

Developing the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre Network into a Sustainable Energy Network

Colin Timmins
Energy Saving Trust
21 Dartmouth Street
London SW1H 9BP, ENGLAND
Colin.Timmins@est.org.uk

Susan Crowley
Energy Saving Trust
Susan.Crowley@est.org.uk

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Abstract

The UK Government's energy strategy sets out targets for carbon savings through household energy efficiency, renewable energy and low carbon transport. The most attractive way for Government to achieve this scale of carbon saving in the housing and vehicle sector is to encourage individuals and group decision makers to choose sustainable energy options in their purchasing decisions and by changing their behaviour.

To achieve such a step change in public awareness of and action on sustainable energy EST is proposing to develop the existing UK-wide network of 52 Energy Efficiency Advice Centres (EEACs) into a Sustainable Energy Network (SEN) covering energy efficiency, renewable energy and transport. Three centres to pilot this concept will be set up in January 2005.

The SEN will be a network of autonomous local management agencies working in conjunction with national activity to provide:

- A high profile marketing campaign working to raise the awareness of 5 million customers (a fifth of all UK households) per year and motivating them to take action.
- A free and impartial sustainable energy advice and information service providing customers with solutions and linking them to available incentive schemes.

- Support and facilitation activities to provide a cohesive, co-ordinated sustainable energy infrastructure that makes it easy for customers to take action.

The Strategic Context

THE ENERGY WHITE PAPER

The UK Energy White Paper (EWP), published in 2003, has the ambitious vision of putting the UK on the road to deliver a 60% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2050. Households and transport account for more than 57% of the UK's energy demand. It is therefore important that concerted activity within these sectors must form a cornerstone of Government energy policy.

This activity needs to cover energy efficiency, renewable energy and domestic low carbon transport, and the scale of the task in all three areas is significant.

For example:

- The required rate of energy efficiency improvement in homes will require roughly a doubling of that seen in the past thirty years, in a climate where the easiest measures will already have been taken.
- It is envisaged that household renewable installations, currently in only a small percentage of properties, will be on a significant scale by 2020 requiring huge leaps in consumer awareness, understanding, acceptance and adoption. In addition, passive support from local communities for large scale projects will be needed to overcome existing barriers to securing planning approval.

- The goal of securing, within a decade, a 10% market share (i.e. 200 000 sales annually) for cars with a performance better than 100 gC/km, implies a significant increase in demand by consumers.

In conclusion, the delivery of the Energy White Paper requires a step change in working with consumers, at a local, regional and national level, both to increase awareness and encourage action. What is also clear is that the most attractive way for Government to achieve this scale of carbon saving in the housing and vehicle sectors is to encourage individuals and group decision makers to choose the sustainable energy option through their purchasing decisions and by changing their behaviour. This is far more cost efficient than centrally funding the required improvements, more politically acceptable than legislation, and will most effectively utilise all of the schemes and incentives that are currently available.

This work with consumers must be on a much larger scale than currently and must engage at a deeper attitudinal level to address their energy use and their commitment to further action. There are two key factors at play:

Firstly, we need to affect the decisions of millions of householders and millions of vehicle owners. Historically energy policy has focussed on a small number of huge investments. A focus on household energy efficiency and renewables requires attention to a huge number of small investments. This is a fundamental change.

Secondly, much of the current energy efficiency activity focuses on individual low and no cost measures and the subsequent savings to be made. Whilst there is still scope for this, it is also now important that consumers consider a number of measures, some of which may not make simple economic sense or may involve a degree of 'uncomfortable' or 'inconvenient' behavioural change. This is about changing attitudes and changing lifestyles and it is imperative that we engage consumers as ethical consumers, aware of their responsibilities to current and future generations.

THE WORK OF EST

The Energy Saving Trust was established in 1993, as a public private partnership between government and leading energy companies after the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. EST is now one of the UK's leading organisations fighting climate change, concentrating on transforming markets in the household and road transport energy sectors.

