indicators reflects the need to take account of wider social, environmental and economic conditions when assessing policy implementation. RPBs may find it helpful to integrate such contextual information into the analysis of policy performance by using a structure-performance model. The distinction made here is between the more descriptive nature of the complex social, economic and environmental conditions in the wider spatial context (i.e. structure), against which the objective-oriented spatial policies in the RSS are making an effect (i.e. performance). Such an analytical framework will provide a sound and realistic basis for LPAs to interpret performance of spatial policies in their LDF and their significant effects on sustainability. This will help RPBs to make more robust and considered commentaries when assessing policy performance in the AMR. An example of this approach at the sub-regional level, of relevance to RPBs is shown in Table 9.1 below.

Table 9.1 Example of a structure performance model**Contextual information:**

The contextual indicator on stock composition for sub-region M shows that over 60 per cent of the housing stock is made up of pre-1919 terraced housing. The local housing assessment surveys aggregated for that sub-region shows that there is a need for more semi-detached and detached properties to cater for households at different stages in their family life cycles.

Output/outcome indicator:

Within the sub-region, the density of new build is 30-35 per hectare compared with a borough-wide target for this indicator of 40-45 dwellings per hectare.

Interpretation:

The density of development in the sub-region appears to conflict with the wider objective of more compact, sustainable development. However, in this part of the region, it accords with the strategy to diversify the portfolio of housing stock to meet the needs of local households. This will help to prevent further outward migration of the local population to more affluent neighbouring sub-regions that have suitable lower density housing stock. However, the relevant policies will need to be kept under review to ensure they do not conflict with national policy on housing densities.

Benchmarking and Evaluation

- 9.5 Analysing policy implementation can be undertaken in absolute and relative terms. Whilst the analysis of indicators and meeting set targets is a means of assessing implementation in absolute terms, it is useful to compare policy performance with the performance of RSSs in other regions. Such a benchmarking exercise may help the process of determining what is the best policy and what standards should be set for policy targets. Benchmarking provides a yardstick by which to gauge the relative performance of a policy.
- 9.6 Benchmarking may be used as part of the on-going policy review exercise to initiate discussion with local communities and other stakeholders in revising policies and targets. Benchmarking also helps RPBs make a realistic assessment of policy performance, especially during a period of time of major changes in external conditions such as economic buoyancy or recession/downturn. The awareness of the performance of others can help to explain how changes in these external conditions assist or hinder meeting policy and sustainability targets.
- 9.7 As RSS regional core indicators will be annually collected, there is scope to carry out appropriate benchmarking when assessing policy implementation. Such a comparison could be presented with trend analysis commentaries regarding the direction of change shown by the indicators, and could be illustrated through graphs and tables. Traditional 'silo' approaches can be broken down by joint working with other regional bodies and LPAs through the Regional Monitoring Group and the Regional Observatory to develop

comprehensive evidence bases and encourage shared visions and approaches. It is good practice to integrate this with joint working with other bodies to collect baseline information and identify common issues and objectives as part of the sustainability appraisal work.

Indicator Bundles

- 9.8 Given the complexity of policy implementation, one approach to analysis useful for considering particular aspects of policy is to link a number of separate indicators into groupings or ‘bundles’. These bundles, which can comprise contextual, significant effects and output/outcome indicators, can also be used to establish the baseline of the RSS. In addition, by examining a small number of output/outcome and significant effects indicators across different policy themes, they can also examine implementation of particular policies. Commentaries based upon the indicator values within the bundle will form a mini-profile of the issue being measured.
- 9.9 Examples of a number of housing related indicators that could be bundled together to analyse housing market dynamics (as contextual information) are shown in the Table 9.2 below.

Table 9.1 Example of an indicator bundle

Indicators grouped together for a sub-regional housing market might include:

- average house price £ (2005);
- percentage house price change (2000-2005);
- percentage low price housing sales (2005); and
- percentage point change in low house price sales (2000-2005).

