

# REPORTER

The electronic magazine of the United Kingdom ACE Association

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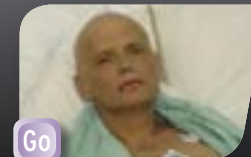
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# Stronger together

Welcome to the latest issue of ACE Reporter. The theme that strikes me from this month's articles is *Strength in Numbers*. That is the concept behind OGC's work on joining up government procurement and it is also what drives the development of partnership working. We have articles on the new National Forest, VCA's opening of an office in New Delhi, the work of the Interlab Forum responding quickly to the death of Alexander Litvinenko, the development of holiday sites on Forestry Commission land and a new European driving qualification for bus and lorry drivers, all of which have required agencies working in effective delivery partnerships.

We also have a piece by Sir Gus O'Donnell on a new programme of collaboration between ACE and ACEVO, the Association

of Chief Executives from Voluntary Organisations.

Strength in Numbers is a theme that underlies ACE itself – together, we as agency chief executives are stronger than we would be apart. We support each other and share our successes and ideas. To see the future, have a look at the stories on HMCS using text to pursue fine defaulters, the Met Office's work on climate change and CSL's spin-off company making innovative new testing kits. I hope you enjoy this issue and look forward to seeing you at the next ACE conference in November.



**Eleanor Emberson**  
CEX Scottish Court Service

# Strength in numbers

Reforms to government procurement are moving up a gear. The Office of Government Commerce (OGC) has been given increased powers to drive up standards of procurement across government. The OGC will work closely, too, with the major projects review group to ensure high standards of scrutiny.

New powers include the ability to set procurement standards, monitor departments' performance, and demand that departments collaborate on buying common goods and services.

The new powers are laid out in the recent Treasury publication *Transforming Government Procurement*, which sets out what the Government is hoping to achieve from better procurement. 'This report is a strong statement,' said Peter Fanning, acting CEO of OGC.

'The first thing the report emphasises is that good procurement is essential to good public services. If we do things well we can plough back savings into frontline services. Our job, in the OGC, is to deliver a transformation in the performance of procurement across government.'



One of the ways the OGC intends to deliver that transformation is through a series of procurement capability reviews. The first pilot is being run in the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). 'These reviews will look at procurement capability and capacity in its widest sense ranging from commodities procurement to the delivery of major projects,' said Fanning.

'Our job is to marshal the skills, wisdom and experience from around the procurement community to work out what is best and

then to make sure it is done. Where there is a case for collaboration we can demand departments collaborate but we have to be confident this is the best thing to do. That's why at the centre, arguably the most important thing we have to get right, is the data, the analysis, and the information, so we can identify the right thing to do.'

Collaborative procurement deals in the making include a print services framework

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# Strength in numbers

led by the Department for Transport, NHS PASA contracts for tyres and vehicle leasing, a police-led contract for vehicle glass and an OGCbuying.solutions framework for electricity. Recently the Department for Works and Pensions, with the help of OGC, led a £1 billion contract for the purchase of government vehicles that will save the taxpayer £100 million over the next four years.

The deal, initially for 78,000 vehicles from 15 manufacturers, already involves 38 government organisations. It will help meet government targets for reducing carbon emissions from vehicles by 15% by 2010-11 by allowing organisations to replace their existing fleets with greener, cleaner vehicles at

a reduced cost. The emphasis on sustainable development is pressed home in the report with a series of targets stretching to the end of the next decade.

To help the OGC achieve these targets, said Fanning, it has recruited an 'outstanding' new team with experience of procurement in both the private and public sectors. This will create a sustainable balance of appropriately skilled and suitably managed procurement professionals, to match the growing scale and complexity of government's delivery agenda.

OGC is also launching a graduate level recruitment scheme. 'We want to look at what we can do to entice young graduates into procurement as well as looking at the

procurement cohort across government as a whole and asking if the talent is being looked after, harnessed, nurtured, incentivised and distributed in the best way,' said Fanning.

'There is a lot of goodwill in Whitehall for this focus on procurement. We need to build on that. There is some excellent practice out there. We need to find it. We need to ask the right questions. It is only by asking the right questions, across government, that we will find the right approaches to ensure that the maximum benefit from procurement is being obtained.'

