

# SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL STRATEGY

2015-2020

ENVIRONMENTAL  
MANAGEMENT TEAM



## FOREWORD

As part of SG2020, we are transforming the way we work to become the organisation we want and need to be in future.

The way we travel for work is an important part of this – we have set ourselves ambitious targets to cut the carbon emissions from our business travel, and we need to reduce our spend on business travel, to make sure we are living within our means.

Our Travel Strategy will help all of us to think again about our travel habits and the changes we need to make to reduce the costs and carbon emissions of our day to day work – to help us get to where we want and need to be in future.

Changing our travel habits will not be easy, however we know that to become the organisation we want and need to be by 2020 we all need to try new things and be more flexible in how we work.

We also need to lead by example, showing other organisations and the communities and stakeholders we work with that this can be done.

Working together across the organisation we can make a real difference – and send a signal to others across Scotland that it may be challenging, but it is possible.



**Leslie Evans, Permanent Secretary**

## Key messages

- We are transforming the way we work as part of SG2020 to become the organisation we want and need to be in future. We all need to think about how changes to the way we travel for work can help us get there
- We need to work together to reduce our impact on the environment and the cost of our travel for work. If we each make changes, we can make a big difference for the SG as a whole
- We want to help all of our staff to travel less often for work, and travel greener – saving time and money and making your work easier. Our travel strategy provides advice to help you choose the cheapest and greenest options
- If you want to have a meeting with someone in another building, video and tele-conferencing save the most time, hassle and money – and they are also the best way to reduce our emissions. If you've not used these before, information and support is available to help you do this
- If you can, walking, or even cycling, to meetings which are a short distance away is cheap, green, and can help you stay more active and feel better
- Unnecessary flights and taxi journeys are the most damaging in terms of costs and carbon so we especially want to reduce these – flying within the UK for work will now need to be signed off by your Director, and taxis between SG buildings should only be taken in exceptional circumstances
- We need to make the most of every penny of taxpayers' money to deliver for the people of Scotland. Standard and Economy class should be used for all trains and flights except Sleeper trains

## What are we trying to do?

We are transforming the way we work to become the organisation we want and need to be in 2020.

As part of this we need to think about how we can change how we travel, to show we are leading by example on tackling climate change, and making the most of every penny of taxpayers' money.

We need to **reduce our carbon emissions by 30 per cent by 2020**, and **reduce the amount we spend** on getting our work done.

In particular, we have set ourselves targets to:

- reduce emissions from work travel by 40 per cent (against 2013/14 levels) – a reduction of 1,657 tonnes of carbon dioxide – **equivalent to 9,500 flights from Edinburgh to London**
- reduce the number of business flights to London by 20 per cent by 2017 and 50 per cent by 2020 (against 2013/14 levels) – **about 350 fewer flights a year by 2020**
- increase the number of meetings using video or audio technologies by 20 per cent by 2017 and 50 per cent by 2020 (against 2013/14 levels) – **about 5,000 more calls a year by 2020**
- increase the proportion of electric and hybrid vehicles in the Pool Car and Government Car Service fleets by 20 per cent by 2020 against 2013/14 levels – **44 new vehicles in total by 2020**

## How can I travel greener and cheaper?

Planning ahead as much as possible will give you more options for work travel and help you take advantage of the best value tickets.

Think about all the options when you're planning meetings and events for yourself and others. We've provided advice and links below to help you consider all of your options – from the cheaper, greener options to the higher cost and carbon options.

### 1. You might not need to travel at all

Video and telephone conferencing can dramatically reduce the need to travel, saving time, money and carbon. A number of options are available across the SG to do this.