EST manages, with financial support from UK government, two major, long-term energy efficiency programmes with individual consumers; the Energy Efficiency marketing campaign and the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre (EEAC) network. These, together with linked programmes such as the Grant Information Database and the Local Authority Support Programme (LASP), demonstrate the extensive skills and experience that EST has established in reaching consumers, encouraging and helping them to take action. In addition, EST has experience in establishing an infrastructure to support other organisations working to deliver energy efficiency. Together these programmes have had a significant, cost effective impact in reducing carbon emissions.

EST is the key player in UK activity supporting the development and adoption of clean fuel vehicles. Current moves toward a focus on low carbon vehicles and fuels open new opportunities for synergies between EST's marketing and advice work in homes and transport.

EST also has experience of promoting small-scale renewable energy to homes and communities. The most significant projects being the Renewable Energy Advice Service (REAS) pilot, which concluded in March 2005 and the Scottish Executive's Scottish Community and Household Renewables Initiative (SCHRI), both delivered through EEACs. EST's experience in running the government funded Photovoltaic Major Demonstration Programme has also provided a clear insight into the consumers, the barriers and the industry in general.

THE WORK OF THE EEAC NETWORK

Over the ten years of its operation, the EEAC network has demonstrated that the provision of free, impartial advice to individual householders on home energy efficiency leads directly to those customers taking action. The network itself, comprising 52 independent organisations working under contract to EST, has built its customer base to around three quarters of a million households per year. Of these clients, the 2002/03 evaluation reported that more than 60% take some action, saving an average of 55 Euro per EEAC client.

Evaluation of the Renewable Energy Advice Service (REAS) pilot has shown that there is a demand for advice on renewable energy and that it can also generate action. Latest research suggests that 5% of clients have installed a renewables measure either totally or partly as result of REAS advice and a further 15% are planning to install a renewables measure for this reason. Significantly for the future, a significant percentage of customers also received energy efficiency advice, demonstrating a significant potential for cross referrals from the same customer base.

The EEAC network comprises many host organisations who are significant players in sustainable energy at the regional level, and the service is staffed by enthusiastic people with a wide range of appropriate skills and experience. It also plays a broader role in developing local action on sustainable energy although activities in this respect are not funded through the contract with EST and are therefore fragmented in application and often limited in impact. However, the network is a very significant resource on which to build.

MOVING THE NETWORK FORWARD

In reviewing how we could evolve the EEAC network there were a number of issues in respect of the current service provision and the context within which it is provided that influenced our view on the type of network that is required, its remit and how it should operate. These are as follows:

Resources and Contractual Arrangements

The EEAC network has been successful and has identified numerous ways to expand and enhance its impact. However, both the level of resources available (which limits effectiveness given that there is a low level of awareness of, and interest in sustainable energy amongst consumers) and the current contractual relationship (which limits their ability to

define their scope of activities or to respond quickly to defined needs) must change if the network is to make a significant leap forward.

Both within and outside of the EEAC network there is now a mature set of organisations with the ability to think strategically and plan tactically though this has not been harnessed or co-ordinated on any significant scale. The SEN will build on the activities currently carried out by the EEAC and LASP programmes. However, whilst there will be more resources available to a geographical area under SEN, the focus will be on analysing the need of the area and deciding on the most appropriate activities to carry out rather than simply just doing more.

Decentralisation

Regional and local variations require different approaches. The nine English regions and devolved nations (Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) will have differing needs relating to, for example, demographics, rurality, housing stock, availability of different fuels, potential for renewable energy sources, transport infrastructure etc. The SEN will decentralise the decision making of tactical activities to the local level, based upon a sound knowledge of what is required locally. The scale and number of organisations required under the SEN will be tested during the pilot phase, which is discussed later on in this paper.