■ Download Transforming Government Procurement at [www.hm-treasury.gov.uk](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk)

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# Sir Gus launches partnership

A new partnership between ACE and ACEVO, the Association of Chief Executives from Voluntary Organisations, that recognises the increasing importance of the Third Sector in helping deliver public services, has been launched by Sir Gus O'Donnell, Head of the Home Civil Service.

The Cabinet Office is supporting the new work programme through the recently created Office of the Third Sector. It will include a conference, a shadowing programme between ACE and ACEVO chief executives and an exchange programme for staff. 'On the basis that collaboration should take place at all levels, not simply the very top,' said Sir Gus.

'There is a considerable value in sharing our approaches and experiences as leaders of large organisations that increasingly operate as deliverers of services to the public. This new partnership, based on the principle of sharing knowledge, expertise and good practice, recognises the increasingly important help the Third Sector provides to Agencies and NDPBs delivering public services in areas hardest to reach.



This new partnership recognises the increasingly important help the Third Sector provides to Agencies delivering public services in areas hardest to reach

'It is crucial that a forward-thinking civil service, equipped to face the challenges of the 21st century, continues to develop new exciting and innovative ways of fostering partnership working. We must continue to recognise that when looking to achieve our aims and objectives. Inviting those with diverse skill sets and expertise to add their input can add real and evident value to projects.

'Within our organisations, it is also vital that we ensure partnerships develop across units, so organisational functions work together. There should be no silo mentality within Departmental units. I want to see HR teams, for example, working with communication

teams, finance divisions, strategy units and others to engage the type of people who can add real value.

'I am looking forward to seeing the benefits of the partnership between ACE and ACEVO. I very much hope it can be an example of best practice across the civil service.'

■ Find out more at [www.acevo.org.uk](http://www.acevo.org.uk)

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# Death prompts joint working

The London poisoning and death of the Russian ex-spy Alexander Litvinenko, linked to the presence of a 'major dose' of radioactive polonium-210 in his body, led to a major collaboration between Government scientific agencies.

Many hundreds of urine samples from people at the various London locations Mr Litvinenko visited were gathered by the Health Protection Agency (HPA), as part of its extensive monitoring programme of people and places identified by the police investigation. It called on The Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) and the Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA) to help it test the samples.

HPA was able to call on Cefas and VLA quickly because they are both members of the new Interlab Forum that brings together six public sector research establishments from across Government to encourage the closer working and effectiveness of their science laboratories.

Interlab Forum Secretary David Harris, head of technology transfer at the Defence Science



Alexander Litvinenko

and Technology Laboratory (Dstl), said one of the key strengths of Interlab was that by putting the different science labs in touch with one another it was possible to know who to call for help in a hurry. 'Although each laboratory is distinctive in its remit, the scope for mutual support is considerable,' he said.

The co-operation brings together the expertise of more than 9,000 scientists, technologists and engineers to enhance the Government's effectiveness through the sharing of best practice and collaboration on strategic activities and projects. Areas where

By putting the different science labs in touch with one another it is possible to know who to call for help in a hurry

the Forum is working include emergency response and disease control.

The six members are: Central Science Laboratory (CSL); Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas); Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl); Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL); Health Protection Agency (HPA); and Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA).

■ More information from Interlab Forum Secretary David Harris: [djharris@dstl.gov.uk](mailto:djharris@dstl.gov.uk)

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# U hav txt – pay your fine!

The novel idea of sending mobile phone text messages to offenders trying to evade the payment of court fines has proved to be an effective use of modern technology. When ‘pay up or get locked up’ reminder texts appeared on their phones in a pilot scheme, some three-quarters of defaulters paid immediately.

The use of texting technology is now being rolled out nationally (April 2007). Text messaging as a means of encouraging the payment of fines was piloted in Staffordshire Magistrates’ Court. It was part of a national blitz by Her Majesty’s Courts Service (HMCS), working with the police, to get fines paid.

Following the success of the scheme it was decided that proactive messaging of defaulters should be included in the enforcement toolkit. Good results were achieved when its effectiveness was tested by the North West Regional Pathfinder for the National Enforcement Service, through a cross-Criminal Justice System initiative designed to ensure defendants, defaulters and offenders obey the orders of the Court. When a defaulter received a text message the average response



rate was just over one hour.