Monitoring at Different Spatial Scales

- 9.10 Whilst indicators should be collected for the whole of the region, there is merit in developing indicators at more fine grained sub-regional spatial scales in the medium to long term. Reflecting spatial planning principles, there may be a need to collect information for specific areas in line with sub-regional policies in the RSS (e.g. growth areas). Where these cross regional boundaries there is already good practice in joint working between RPBs to monitor how policies are affecting these.
- 9.11 Flexible analytical structures are required in assessing policy implementation at different spatial levels. Geographical information systems are an important tool in this respect as they have the capability to deal with single point data and organise, analyse and display data at varying spatial scales.

Glossary

Suggested Terminology

Act Regulations	The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and The Town and Country Planning (Regional Planning) (England) Regulations 2004.
Local Development Framework	The name for the portfolio of local development documents and related documents that provide the local framework for the spatial planning of an area.
Sustainability Appraisal	The appraisal of the potential economic, social and environmental effects of RSS options, policies and overall strategy.
Policy Implementation Analysis	Evaluation of the effectiveness of policies in terms of achieving their objectives and targets. Measured by output and contextual indicators.
Plan Performance	The effectiveness of the RSS in achieving its policy objectives, by measuring the outputs against policy objectives and targets using both output and contextual indicators.
Value for Money	The worth of RSS processes, outputs and outcomes compared to the resource costs.
Objectives	Measurable, normative statements in specifying the desired direction of change in regional trends and conditions.
Outputs	The direct planning outputs of RSS policies as measured by output indicators, such as land allocated for housing in Development Plan Documents.
Outcomes	The intended real world outcomes of RSS policies in terms of regional trends and conditions which can in large part be attributed to the RSS, measured against strategic objectives, such as housing completions.
Targets	The expression of RSS policy objectives in terms of specified scales of change in specified time periods.
Process Targets	The means by which RSS policy objectives are to be delivered in terms of dates by when RSS policies are to be translated into specified plans and strategies; and the actual policies, programmes and proposals which RSS expects to see in these lower order plans and strategies in specified time periods.

Policy Targets	Definition of the intended, direct, real world effects of RSS policies in terms of specified, realistic and achievable changes in specified time periods.
Monitoring	Regular and systematic collection and analysis of data to measure the implementation of policies.
Monitoring Framework	the objectives, targets and indicators against which RSS performance can be monitored and the process by which this is carried out (including monitoring delivery of the RSS implementation plan).
Output indicators	Measures of specified, real world planning outputs over time that are a direct consequence of the RSS. The specified variables are defined by reference to the policy objectives and targets to be measured.
Contextual Indicators	Measures of the wider economic, environmental and social background against which the RSS policies operate. As such they help to relate policy outputs to the region.
SMART (Objectives, Targets, Indicators)	Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound.

Potential data sources

There are many potential sources of information that authorities can consider when defining and analysing targets and indicators. Some general sources of data are contained on the Central and Local Government Information Partnership (CLIP) website www.clip.gov.uk, as already referenced in paragraph 8.28 above. A list of links is available under each planning subheading. Additionally, Annex E of the *Local Development Framework Monitoring: A Good Practice Guide* contains a list of potential data sources that may also be of use in the development of a regional monitoring framework.

Examples of objectives, targets and indicators

The following examples of objectives, output targets, indicators, contextual indicators and significant effects indicators are for illustrative purposes only. They provide examples by topic of the possible relationships between objectives, targets and indicators. These are not intended as recommendations. They will need in many cases, to be regionally specific. As such, they will depend on regional economic, social and environmental conditions and anticipated changes, and on the strategic vision for the future spatial development of the region.

The advice in the main text of this guide, especially chapters 6, 7, and 8 which relate to the objectives led approach to monitoring and the setting of targets and indicators, should inform consideration of the examples below. Any adaptations of these examples should, for example, be checked to ensure that they remain SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time bound). In using this annex and in adapting the examples, RPBs should be careful to ensure that they identify how they intend the RSS policy objectives and targets to be realised.