Consistent Message to Consumers

There is a failure to join up activities at the national and local level. Customers can therefore see these activities as competing rather than as a single clear message. There is a reasonable level of activity going on, but, due to its fragmentation, it is low profile, confusing to customers, and relatively difficult to access.

There is a need for specialist independent bodies to drive forward the Government’s sustainable energy agenda. Marketing by the private sector clearly has a role to play in raising this demand but needs to be supported by independent and impartial messages and advice to gain consumer trust and avoid the agenda being lead by the interests of commercial organisations.

The Sustainable Energy Network (SEN)

Proposition

The SEN proposition has been developed in order to build upon the points raised above. The proposition has three key areas of awareness raising, providing advice and information and supporting routes to action. The role of each of these can be seen in the SEN mission.

MISSION

See Figure 1.

OBJECTIVES OF SEN

1. **Carry out a range of locally tailored marketing activities, co-ordinated with national campaign activity, to raise consumer awareness on sustainable energy.**
This will aim to reach a fifth of all householders each year, to get them interested in taking up measures (both

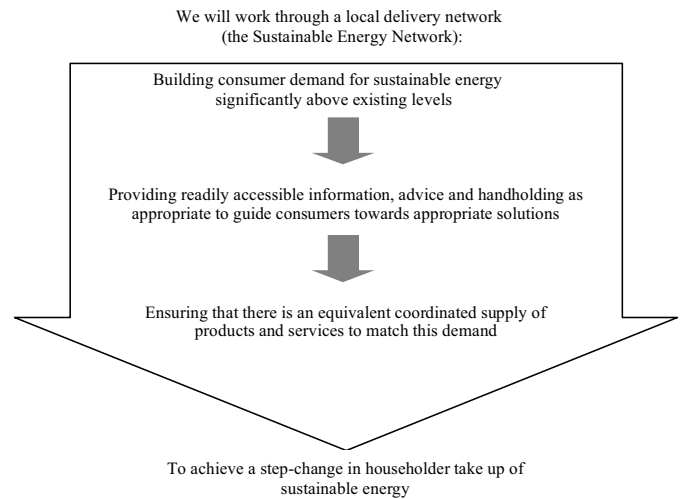


Figure 1. SEN Mission.

physical and behavioural), and over the long term to make sustainable energy a lifestyle choice. The SEN will involve relevant partners (e.g. local authorities, energy suppliers, retailers etc.) in these activities wherever possible; harnessing the marketing strength of the private sector to promote sustainable energy, helping the public sector activity utilise national sustainable energy branding and maximising the resulting benefits to all parties and the consumer.

2. **Provide all consumers with a uniform source of free, impartial information and advice on sustainable energy.**
This will be accessible through a wide range of media, e.g. phone, website etc, and local advisors will go out into the community to provide face to face advice and ensure that remote and vulnerable groups have access to the service. In addition, we will ensure that consistent advice is provided within relevant partner and supply chain activities, e.g. by local authority registered approved installers, by retail store staff etc.
3. **Ensure that the supply of sustainable energy matches the stimulated demand.**
Making sure that appropriate products and services are readily available, together with necessary distribution and installation capacity so that consumers whose demand has been raised or need identified can access the product or service they require. The SEN will do this through a tactical forecast of the scale and distribution of local demand (based on its own and others activities) and a resource analysis to identify the organisations best placed to deliver and providing them with the right framework for doing so, building capacity and filling gaps in delivery where necessary. In practice this work will include developing delivery partnerships, providing training to build capacity, facilitating the set up of focussed incentive schemes and so on.