Rigorous enforcement in collecting fines is high on the HMCS agenda. HMCS Chief Executive Sir Ron de Witt said: ‘Collecting debts and compensating crime victims is a vital part of our work. Courts can no longer rely on traditional methods alone to collect fines. Most people now own a mobile phone and the pilot scheme was set up to test the

effectiveness of collecting fines by text. It produced excellent results.’

The benefits of texting include: increased compliance with court orders; a more modern approach and tool for enforcement; the ability to reach individuals with chaotic lifestyles; a more cost effective method of enforcement; and a quick response rate.

The Probation Service is piloting texting to remind offenders to attend their appointments and defendants are being contacted by text to remind them to attend their court hearings.

Sir Ron said: ‘The certain knowledge that defaulters, defendants and offenders will be pursued relentlessly will encourage them to pay their fines, attend court hearings and do their community penalty. It sends an important message to criminals that the justice system is one step ahead of them and will not tolerate a failure to respect the courts. This fits in well with the Government’s respect agenda.’

■ Find out more at [www.hmcs.gov.uk](http://www.hmcs.gov.uk)

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# Driving up standards

A new European driving qualification for both lorry (LGV) and bus and coach (PCV) drivers will be launched in the UK by the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) in September 2008. The Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (Driver CPC) will include theory and practical tests. All drivers will need to complete 35 hours periodic training every five years to maintain their Driver CPC status. It will be introduced to PCV drivers in September 2008 and LGV drivers in September 2009.

DSA chief executive Rosemary Thew said: 'This new qualification will improve road safety and reduce the number of casualties on our roads because of the increased number of better qualified drivers. It should also present a more professional industry face to younger people who may be considering driving buses, coaches or lorries as a career.'

DSA is working collaboratively with the passenger transport and freight haulage industries to promote the Driver CPC programme before it becomes a requirement. Skills for Logistics, for people who work in moving, handling or storing goods, and



the Road Haulage Association have proved essential in successfully targeting all PCV and LGV drivers, said Thew. DSA will be exhibiting at the annual Commercial Vehicle Show at Birmingham NEC 24 April to 26 April.

The past year has seen significant developments for the DSA. The number of test bookings made online has grown significantly, accounting for more than 60%

New qualification will improve road safety and present a more professional face to younger people considering driving buses, coaches or lorries as a career

of all bookings; and the fact this service is available 24x7 has meant a dramatic reduction in calls at peak times. 'Overall customer service satisfaction at the DSA reached an all time high of 95%,' said Thew.

'This is particularly pleasing when the high failure rate of more than 50% for those attempting the practical car driving test is taken into account. These results have been achieved against a background of considerable on-going organisational change. All staff can be justifiably proud of their achievements during year.'

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# On-site testing success

Innovative on-site test kits for plant and animal diseases, food safety and environmental testing are being developed and produced by a new spin-out company initiated by the government's Central Science Laboratory (CSL). Forsite Diagnostics Ltd was established by CSL and sold on to private investors. The innovations that underpin Forsite were developed in CSL's laboratories during the search for rapid, on-site tests to detect plant diseases.

CSL commercial director Dr Robert Bolton said: 'We identified the potential several years ago and began the process of development, culminating in attracting external investment. I am delighted to say that significant private sector funding from the UK and Canada has now been secured, and all the financial agreements for the new company are in place. The investors have a strong interest in diagnostic technologies, and the funding gives a significant return on investment for CSL as well as allowing ongoing expansion of the new company.'

Forsite is leasing space on the CSL site at Sand Hutton. Chris Danks, the new chief



executive, says, 'It is particularly pleasing to know we have succeeded in our ultimate goal of expansion as an independent entity. The external investment will enable us to expand rapidly in response to growing customer demands. Watch this space!'

CSL, the UK's foremost public-sector laboratory providing support for evidence-based decision-making in the fields of agriculture, food and the environment, was recently recognised as a centre of excellence.

The fact that CSL has been recognised as a highly valued national centre of excellence within the UK and the wider international community is good

A full-scale independent audit by an independent panel of 19 science experts found CSL, an executive agency of Defra, to be a national centre of excellence whose work and facilities are valued highly in Europe and the wider international community. Jeff Rooker, Minister for Farming and Food, said: 'The fact that CSL has been recognised as a highly valued national centre of excellence within the UK and the wider international community is good news.'

