



ANNEX A – GUIDANCE ON DRAFTING DCLG REPORTS

Reports fall into two broad categories:

- those that form background material arising from the research project (these would be made available upon request but are not specifically intended for publication)
- those being prepared specifically for publication.

Background Material

Background material should contain draft material for later publications or should only be of value to anyone wishing to reproduce the project or develop on from it.

Examples of background material include:

- project progress report
- interim report
- draft of the content for an approved document revision or Impact Assessment (IA)
- tool, database, software or other deliverables for the purpose of recording raw data or producing those analyses that will be published
- functional specification and any other development documents for tools, databases, software, etc that are intended for public use.

Publishable Reports

Each project must produce as a minimum 1 report for publication. The key requirement is that any reports for publication succinctly provide all the information arising from the project that can usefully be used without unnecessary details. Reports for publication must be clearly written and in a style suitable for the target readership. The contractor should consider using a professional technical editor to ensure that published reports can be easily understood. Their content should:

- attract the interest and attention of the relevant stakeholders and have an appropriate impact
- be authoritative and challenge-proof
- be written in plain English.

Authors should consider the following three questions and address them in the Executive Summary and Introduction sections of their report:

1. What is the report or publication's purpose?

An in-depth technical report? A summary of a new process? A best practice guide to improve safety or efficiency? A draft of a new approved document?



2. Who will use the publication?

Who is it being written for? Will it provide guidance to DCLG Policy Officers or is it designed for a wider audience? Can you identify the market for the publication? How big is the market (be realistic)? Do the intended readers work at boardroom, office or site level? Are they regulators, executives and managers, professionals, designers, or students? Are the readers purely UK-based or does the information have European or worldwide relevance?

3. How will they use it?

Will the intended audience read it from cover to cover or dip in to particular sections? Is it a reference work with a long life or will it be old news in six months' time?

The answers to the questions will help dictate the organisation of the content within the document.

Examples of publications are:

- *brief summary report on expert advice and contributions made at codes and standards committees*
- *guidance document to be referenced in an approved document*
- *guidance document on best practice*
- *final research report*
- *information paper*
- *impact assessment (IA)*
- *consultation document*
- *user guide for a tool, database, software etc that is intended for public use.*

In most cases, DCLG will publish deliverables with a disclaimer. DCLG will decide whether to use a disclaimer during its preparation of the publication. Publication will normally be on www.gov.uk but DCLG may consider producing a printed version as well.

Format of Reports

All reports should include a front cover and QA sheet including:

- report title
 - DCLG CI (contract) and BD (project) reference numbers
 - milestone identification number
 - version number and date
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- checking and approval signatures.

They should also be marked as draft until an approved final version is requested. The front cover may be removed and replaced when reports are prepared for publication by DCLG.

The status of a report should be clearly indicated as one of the following:

- *Progress Report*
- *Interim Report*
- *Information Report*
- *Policy Implications Report*
- *Final Research Report.*

Progress Report

Progress reports should be provided on a quarterly basis where there are less than two milestones in any 12 month period. They are intended for DCLG internal use and are needed to track project progress. They should clearly outline work undertaken in that quarter. They should identify any milestones achieved within the programme of work and any difficulties anticipated that may hinder the project's performance. Progress reports should be completed in a standard template agreed with DCLG and should:

- define the period covered
- describe progress against each of the tasks or activities for which work has been undertaken, identifying any implications
- provide interim conclusions that have been derived from the work to date
- comment on future work, identifying any issues arising that may hinder timely progress or performance against the objectives and outlining what action is needed
- include a list of deliverables to date as an Appendix

A progress report does not require an Executive Summary. Typically the length of a progress report should be:

- ½ page per task for progress against objectives
- up to 1 page for interim conclusions
- up to 1 page for a forward look.

Interim Report

An interim report will be expected to cover particular tasks or groups of tasks at interim stages of a project. Interim reports should:



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- provide an introduction identifying the tasks or activities being reported on in the context of the project objectives
 - describe the work carried out including the methodology adopted, the results or outcome and any dissemination or discussion with stakeholders
 - provide interim conclusions relating to the project objectives and a summary of the impact/implications for regulation and/or policy
 - comment on future work, identifying any issues arising that may hinder timely progress or performance against the objectives and outlining what action is needed.

An interim report does not require an Executive Summary. The length of the report will be as necessary to provide a full understanding of what the project is delivering against the objectives.

Information Report

An Information Report may cover specific information arising from a project that warrants a stand-alone publication from the Final Research Report (eg a specific user guide or package of training materials). The content may be bespoke and will be agreed with DCLG either through inclusion in the project proposal where possible or at least in advance of drafting.