4. Provide a cohesive face to consumers for sustainable energy initiatives.

By operating across energy efficiency, renewable energy and transport the SEN will be able to offer the widest range of motivators and potential solutions to consumers and cross sell between technologies wherever possible. For instance, consumer interest in solar power might lead to advice on installing insulation as a priority, or consumers engaged by heating advice might happen to be at the stage of deciding to buy a car and therefore could also be given opportunistic advice on low carbon vehicles. The SEN will also ensure that the supply of sustainable energy goods and services is co-ordinated. This will mean that advice clients can be referred or signposted effectively to grants and discounts, to suppliers, and to related services such as specialist contractors, debt counselling etc. so that they can easily take action. The SEN will ensure that the overall sustainable energy marketing campaign messages, brand identity and advice service standards are represented and reflected through the supply chain.

5. Reinforce Government policy instruments detailed in the Energy White Paper by supporting incentives and ensuring that everyone plays their part.

The SEN will act as a local 'hub' for sustainable energy activity; in touch with organisations, individuals, and consumers to create the climate for an unprecedented change in attitude and action. Through its work, the SEN will generate the local support and active participation of consumers, communities, the private and public sector. One example would be to encourage and enable local authorities to be exemplars, regulators and leaders at a local level by encouraging chief executives and councillors to buy in to the importance of their sustainable energy activity. Another example would be to bring on board private companies who have a role to play but for whom sustainable energy is not their primary interest (e.g. heating installers, car dealers etc.) It will also work to break down the barriers to public acceptability of commercial renewable energy developments by raising local awareness or through practical actions such as managing engagement between developers and local communities to realise benefits for both. In addition, the activities of the SEN will directly support initiatives such as the Energy Efficiency Commitment (EEC), the renewables obligation, EU agreements with vehicle manufacturers and national grant schemes (e.g. Clear Skies etc.) by providing an underlying framework for their successful implementation.

6. Assist regions and devolved nations to adopt a strategic and sustainable approach to energy.

The SEN will support devolved administrations, local and regional bodies (Local Authorities, Regional Development Agencies, Regional Assemblies and Government Offices in the Regions) to fulfil the key role defined for them in the Energy White Paper. Specifically, by providing a resource to translate their strategic approach into clear tactical priorities and by co-ordinating the practical delivery of these priorities. Working to

regionally defined targets (where they fit Government remit) the SEN will provide market information and cross-network examples to inform the regional approach, disseminate good practice within and between regions, facilitate partnership approaches to delivery of targets, ensure that there are clear and simple lines of communication and defined responsibilities in place, and provide data to allow objectives to be meaningfully tracked.

APPROACH

The SEN approach is about much more than simply adding a set of additional responsibilities onto the EEAC network. Therefore the operational approach will be significantly different as described below:

The SEN will be a network of up to 22 regional delivery agencies, referred to as Sustainable Energy Centres (SECs), each of which will cover an area made up of 2-3 of the existing 52 EEAC territories. The actual EEAC structure will cease to exist once the SEC network is established, although subject to tendering, it is likely that many of the organisations who currently operate an EEAC will be involved in delivering an SEC. They will therefore continue to be consistent with local authority, regional and national boundaries and were defined to be broadly consistent by balancing out household numbers and geographical size (i.e. those with a higher household density cover a smaller area.). There will be between one and three SECs per government region or devolved nation.

The key operational difference is that EEACs currently undertake a set of operational activities as defined by EST within a Service Level Agreement, these activities being the same regardless of where the EEAC is located. Each SEC will be expected to define the operational activities that it will carry out, and will decide these through a tactical analysis of the territory they cover looking at its characteristics and needs, and the strategic context (national, regional and local.). EST will define a set of 'base' activities, such as advice service standards, to ensure that the SECs fit with national activity, and work within the remit of the SEN and meet other stakeholders' needs. It will therefore be vital that the SEC management team have skills and experience in defining tactics and have strong strategic awareness. They will also need to be excellent communicators in order to secure buy in from stakeholders and potential partners.

The individual SEC will be contracted to define and deliver a work plan (to be agreed with EST) detailing the tactical and operational activities they will carry out and the outcomes that will be achieved through these activities. They will be targeted on auditable outcomes (e.g. for carbon saving, affordable warmth and clean air) rather than outputs (e.g. presentations undertaken).