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## Enjoyable evening



ACE has celebrated its first year as a 'proper' association. 'To celebrate our first anniversary as a proper Association and our relationship with SOLACE, we were delighted that Peter Rogers, Chief Executive, City of Westminster Council kindly agreed to be the after dinner speaker,' said ACE chair Vanessa Lawrence, Director General and CEO Ordnance Survey.

'He gave a stimulating speech and addressed some of the challenges faced by chief executives in the current climate. Many of us commented on the similarities between the tensions and stresses faced by local government chief executives and those faced by ACE members'. Sir Ron de Witt, Chief

Executive of the Court Service, proposed the 'birthday' toast.

It was the first ACE event for new member Deryck Steer, Managing Director Joint Nature Conservation Committee (pictured with Vanessa Lawrence). 'It was a most enjoyable evening,' he said. 'I made some valuable contacts and gained new insights into the issues of the day for organisational leaders. I look forward to the next event.'

## Training to count on

A unique web-based learning scheme focusing on core skills in financial management is part of a massive training effort by HM Treasury. The new e-learning scheme put together by HM Treasury, working with the National School of Government, supports the financial management skills vital to delivering better public services more efficiently and effectively.

Mary Keegan, Head of Government Finance, said: 'The watchword for the new spending period is driving better performance from resources. Budget management becomes ever more important. For many colleagues, however, the concepts surrounding budgeting and accounting processes in government remain a complete mystery.

Even the vocabulary is scary – and sometimes it's just too difficult to ask! Our new e-learning modules offer people the chance to overcome that difficulty by logging on at their desk or at home.'

■ Find out more at <http://lovelearning.nationalschool.gov.uk>

## Conference date set

This year's annual ACE Association conference will take place on Thursday and Friday 22-23 November 2007. The 24-hour event will be held again at the National School for Government, Sunningdale Park, Ascot. Several high profile speakers have agreed to speak at the event, which will also include the second AGM of the Association and election of officers.

ACE chair Vanessa Lawrence, Director General and CEO Ordnance Survey, said: 'The organising team of fellow CEOs are already working to build on the success of last year's event. I would encourage ACE members to put the date in their diary now. Feedback from last year demonstrated the value of the conference for networking and learning beyond our normal day-to-day work.'

# Keeping roads safe-worldwide

India's flourishing automotive industry is now enjoying the significant advantage of having the UK test and certification approval authority close to home. VCA, which has expanded globally, has opened an office in New Delhi that will give a boost to India's hopes of exporting more products to Europe and the wider world.

Speaking at the launch in the autumn, Prince Andrew, who attended as UK Special Representative for International Trade & Investment, spoke of the world-leading expertise that exists within the UK and the role companies like VCA could play in helping the Indian automotive industry to realise its aspiration to access the EU market.

India is thought to be second only to China in terms of overall growth and impact on the automotive industry. Key sector players are a mix of indigenous manufacturers and joint ventures with major global brands. There is a huge home market but the Indian automotive industry is keen, too, to export. VCA will not only be on hand to help existing customers but also to play a part in assisting 'would be' exporters.



Prince Andrew at the New Delhi opening

The office is the latest overseas venture of VCA and is part of its aim to establish a presence in key parts of the automotive globe. It has offices in North America, Japan, Malaysia and, most recently, China. As part of the UK Department for Transport, it is the UK type approval authority and offers a wide range of certification. Its client base includes the Ford Motor Company, Honda and Toyota.

VCA CEO, Paul Markwick said: 'There is no doubt in my mind that India is becoming a force to be reckoned with and we will be on hand to support the testing and certification of products to European and other standards. Both I, and my team on the ground, look forward to supporting local industry in the

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# Keeping roads safe - worldwide

years to come.'

Shortly before the launch, VCA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with NATRiP, the National Automotive and R&D Infrastructure Programme, which plans to invest \$360 million in world-class test operations over the next three to five years. A consortium has been selected to specify, design and build new facilities in four main regional industrial centres of India.

This will include the enhancement of the test facility of ARAI, the Indian certification authority for the home market. A new purpose built test track, covering 4700 acres is planned for the centre of the country. Markwick said: 'We look forward to using the new facilities as a base for our engineering staff, providing for an even greater degree of regional coverage on the site of what will be some of the most advanced test facilities around.'