Project proposals should offer deliverables that are appropriately named (eg a User Guide), the generic name Information Report is just used here as report category covering these types of deliverables.

Policy Implications Report

A Policy Implications Report may take the form of:

- revision to an Approved Document
- Impact Assessment
- Consultation Document
- supporting guide to be referenced in an approved document or other DCLG publication.

Such reports should provide the initial contents of documents that DCLG will publish after due process including any editing arising from DCLG and stakeholder review and/or required to achieve Ministerial approval. Formatting will, as far as possible, emulate that used in any recent and similar publications but should be prefaced on separate pages by some contextual content as follows:

- Contractor's normal QA cover
- statement that the content is subject to review and amendment by DCLG and stakeholders prior to publication
- introduction covering the objectives of the research project under which it was generated



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- explanation of any underlying issues that were considered in drafting the revision and what decisions were made to arrive at the proposed content
 - comment on the impact/implications of the content for stakeholders.

Project proposals should offer deliverables that are appropriately named (eg a Consultation Document), the generic name Policy Implications Report is just used here as report category covering these types of deliverables.

Final Research Report

A Final Research Report should cover the whole project and should:

- provide a brief (no more than two pages) non-technical Executive Summary including advice on who may benefit from reading the report, what they should know as a result and what the implication of the new knowledge may be for them
- provide an introduction outlining the purpose and scope of the project and the expected outcomes in the context of the project objectives
- describe the work carried out including the methodology adopted, the results or outcome and any dissemination or discussion with stakeholders
- provide conclusions relating to the project objectives and a summary of the potential impact/implications for regulation and/or policy
- be a standalone document with no cross referencing back to earlier progress or interim reports
- refer to Information Reports generated within the project if this is appropriate and does not compromise the requirement to be standalone.

A 200 - 400 word summary suitable for publicising the results of the work in journals, newsletters, annual reports or web sites should be provided with the Final Research Report as a separate document.

Final Research Reports must not contain recommendations or any proposed text for a revision to an approved document or supporting guidance, including draft/initial Impact Assessments. Such material should be provided in a separate Policy Implications Report as this will typically need to be published separately.

A final research report will be the last deliverable for every project. It may be brief if the project has largely provided representation and advice or generated other deliverables for publications (eg information papers or policy implication reports).

Publication Guidelines



Introduction

The following guidance focuses primarily on final research reports. However a large part of the guidance is standard good practice for the preparation of written reports and hence will also apply to other forms of reports to DCLG e.g. interim reports.

All reports for publication must be proof-read by the Contractor. Any comments from DCLG or the Steering Group must be addressed and edited as appropriate by the Contractor prior to acceptance by DCLG. The associated milestone invoice should not be submitted until DCLG has accepted the report for publication.

This guidance sets out basic 'Do's and Don'ts' to follow so that the report delivered is in a consistent style that meets Government publications guidance.

This guidance also identifies 'Do's and Don'ts' concerned with copyright and approval issues.

DCLG standards

All publications that are available through DCLG are produced to a uniformly high standard. All material submitted for publication should be:

- provided in the required format, in accordance with this guidance or as otherwise agreed with DCLG.
- written in a style appropriate for the intended readership
- structured logically
- factually accurate
- cleared for copyright
- up to date
- consistent in style and approach
- free from grammatical and spelling errors
- free from jargon and acronyms
- fully referenced.

Writing style and 'Plain English'

Reports should be written impersonally using the passive voice. This means that the words "I" or "we" should not appear in the report.



It is recognised that reports will address technically complex and specialist subjects, but authors must use ‘plain English’ as much as possible in all cases. The executive summary, conclusions and recommendations must be comprehensible to the non-specialist educated reader. All other scientific and engineering concepts addressed in the report should be expressed in language that will be readily understood by the target specialist or technical audience. Where the report is aimed primarily at a non-technical audience, ‘plain English’ must be used throughout. Jargon and acronyms should be avoided.

Structure

The default page order is:

Title page (right-hand page, p 1)

Acknowledgements

Content List

List of figures 1

List of tables | include, if appropriate, in technical reports

List of boxes |

Glossary

Abbreviations

Notation – essential for those publications that contain formulae and equations

Executive summary

Main text of report - structured as appropriate to the type of publication

Conclusions

Recommendations

References/bibliography/further reading

Appendices - if required

Output type

Reports should normally be provided in a standard word processing package e.g. Microsoft Word, and in Adobe Acrobat pdf. Authors should contact DCLG’s Contract Manager regarding any specialist software used in diagrams.

Use of word processing style settings



Wherever possible word processing style settings should be used to create normal text, headings, captions, indexes, lists etc. This will ensure consistency and assist reformatting the document e.g. to meet the needs of visually impaired readers, without the need to manually retype headings etc.