Regional scale delivery will allow delivery mechanisms that are consistent with regional goals, whilst retaining the ability to share cost effective best practice across a national network.

Each SEC will comprise a small management team operating from a defined office within the area it covers and will also provide or manage a local call handling service for customers seeking telephone advice. This will help to provide a focus for the SEC and its geographical location will ensure that it can work effectively with key partners and within key

locations. However, the SEC will ensure that its activities reach appropriately and effectively across the whole area of coverage. The management team will comprise three defined posts; SEC Director, SEC Marketing Manager and SEC Tactical and Operations Manager. A defined management team is required to ensure that the key functions of the individual SEC are fulfilled and that there can be effective communication between the SECs and EST. They are also pivotal in that they will be important and influential roles in the delivery of sustainable energy and will therefore need a wide range of practical and interpersonal skills to be able to liaise effectively with all stakeholders whether national, regional or local, as well as design and deliver against an ambitious work plan to deliver the required targets.

MARKETING AND BRANDING

At present consumers are presented with many competing national and local brands, which dilute and confuse the messages put out. In order for the SEN to be recognised as a trusted advisor of impartial advice it will be necessary for the SEN to operate under a national brand, closely linked to the EST brand. Work on this is underway as part of the wider EST work on branding.

Under the SEN model local and national marketing are the flip side of the same coin. Individual SECs, through their marketing plans, will provide the tactical local delivery in line with EST’s marketing strategy and identity. EST will support SECs by providing the infrastructure, support and tools for effective delivery, i.e. literature and website, etc. It is proposed that the majority of the marketing will be co-ordinated centrally and then adapted locally, via centrally managed brand guidelines, to suit local markets and objectives. In this way the customer will have the same experience in terms of look and feel of SEN irrespective of which SEC they are physically in contact with, but the messages will be relevant to the local area. They will see and feel the ‘umbrella’ SEN brand and will be unaware that different organisations affect the delivery at local level. An example of this working would be for the SEC to develop a local campaign with a partner but the central branding is used. The results will be maximised as local marketing is reinforced by national marketing.

MANAGEMENT

The SEN will be managed by EST to ensure that it meets the outcomes required by Government funders. However, for this to be a truly cohesive initiative, the SEN will need to provide a sense of ownership to a number of stakeholder groups as shown in Figure 2.

Government departments funding SEN will have the overall say on its remit, the strategic context within which it works and, through EST, the targets it will be required to deliver. EST will directly liaise with government to ensure that their aspirations are being met. Each SEC will hold a contract with EST that will oblige them to submit an annual work plan detailing their proposed activity for the year. The work plan will specify how these defined activities meet Government strategy, how outcomes will be met and monitored, and the rationale behind decisions on which activity to undertake. EST will ensure that work plans are met or

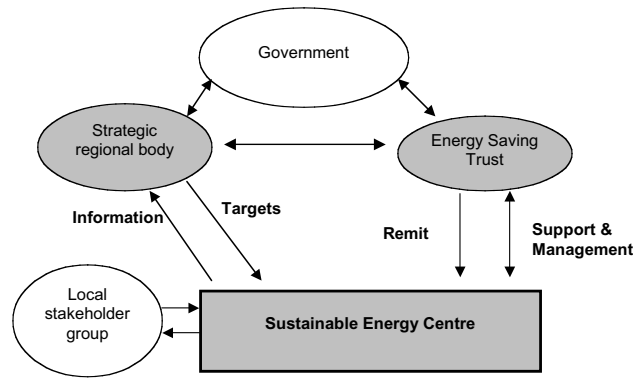


Figure 2. SEC management links.

that there are sound reasons why targets have not been achieved.