Commenting on VCA's expansion, he said: 'The automotive industry is one of the most competitive there is and as our customers have moved to adapt to global pressures we have had to do the same. But it isn't just about retaining work and being competitive,

There is no doubt in my mind that India is becoming a force to be reckoned with and we will be on hand to support the testing and certification of products to European and other standards

I believe that we have a vital role to play in encouraging fledgling manufacturers in emerging markets to embrace the concept of quality to ensure the integrity of their product. After all, this product is going to end up on our roads.'

■ UK media contact – Paul Cooke, **paul.cooke@vca.gov.uk** or 0117 9524126. To find out more visit **www.vca.gov.uk**

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# Changing the landscape

The National Forest has earned itself some good headlines in a leading national newspaper. A leader column in *The Guardian* said the Forest – a Government initiative covering 200 square miles in the heart of England – was changing the landscape for the better and was a model for other parts of Britain to follow.

More than 7m trees have been planted in the Forest that runs through Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Staffordshire and includes the towns of Burton on Trent, Ashby de la Zouch, Swadlincote and Coalville.

The social and environmental value of woodland and forest in Great Britain, estimated to be worth up to £1 billion a year, is explored in a new Parliamentary report, that looks at the issues surrounding the sustainable management of existing and new forest sites in the UK. It is this study that *The Guardian* picked up on. Its leader column on Monday 12 February read:

'In praise of ... the National Forest ... forests provide jobs and create prosperity, as well as improving the environment and soaking up carbon dioxide emissions. The National Forest is changing a landscape for the better, a model for



● Picture by Christopher Beech

other parts of Britain to follow.'

Sophie Churchill, CEX National Forest Company, established by the Government in April 1995 under the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) said: 'It is great that The National Forest provided a robust case study for a parliamentary report

but also that this was picked up by a national broadsheet, in an entirely positive leader. The seven million trees, thriving in carefully planned woodlands, are beginning to do our publicity for us!'

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The purpose of the initiative is to increase woodland cover while demonstrating sustainable multi-purpose land use. From a baseline of 6% in 1991, woodland cover is now 17%. The aim is to keep going until around a third of the landscape is covered by a mix of trees, most of them broadleaf species such as oak, ash and birch.

The Forest aims to grow high quality timber, as well as to provide a framework for other activities, including farm diversification and regeneration of former coalfields. New jobs are being created and local wood-based industries encouraged. Environmental benefits include a considerable and varied habitat creation, the linking of two previously isolated ancient woodlands and the establishment of new nature reserves.

One example of how The National Forest exercises leadership in sustainable development was demonstrated at its most recent conference with about 150 partners. 'We adapted a well known management technique and used it in real time, in a way in which it is rarely used,' said Churchill. 'Our aim was to get an assessment of the views of voluntary

organisations, politicians, foresters, landowners and local authority officers about the Forest's sustainability.

'We devised a set of indicators, to include the environmental, the social, the economic and some on leadership. Under strict instructions not to prevaricate, each group had to come up with their collective score for each of these. The pace was punishing! We ended up with something like 150 scores to collate.

'These scores, which ranged from low scores for waste management and transport, to high ones for leadership, were plotted on a web, literally a graphic like a spider's web. The higher the score the further the dot from the centre of the web. Joining the dots around the periphery gives you a bigger web area for some categories than others and where something scored low there is a bite in the web, where the dot is near the centre.

'Re-presenting the picture to delegates before the end of the conference, with all the caveats necessary about it being an instant snapshot, was powerful. Conferences such as ours should be about coming to a collective view as well as taking in information from the front, but you do

need a technique to do it. The days of flipchart feedback surely have to be over!

'We ended up with a picture, literally, which we can use in dialogues with partners about their areas of responsibility. By adapting it to a large group session we have also supported Defra's promotion of this tool as part of sustainable development action planning, demonstrating that it can be used in real life stakeholder settings.

'Nevertheless, feedback is not always as expected. I wore a jacket that day which I rarely wear because it is a little short. I had forgotten that at 6am that morning. One florid-cheeked forester, asked to note what he enjoyed most during the day, wrote "Seeing Sophie's tummy". At least we made an impression!'