#### Video Conferencing

- The SG has over 210 video conferencing facilities (VC) in more than 80 different buildings – you can find out where these [are on Saltire](#)
- Our VC units can connect with any other site in the world that has compatible equipment
- VC meetings can be set up at fairly short notice so can offer a more flexible option
- Information on how to book and use VC equipment is also available [on Saltire](#) and from the [Transforming our Workplace Team](#)
- If you're not that comfortable using video-conferencing, you could try a quick test meeting with colleagues from another building before you schedule a VC meeting – or get advice from the [Smarter Workplaces Team](#)

#### Tele Conferencing

- MITEL IP phones or tele-conferencing units (also known as Spider Phones) are available in the majority of meeting rooms across the SG.
- More information and advice on using tele-conferencing is [available on Saltire](#)
- If you have a MITEL IP phone, you can use these to run conference calls by pressing the conference button and dialling the number. More information on conference calling on your MITEL phone is [available on Saltire](#)

#### Microsoft Lync

- Microsoft Lync is a desktop video conferencing system that allows users on SCOTS Network to: share their desktop, carry out video and telephone chats, work on joint whiteboards, and share instant messages.
- More information on getting access to, and using Lync is [available on Saltire](#)

## 2. Walking

If your meeting is within 2 km, and you're able to, why not think about walking? Walking is a cheap and green way to travel and can help you feel better and healthier. Taking 10,000 steps a day can burn up to 500 calories. Walking can also help to increase strength in the lungs and bones, improve mobility and general wellbeing, provide more energy, and have a positive effect on mental health.

- You can find walking routes to meetings using [Google maps](#), [Walkit](#), or using the [Greener Scotland journeys app](#) – the app will also calculate your calories burned and carbon emissions saved every time you walk

## 3. Cycling

If your meeting is within 5 km, and you're able to, why not think about cycling? We appreciate it's not for everyone, but if you like to cycle it's a cheap and green way to get to meetings – and it's good for you.

- You can find cycling routes to meetings using the [Cyclestreets website](#) or the National Cycle Network map on the [Sustrans website](#)
- During rush hour, a bicycle can be twice as fast as a car, cutting down on the frustration of being stuck in traffic jams
- All of the main SG offices have cycle parking facilities, and changing and showering facilities
- The SG will pay an allowance of 20p per mile when you cycle for business (not including your commute to work)

## 4. Public Transport

Using public transport helps reduce emissions and congestion on the roads, and should always be considered first for travel between SG buildings.

### Buses

- You can find information on available buses and timetables on the [Traveline](#) website
- Information on booking bus tickets for travel to meetings is [available on Saltire](#)
- If you're getting the bus in Edinburgh, you can get real time information on buses using [Lothian Buses bustracker](#)

### Trains

- To make sure everyone gets the best possible deal on train fares, all official rail travel must be booked through the SG's Travel Agent. For travel required in emergencies the Travel Agent operates an out-of-hours service
- To get the cheapest possible train, staff are asked to book Standard class only and to book at least two weeks in advance of travel wherever possible,

using fixed or restricted tickets to get the best deal - try to take advantage of reduced rail fares including day returns and saver tickets

- If you've got your own season ticket which is valid for a journey you're taking for work, and which would reduce the cost, we ask that this is used to help save money. We're not able to reimburse any of the cost though
- As well as saving money, travelling by Standard class has lower associated emissions than making the same journey by First class
- First class is permitted if you're taking the overnight sleeper train as this allows you to have a cabin to yourself
- Travelling by train is greener than flying, so travel to London should be by rail wherever possible. Journey time from central Edinburgh or Glasgow to central London by train is around 4 hours 40 minutes, which is comparable to the time taken door to door if you fly – and is less hassle, with more time to work. If you do need to fly to London, you'll need authorisation from your Director before you book tickets
- If you lose or don't use a ticket bought by the SG for business travel, notify the SG Travel agent as soon as possible. Lost tickets are not refundable, but we can get a refund for unused tickets returned within month
- Find train time and information on the [National Rail website](#)
- Get more information on booking trains [on Saltire](#)

## Sea Travel

- If you need to travel by sea, you can book First class travel and on-board accommodation, and if you're travelling overnight, you can claim a subsistence allowance of £24.10. You can also claim for the cost of breakfast if this isn't included in your ticket and you have the receipt
- Because of the travel time involved, if you need to make overseas journeys by sea, you'll need to get approval from your Director General before any arrangements are made
- Get more information on booking [sea travel on Saltire](#)

## 5. Taxi

The Scottish Government has contracts which should be used to get the best value for money when traveling by taxi in Edinburgh and Glasgow. If you do need to be reimbursed for hiring a non-contract taxi, you'll need to explain the reasons on your claim form.