The Energy White Paper specifies that a regional strategic approach to sustainable energy will be taken. It is therefore appropriate that the SEN works to appropriate targets defined at a regional level. EST will work to influence these targets in line with Government strategy and to ensure that on an overall basis the delivery of these targets will deliver overall government targets. The SEN will also assist the setting of these targets by providing accurate and up to date information on local conditions and potential.

For the SEN to deliver government targets through a co-ordinated local approach it will be necessary not just for the centres to work with local stakeholders, but also to ensure that these stakeholders buy in to and fully participate in their work plan, activities and approach. To achieve this some form of local stakeholder group will need to be established that can contribute to direction, and give stakeholders a sense of ownership yet without slowing down decision making process or losing focus. The exact composition of this group will be decided by the individual SEC dependant on local priorities and appropriate local stakeholders. It will also be necessary to ensure that this group is consistent with other local groups (e.g. to ensure that the Local Authority forums which exist are represented etc.).

Sustainable Energy Centre Activities

The SEC will decide upon the overall management and operational structure required to deliver the work plan they have specified and to meet the overall defined requirements of their role. However, they will be required to have in place the three key management roles as defined previously. The actual remit of these roles and their fit within the overall activities of the centres are described below.

OVERALL MANAGEMENT

The SEC Director will fulfil the main role within each SEC, managing its staff and activities and ensuring that it delivers against targets through a locally focussed approach. It should also be a key external facing role to build the reputation and credibility of the SEC locally, regionally and, as a network,

nationally. In addition, it will be a key role of the SEC manager to build the climate for change at a local level. This will involve working at high level within local organisations to get their commitment, helping to influence local policy to incorporate sustainable energy objectives wherever appropriate, and providing local leadership, demonstrating drive and enthusiasm to ensure that there is strong local support for sustainable energy.

In terms of profile it is a requirement that the individual taking on this role would be able to establish a strong local and regional profile, effectively communicate the desired messages and inspire others to work toward the defined goals. Their skills and experience would need to encompass strategic and tactical awareness, resource management, procurement and procedures management, communication, negotiation and leadership.

ADVICE PROVISION

The SEC manager will be accountable for the objective to "Provide all consumers with a uniform source of free, impartial information and advice on sustainable energy."

The SEC will provide free, impartial advice and information on sustainable energy to customers in their area, forming part of a national advice and information service. The call handling will be consolidated to one site within the SEC area. Other advisors may be based away from the main office and utilised more on proactive 'outreach' type work engaging directly with customers and enhancing the accessibility of the service.

The SEN approach will also focus on ensuring that customers engage fully with the concept of sustainable energy so that they will recall and act upon the advice or any subsequent promotional activity, and to work to achieve a long-term change in attitude from customers (e.g. through customer relationship management) so that they will choose the sustainable energy option in future.

MARKETING BY THE SUSTAINABLE ENERGY CENTRES

The SEC Marketing Manager will be accountable for the objectives to "carry out a range of locally tailored marketing activities, co-ordinated with national campaign activity, to raise consumer awareness on sustainable energy" and to "provide a cohesive face to consumers for sustainable energy initiatives." However, the SEC marketing activities will also specifically contribute to the objective to "ensure that the supply of sustainable energy matches the stimulated demand".

The SEC Marketing Manager will produce and deliver a marketing plan for SEC activity, assist other organisations to develop marketing plans and encourage a joined up local marketing approach that is consistent with national activity.

Given the specialist nature of marketing and its importance to the concept, the local marketing manager within each SEC will be an experienced marketing professional. They will strengthen the link between local and national activity by providing a real strategic insight at a local level and feeding into the national strategy and approach. Also a more locally driven range of strategic marketing activity will enable EST to know our customers better, to target them more effectively and utilise strong local partnerships to deliver effective sustainable energy solutions.

Their role will include putting together and implementing the SEC marketing plan which is described below. However, they will also act as the brand guardian at a local level to ensure that branding and messages from EST and the SEN are delivered accurately, provide marketing support to local organisations, build relationships with local press and radio, TV and carry out joint venture activities etc.