■ Read the Parliamentary report [here](#)

■ For more on the spider web technique visit [www.nationalforest.org](http://www.nationalforest.org)

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# Ticket to change

Holidays in Britain's public forests are set to take off this summer with an ambitious programme of investment and renewal that will transform the holiday sites on Forestry Commission land.

This follows the transfer last year of the Forestry Commission's 24 Forest Holidays cabin, camping and caravanning sites to a new public-private partnership joint venture between the Commission and The Camping and Caravanning Club.

The new partnership, which will continue to be known as Forest Holidays, will invest £40 million of private-sector capital over the next five years in upgrading facilities at the 21 camping and caravan sites, and building a new cabin site on Commission land.

Simon Hodgson of the Forestry Commission said: 'This venture frees the Commission from day-to-day responsibility for running the business and brings access to private-sector business acumen and much-needed capital to invest in upgrading and expanding the facilities. It brings access, too, to a huge new pool of potential customers from the Camping and Caravanning Club's existing members.'

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# Ticket to change

'Importantly, it ensures we can continue to deliver a high-quality Forest Holidays experience with a partner who shares our values of sustainable tourism, healthy living and offering people high-quality enjoyment of the natural forest environment.'

The business plan allows for the provision of 'lodges' at camping and caravan sites, and establishing a new cabin site at a location yet to be decided. The new company will also be able to search the Forestry Commission estate for potential new holiday sites to expand the business.

The Camping and Caravanning Club, probably the world's oldest and largest club for all forms of camping, with more than 400,000 members and nearly 100 sites throughout the UK, sees the venture as a logical move that will bring its sites' capacity back into line with recent exceptionally high membership growth.

Director-General David Welsford, said: 'The Club will invest £10 million in Forest Holidays site improvements in the early days, as part of the overall £40 million investment plan. This venture will expose the Club to potential new

This is a partnership where everyone is a winner. It paves the way for better-managed sites with better facilities that, in turn, will increase visitor numbers. It will enable us to provide all the wholesome, natural education and entertainment of a forest environment

members and, most particularly, to a younger audience.'

For Forest Holidays, the joint venture will mean improved site facilities and the potential of additional sites on Forestry Commission land. Gary Fletcher, chief executive officer, commented: 'This is a partnership where everyone is a winner. It paves the way for better-managed sites with better facilities that, in turn, will increase visitor numbers. It will enable us to provide all the wholesome, natural education and entertainment of a forest environment, together with the best in cabin, camping and caravanning facilities.'

The formation of the partnership was aided

by Partnerships UK, a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) which aids government departments with all aspects of creating and operating PPPs. Claire Phillips, Partnerships UK's project director for Scotland, added: 'As a co-sponsor of this ground-breaking initiative, Partnerships UK is delighted to have worked alongside the Forestry Commission in the successful creation of this PPP holiday business.'

■ For further information visit [www.forestholidays.co.uk](http://www.forestholidays.co.uk)

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# Forecasting the future

The Met Office is well placed to forecast potential risks of climate change and to offer advice on how to mitigate and adapt to it, says Karen Wordsworth

Climate change is with us. But scientists at the Met Office predict it can be stabilised if carbon emissions, such as those from the burning of fossil fuels, like coal and oil, are reduced significantly. Proposed targets outlined in the Climate Change Bill (March 2007) involve reductions of 60% by 2050. Even then, we would still expect to see some level of climate change as the full effect of past carbon emissions on the world's climate has yet to be realised.

Left unchallenged, climate change will affect the basic elements of life for people around the world, including in the UK, and lead to substantial economic costs. Last year, Met Office scientists contributed to the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change, which outlined the projected costs of our changing climate. It identified the need for

investment in mitigation and adaptation now to avoid the risk of severe consequences in the future. Made wisely, the cost of such investments will be manageable and may even lead to opportunities for growth and development along the way.

Key to helping government and businesses turn climate change science into practicable business solutions is Met Office Consulting. Working closely with our scientists, this team of highly-skilled consultants tailors output from our climate models to help customers make successful choices, whether in policy planning, commercial investment or risk decisions. Our approach is to look ahead and not simply base advice on recorded historical weather and climate patterns.

Although it provides a glimpse of the future, Met Office Consulting does not read minds!