- If you're travelling between Scottish Government offices, or where good public transport is available, we ask that you use taxis only in exceptional circumstances. Some examples include: where significant volumes of confidential papers are being transported, if a taxi is deemed to be a reasonable adjustment by occupational health, if public transport is not suitable due to roadworks or diversions which would cause significant delays, if you're occasionally required to work late and public or other transport is not an option, due to lack of availability, reliability or length of journey

## 6. Pool cars and car hire

Self-drive hire cars are provided by the Scottish Government contractor. If you need to hire a car, you'll need to agree this with your line manager and get authorisations from the budget holders before you make a reservation. You'll need to have a valid driving licence too. If you can, try to car share with others going to the same meeting or event.

- If you are going to hire a car, make sure this is the most cost effective method of travel available to you and that the category of car you hire is the most appropriate model for your journey and the best value for money
- More information on how to hire cars, and the authorisation and insurance needed, is [available on Saltire](#)

If you regularly travel by car for work, you can take part in fuel efficient driver training which is offered on a regular basis – this will help you save carbon and money whenever you drive! More information is [available on Saltire](#) and on the [Energy Saving Trust website](#)

## 7. Private Vehicles

If public transport, or a pool or hire car are not available, you can use your own vehicle for business travel. Do check your options first though, as using public transport or SG vehicles will save carbon emissions and money. If you can, see if other people going to the same meeting or event who you might be able to car share with. This will save emissions and money.

- To use your vehicle for work, it will need to be insured for business use and have the appropriate MOT and tax.
- Try to take the shortest possible route. If the journey is 60 miles or over, consider using a pool or hire care – this reduced cost and carbon emissions
- More information on using your own car for work, including mileage allowance, and other expenses is [available on Saltire](#)

## 8. Air Travel

Air travel produces the most carbon emissions so avoid domestic air travel where trains are available. Trains emit only around a quarter of the carbon of equivalent plane journeys.

When considering air travel from the Central Belt to the South East of England staff should think about the overall journey. For example:

- The journey time from central Edinburgh or Glasgow to central London by train is around 4 hours 40 minutes which is roughly the same as the door to door journey by air
- It's easier to work sitting on the train than on an aircraft
- The overall cost includes travel to and from the airport at both ends of the journey

To make sure everyone gets the best possible deal on air fares, all official air travel must be booked through the SG's Travel Agent. For travel required in emergencies the Travel Agent operates an out-of-hours service. More information on booking flights is [available on Saltire](#).

- If you do need to fly within the mainland UK, you'll need to get [approval from your Director before you book](#)
- Try to book early wherever you can to take advantage of the best possible fares
- We need to show we are making the most of every penny of taxpayers' money so Economy class should be used for flights of 10 hours or less
- Business class travel is only permitted on flights of under 10 hours in exceptional circumstances, for example if you need to travel with someone who is not a UK civil servant, who is travelling in a higher class
- If you need to take a charter flight, you'll need to consult with the SG Travel Agent first – except if the aircraft is chartered by another government department
- If you lose or don't use a ticket bought by the SG for business travel, notify the SG Travel agent as soon as possible. Lost tickets are not refundable, but we can get a refund for unused tickets returned within month. More information about cancellations or refunds is [available on Saltire](#)

## Role of Countersigning Officers

Countersigning Officers are the people who approve travel requests. If you're a countersigning officer, you're asked to:

- Look carefully at the travel details to make sure that the most efficient and economic method of travel has been chosen and the journey relates to official business
- Check the accuracy of each application, ensure that receipts are produced and it has been completed in accordance with the guidance notes on the Travel and Subsistence website
- Approve and submit the form direct to Travel and Subsistence for processing
- If you're not sure about any of the rules surrounding an item claimed the consult the Travel and Subsistence Team