In developing their marketing plans the SEC will need to start with a comprehensive market analysis followed by effective evaluation and finally a decision on the appropriate marketing tactics to be employed.

First Element – Market Analysis

This will provide a picture of the current situation in the region, including detailed information from which to identify potential opportunities to build demand as well as address barriers or gaps in supply. This exercise will cover the following: political/legal issues; social and cultural issues (demographics etc); environmental issues (rural/urban, employment etc); economic factors; technological factors; and other factors such as supply chain, distribution and channels to the consumer.

The purpose will be to identify critical issues in the external environment that may affect priority areas that the SEC needs to focus on. In order to assist with this process EST will define the key audiences and the marketing objectives in line with the EST's Marketing Strategy.

Second Element – Evaluation of Market Analysis

This will involve using the market analysis to develop scenarios and identify priority areas to concentrate activity on. The viability of identified priorities will encompass considerations of available capacity and resources that the SEC can draw on. The priority areas will form the basis of how the SEC will work in their region.

EST will review the Market Analysis and identified priorities and consider their viability and national fit in order to approve the individual SEC marketing plans.

Third Element – Definition of Tactics

For each defined priority area a tactical activity plan will be outlined covering the following:

- Target audiences (householder, supplier, channels etc) and their drivers.
- What we want them to do.
- How we get them to do what we want.
- Who needs to be involved.
- What activities need to happen.
- Communication to audiences e.g. Direct Mail campaigns.
- Marketing Tools required (including use of branding website etc.).
- Interrelationship with other tactical activities.
- Longer term strategy in this respect.
- Resourcing.
- Timescales.

- Monitoring and evaluation.

EST’s audience segmentation will help to define the drivers for each identified target audience. Tools defined by the EST including branding, website, and customer contact strategy will help to provide the infrastructure within which the tactical activity can be delivered locally.

Tactical marketing activities will be continually monitored to ensure that any potential opportunities or threats are acted upon accordingly, that the activities are co-ordinated with other SEC activities and that the implications of longer term strategy are taken into account.

SUPPORTING ROUTES TO ACTION

The SEC Tactical Operations Manager will be accountable for the objectives of “ensure that the supply of sustainable energy matches the stimulated demand”, “reinforce Government policy instruments detailed in the Energy White Paper by supporting incentives and ensuring that everyone plays their part” and “assist regions and devolved countries to adopt a strategic and sustainable approach to energy”.

However, these SEC activities will also specifically contribute to the objective “provide a cohesive face to consumers for sustainable energy initiatives”.

The SEC Tactical Operations Manager will define and manage the delivery of support activities carried out by the SEC, ensuring that their tactical fit is defined, that they are consistent with the marketing plan where appropriate, that they are implemented effectively and that they are evaluated. They will also develop partnerships and other relationships in order to ensure that a co-ordinated approach is taken. In essence these activities will cover:

- Supporting the customer by making it simple, easier and cheaper (either financially cheaper or requiring less effort) for them to take action e.g. via the establishment of local grant schemes or providing support in grant application etc.
- Helping local organisations working in sustainable energy (either primarily or as part of their actions) to fulfil their remit more effectively e.g. by helping them to gain high level support for their activity within their organisation, providing practical tools or resources etc.
- The key driver for individuals in this role will be to ensure that there is a clear focus to SEC activities, that priorities are identified, and that activities undertaken lead to clear outcomes.

Specific activities of the tactical manager with organisations would include providing the following:

- Strategic Support – ensuring that there is high level support within an organisation for the sustainable energy activity and therefore providing the remit and resources for that activity to be implemented effectively (e.g. persuading Local Authority Chief Executives to support the activities of their Home Energy Conservation Act officers).
- Practical Support – the provision of tools, training and/or resources to improve the effectiveness of the sustainable energy activity including facilitating access to funding sources and assisting with funding applications.