Biodiversity

RSS Policy Objective	Target (if applicable)	Indicator
Maintain and enhance the status (extent and quality) of areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value of international, national or regional/sub-regional importance	The region will aim to ensure that A% of the land in its' SSSIs are in favourable condition, defined as B, by date C.	Amounts of land in designated SSSIs assessed by English Nature to be in a (i) favourable and/or (ii) unfavourable condition, as defined by B.
Contextual Indicator	Public awareness of the importance of protecting and enhancing identified environmental areas of value in the region as measured by D. Number of, and amount of investment from, development programmes for these protected sites. Climate change as measured by E.	
Significant effects indicator	Deterioration of identified 'at risk' environmental areas.	
Implementation	The implementation of this target and measurement of the indicators would need to be undertaken in partnership, with the relevant LPAs and English Nature and discussed with them at an early stage of formulation. It would require establishing a baseline condition level of the region's SSSIs and then measuring progress on a 3 yearly assessment cycle until date C. The assessment of the overall condition of the site might necessitate looking at a wide range of other indicators to get a complete picture. This would involve checking with the appropriate agencies on the availability and timing of data on these indicators. Measurement against the significant effects indicator would require checking that those SSSI areas that were initially identified as being included within the wider 'at risk' areas have not deteriorated further.	

Economic Development

RSS Policy Objective	Target (if applicable)	Indicator
Promote economic regeneration and development to meet strategic regional needs	LPA's to have allocated land in their DPDs for strategic employment areas by date A in accordance with the RSS and this land to be developed by date B.	Land (i) allocated in DPDs by date A, and (ii) developed by date B for employment purposes (being UCO B1a,b,c, B2 & B8) in strategic employment areas in accordance with the RSS.
Contextual Indicator	Movements of working age population. Level of unemployment. Number of new business start-ups.	
Significant effect indicator	Amount of land lost to greenfield development for employment purposes. Amount of increased private car travel for journey-to-work purposes.	
Implementation	LPA's would need to ensure that the amount of land allocated in their DPDs for strategic employment purposes and its location was in general conformity with the RSS. Data on completed floorspace of such employment development would be collected by LPA's. This would be reported on annually. Measurement of indicators would also involve liaising with other data collection agencies, such as Local Transport Authorities, to gain relevant contextual information. Measurement against significant effects indicators would highlight: how much strategic employment land had been developed on greenfield sites; and, whether that development had increased private car usage for journey-to-work purposes.	

Housing

RSS Policy Objective	Target (if applicable)	Indicator
Provision of dwellings to meet regional needs	Net regional housing growth of X units over N years. X housing allocations in sub-region Y.	Number of net additional dwellings provided. Number of net additional dwellings provided in sub-region Y.
Contextual Indicator	Population movement. Household composition. Housing market data, sales, price, type.	
Significant effects indicator	Amount of development within identified floodplain. Amount of land lost to greenfield development for housing.	
Implementation	LPAs would need to ensure that the amount of land allocated for housing in their DPDs and its location was in general conformity with the RSS. Data on completed net additional dwellings would be collected by LPAs. This would be reported on annually. The collection of data by LPA's should enable RPBs to highlight growth in housing market areas that cross LPA's boundaries. Measurement against significant effects indicators would highlight: how many dwellings (and associated total land area) had been developed within the identified floodplain; and, how many dwellings (and associated total land area) had been developed on greenfield sites.	

Leisure

RSS Policy Objective	Target (if applicable)	Indicator
Provision of leisure facilities to meet strategic regional needs	To make provision for X major new leisure facilities of regional and sub-regional importance over the time period Y to Z in centres in centres A, B and C.	Proportion and amount of leisure floorspace completed in developments in sub regional centres A, B and C.
Significant effects indicator	Reduction in available open space. Amount of land loss to greenfield development. Amount of increased private car travel for leisure purposes.	
Contextual Indicator	Population movements. Demographic profiles. Relevant health statistics.	
Implementation	LPA's would need to ensure that the amount of land allocated for regional and sub-regional leisure facilities by type and location was in general conformity with the RSS. Data on completed floorspace of such leisure development would be collected by LPA's. This would be reported on annually. Measurement of indicators would also involve liaising with other data collection agencies, such as local and regional health authorities, to gain relevant contextual information. Measurement against significant effects indicators would highlight: how much if any, open space had been reduced by the development of regional and sub-regional leisure facilities; how much leisure development had been on greenfield land; and, whether that development had increased private car usage.	

Regional Spatial Strategy Monitoring: A good practice guide is an update of guidance on the development and reporting of monitoring frameworks for regional spatial strategies including good practice in defining objectives, targets, indicators and significant effect.

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