Font

The default style for normal text is Arial 12 point. Other fonts may be used, but whichever one is chosen, it should be clearly legible on the screen and in hard copy.

Page layout

The page layout should be set up for double sided printing. Each chapter should start on a right hand page.

Either left handed justification or full justification is acceptable.

Margin sizes should be adequate for binding (at least 2.5 cms).

Layout of text

Closely typed long paragraphs should be avoided. The text should be broken up and present a neat, well-shaped layout with headings and sub-titles.

Headings

A numbering system for chapters and section headings is preferred for easy reference. It is most usual for the decimal numbering system to be used (2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.3.1, 2.3.2 etc). There should be no more than three levels of numbering.

Roman numerals should not be used for paragraph numbering or elsewhere.

If more levels are required within a section, bullet points or unnumbered section headings should be used.

Headings should be meaningful so that the reader can interpret them correctly and quickly find information required. Imprecise headings such as "Other considerations" should be avoided. The headings should follow a logical order.

Paragraph numbering

The default is for paragraphs not to be numbered. If paragraph numbers are used, they should be consistent with the heading numbering system.

Page numbers

Wherever possible reports should have consecutive page numbers which should follow through to the Appendices. Where it is impractical or potentially confusing to have consecutive numbering through the Appendices, these should be separately numbered using an alternative numbering system that clearly identifies each Appendix e.g. A-1.1, A-1.2, A-2.1 etc.



There is no preference for the position of page numbers (centre or right). The default style is for page numbers to be centered.

Lists

Either bulleted lists or numbered lists may be used.

Roman numerals must not be used in numbered lists (e.g. i., ii., iii. etc) or elsewhere.

Bulleted lists are preferable for brief entries. They should be introduced by an incomplete sentence ending with a colon. Entries should start with a lower-case letter and only the final entry should end with a full stop.

It is best to use numbered lists for longer entries (each containing one or more complete sentences), where the sequence of items is important, or where

the list is introduced by a phrase stating the number of items. Numbered lists should be punctuated by a full stop at the end of the introductory statement, then full stops at the end of each numbered item.

Text under bulleted and numbered lists should be indented to line up with the first line of the bullet point e.g.

- example example.

Usage of bulleted and numbered lists (including punctuation in lists) should be consistent throughout the document.

Bullet points

Bullet points may be indented (as above) or lined up with the margin of the preceding paragraph. Whichever style is selected, it should be used consistently throughout the report.

References

References to publications (and interviews if appropriate) should be listed in a reference list. The default location for the reference list is at the end of the report, before any appendices. It is also acceptable to locate references at the foot of a page; this system works best when there are a limited number of references and they are not duplicated in later pages.

A separate bibliography may also be included to cite all material used in putting together the work (whether this has been referred to in the main text or not).

In the case of a reference to a book, the reference should give author/editor, year of publication, title, edition, volume number, place of publication and publisher as found on the front and back of the title page. (Not all of these details will necessarily be applicable.)



In the case of a journal article the details required include: author of the article, year of publication, title of the article, title of the journal, volume and issue number of the journal, and page numbers.

For all electronic information, in addition to the above authors should note the date that the information was accessed, and database name or web address (URL). The default style for web addresses is www.gov.uk.

When citing references within a report the name of the author, followed by the year of publication (Harvard style), should be used. In other respects, please refer to Copy-editing: The Cambridge Handbook for Editors, Authors and Publishers; Judith Butcher, Cambridge University Press isbn 0-5214007-4-0.

Tables and Figures

Where graphs or tables are used, all source data files must be supplied at the initial stage. Tables and figures should be of reproducible quality, should include captions and should not duplicate material presented in the text. All tables and figures must be cited in the text.

Tables should be numbered consecutively in the order of their first citation in the text. The table number and caption should be placed consistently throughout the report (either above or below the table). The default style is for the table number and caption to be placed above the table.

The same guidance applies to numbering of figures.

Where figures have been imported from other software packages (e.g. graphs imported as pictures from Microsoft Excel) care must be taken to ensure that legends and axis titles are large enough to be legible in the printed report – see guidance on line artwork below.

Explanatory notes should be placed in footnotes, not in the table or figure heading.

Explain in footnotes all non-standard abbreviations.

Pictures and other Images

Contractors should check with the DCLG Contract Manager what the publication route is likely to be (web or hard copy - web publishing is the default). This may influence the format and file size of any pictures and images either embedded in the report or provided separately.

For printed reports, all pictures and illustrations (line drawings, diagrams, graphs, boxes, photographs etc) must be suitable for high-quality reproduction at their intended size in the final publication. Sub-standard illustrations, such as photocopies, pencil sketches, rough drawings, distorted or damaged material, or photographs that are too light, too dark or out of focus are not acceptable. Images scanned from printed media or downloaded from the Internet are not acceptable.