- Provision of Information –both local and regional to assist in planning and evaluation of activity. This will include provision of case studies and good practice from other SEC areas.
- Partnership development – working to instigate or develop partnerships to the mutual benefit of the partners and their activities.
- Supply chain support – ensuring that the supply chain is supportive of sustainable energy and initiating practical relationship activities to ensure that activists receive effective supply chain support for their activities. (e.g. linking local authorities setting up a bulk purchase with suitable product suppliers willing to be involved).

The key to the SEN support activities is to drive the activity and make tactical decisions at a local level. However, EST will manage and support this activity through:

- Defining operational remits where appropriate to ensure that national goals are achieved alongside regional targets.
- Getting high level commitment from national and regional organisations.
- Influencing national and regional policy.
- Providing national leadership, demonstrating drive and enthusiasm.
- Driving standards and providing endorsement activities.
- Assessing national and regional scale outcomes.
- Providing feedback to national partners.
- Maintenance of national database.
- Providing toolkits, e.g. for retailer training.

Implementation of the Concept

The SEN concept currently has funding approved to carry out pilots for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The specific political and geographical characteristics of Scotland may necessitate a slightly different approach and discussions are ongoing with the Scottish Executive in this respect. Decisions on further funding to fully launch the SEN will only be determined once the pilots have been evaluated, hence the following timings are only provisional at this stage.

EST will pilot the SEN concept throughout 2005/06 to evaluate if it is an effective delivery mechanism to meet the requirements identified within the EWP. Following an EU wide tender selection process, three pilots will launch to the consumer in July 2005 in Northern Ireland, the North East of England and Anglia (comprising the counties of Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and Norfolk). Whilst it was not a requirement within the tender, all successful tenderers include organisations that have been operating an EEAC during 2004/05, which will harness the skills within the current network.

If the initial year looks to be a success the pilot will continue for a subsequent full year to allow full evaluation. Subject to the concept meeting its objectives, 2007/08 will

be used as a transition year, with a full UK coverage in 2008/09.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PILOT

The objectives of the pilot are to specifically test the SEN concept prior to full implementation. The key objectives are:

- To establish whether the SEC proposal will facilitate a cost effective delivery of the relevant goals of the Energy White Paper.
- Test whether it is effective to tie all sustainable energy areas together, i.e. do customers see boundaries between energy efficiency, renewables and sustainable transport?
- To develop and test the brand proposition for the SEN to ensuring client understanding and that it delivers on the objectives of the SEN.
- To ensure that advice links more effectively with national grant and incentive schemes such as the Energy Efficiency Commitment and Warm Front, thereby leading to greater take up of measures.
- To ensure that the service provided by the pilots is valued by the clients and stakeholders and that customers see EST as a trusted advisor on sustainable energy choices and are satisfied with the service offered.
- To assess the effectiveness of focusing on regional activity with national support.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS FOR THE PILOT

The ultimate evaluation of the pilot will be based on the carbon saved directly from the advice provided. This will allow an assessment of the cost effectiveness of the pilot. A key measurement will also be the effectiveness of cross selling advice. For instance, if somebody required energy efficiency advice the SEC should look for opportunities to also advise on transport or renewables.

Whilst the main activities carried out under the current EEAC and LASP contracts should continue and be enhanced, a key decision on whether to proceed after the pilot period will be customer satisfaction. This will include whether consumers feel the network is a valuable resource and how easy it was for them to take action. This will be one way to assess the SEC's role in supporting action, but conclusions will also be drawn from looking at the views of partners. Ultimately the SEC should show that there has been more action from householders and better coordination of activity within the SEC area.

Glossary

EEAC	Energy Efficiency Advice Centre
EST	Energy Saving Trust
LASP	Local Authority Support Programme
REAS	Renewable Energy Advice Service
SEC	Sustainable Energy Centre
SEN	Sustainable Energy Network