Please supply each illustration both as an **electronic file** and in **hard copy** form (the latter should be a good-quality printout). You may also embed low resolution copies of the illustrations in your main



document to give an indication of size and positioning. If you do this, please supply a separate text-only document, indicating within it the position of each illustration.

Figures, pictures etc provided as electronic files should be identified with a file name that matches the number given to the figure, picture etc in the report e.g. Fig04.04.tif or Fig12.01.wmf. Printouts should be labelled with the corresponding electronic filenames. Note that all illustrations – drawings, graphs, photographs etc – should be identified as figures.

Please check whether DCLG intends to produce the publication in mono (black print only), two-colour (black plus one other colour) or four-colour (full colour). Do not generate multi-coloured diagrams or line figures if the publication is to be printed only in mono or two-colour, since different colours can be indistinguishable when printed in monochrome.

If the publication is to include many illustrations, you can help reduce the risk of problems by submitting some samples to the DCLG Contract Manager for assessment *before* you complete the final draft. Should you have any queries about illustrations, contact the DCLG Contract Manager.

Formats

Electronic files should be virus-checked and supplied preferably via a drop-box, or on PC formatted DVDs or CDs. Do not zip the files.

The following formats are acceptable:

- for photographs (black-and-white or colour) – **tif** is preferred; **jpeg** is acceptable
- for line artwork – **wmf**.

Contractors must inform the DCLG Contract Manager *before* final draft stage if it is intended to supply an illustration in any format other than tif, jpeg or wmf. Please wait for written approval before including any such illustration in the final draft.

DCLG cannot accept CAD files, so please export any CAD file as a wmf.

Where graphs or tables are used, all source data files must be supplied at the initial stage.

Photographs

The resolution (image quality) of **electronic files of photographs must be a minimum of 300 dpi** – files at lower resolutions cannot be accepted.

Please save photo files at about the size they will be used in the publication (maximum 157 mm/6¼ in wide, 250 mm/9¾ in deep). Whether traditional or digital, photographs should be sharp, clear and with a good colour and tonal balance. If the camera prints the date on the picture, compose the picture so that the date does not intrude on the main image area.

Line artwork

Where possible, line artwork (graphs, diagrams, drawings etc) should be drawn or redrawn to a standard style for the publication. Rules (lines) should be no thinner than 0.5 pt when reduced to



their final size on the page. Labeling of artwork should be no less than 6 pt after the figure has been reduced to its final size.

Maps should have accurate, legible scales and keys. Check that any colours, shading, symbols and labeling are clear and easily distinguished when reduced to fit on the page.

Logos

Use of the contractor's logos should be limited to the title page of the report. When subsequently published, this may be omitted at the discretion of DCLG.

Spelling

UK spelling should be used throughout (not American).

Use of acronyms

Acronyms must be used sparingly. The reader may not be familiar with the acronym used, therefore all references to acronyms must be written in full when they first occur, with the acronym following in brackets e.g. Communities and Local Government (DCLG). Acronyms should be spelled out in the Executive Summary (where provided) and again on the first occasion of their use in the main body of the report.

A glossary, including acronyms, may also be useful.

Executive summary/abstract

An executive summary/abstract should normally be provided at the start of the report. It should give a brief and factual survey of what is contained in the report itself with the material summarised in the same order. It should give readers enough information to assess the importance of the material and its relevance to them.

Table of contents

This should be on a separate page listing the contents chronologically by page number. The titles of each section should make it informative and should match the chapter/section headings. Two levels within the Table of Contents are normally sufficient; no more than three should be given.

Reference to Third Parties

If reference is made to third parties who have contributed to the work (e.g. contributors at workshops, interviewees etc) their permission must be obtained if they are named in the report. It is generally preferred that individuals are not named or quoted in person. In some cases it will also be necessary to obtain the approval of organisations, companies and professional bodies for their views and opinions to be given in a report.

Acknowledgements



Acknowledgements will normally come after the title page and should include the chair and members of any research project steering group, project funders and other contributors. Authors should note that DCLG reserve the right to adapt acknowledgement pages (or extract acknowledgements from elsewhere in the report) to conform to the house style for the opening pages of DCLG reports.

Data Protection

Contractors are responsible for checking that the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 are met.

Copyright Approval

Authors and the research contractor are responsible for obtaining written permission to use other organizations' or individuals' copyright material (text or illustrations) in the publication. This includes material published on the Internet. Be sure to include appropriate credits or acknowledgements for such material. Make sure that co-authors, collaborators and contributors also obtain copyright clearance for their portions of the document.

Appropriate credits should be placed adjacent to the respective matter in the text

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