The only way our experts can offer advice is to work alongside government and businesses to understand their specific weather sensitivities and help integrate climate change into strategic plans. Severe weather brought about by climate change is emerging as a common concern among many customers. Working with our consultants, they are finding the answers to all their important questions, such as: How can I future-proof my organisation? Where should I base operations? What type of investment is needed?

At the Met Office it is our job to make sure you have the right information at the right time to prepare for whatever the weather and climate have in store. There is no need to be frightened of the future, but it is imperative to understand climate change and quantify uncertainty and risk. Scientists at the Met Office are working hard on the research and our consultants can demonstrate the relevance of new discoveries for your organisation.

■ Karen Wordsworth is a partner in Met Office Consulting. More details at [www.metoffice.gov.uk](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk)

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# Feedback

Read something that interests you? Concerns you? Annoys you? Want a chance to put your view? Want to find out more? Whatever your view, please share it with us.

ACE Reporter is only as good as the contributions it gets. It is your e-magazine, meant to reflect ACE. Let us know if it is (or isn't) doing the job.

### Editor ACE Reporter

Eleri Evans: [eleri.evans@ace.gov.uk](mailto:eleri.evans@ace.gov.uk)

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Chair: Vanessa Lawrence,  
Director General & Chief  
Executive, Ordnance Survey



Head of ACE Membership  
Services: James Jeynes  
Contact telephone: 0845 652 4010  
Email: [james.jeynes@ace.gov.uk](mailto:james.jeynes@ace.gov.uk)



ACE Reporter

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# More about ACE

ACE is the UK Agency Chief Executives' Association and is an inclusive organisation open to Chief Executives and senior managers who report to Chief Executives, working in central government Executive Agencies, Non-Departmental Public Bodies, Non-Ministerial Departments and Trading Funds. Other Chief Executives of public sector organisations will be able to apply for membership, but approval of membership will be subject to the agreement of the Board.

ACE promotes effective government and provides networking and learning opportunities for its members.

ACE was formed in May 2006 and exists to promote excellent working relationships throughout all aspects of government. It will seek, on an annual basis, to:

- Generate the opportunity for networking on the basis of an up-to-date database of contact details and specialisms.
- Produce regular newsletters for the purpose of promoting and sharing good practice, experience and knowledge.
- Organise an annual conference.

■ Organise two events which:

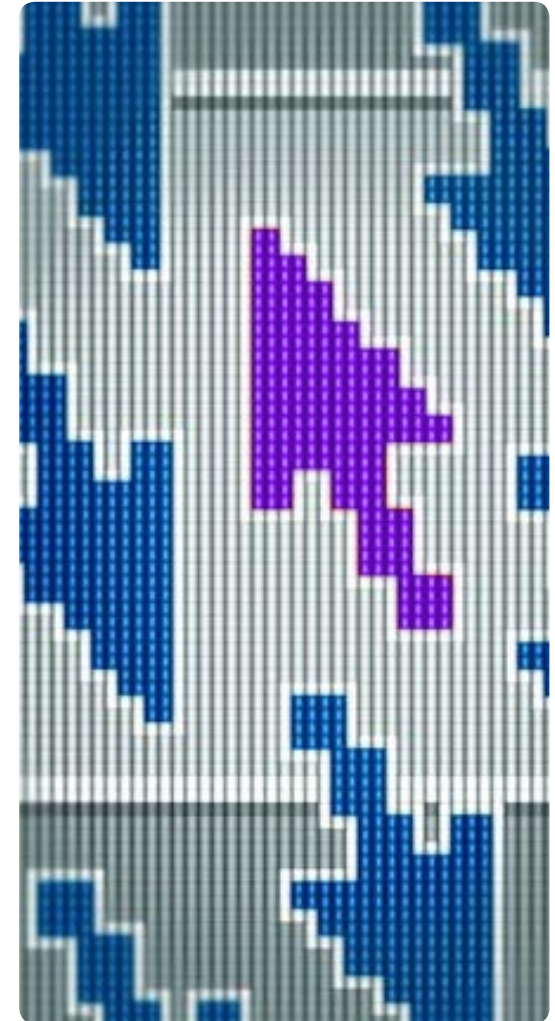
- ▶ Highlight priority areas of action for government; and
- ▶ Offer specific opportunities for networking across the public and private sector
- ▶ Provide a point of contact between the Civil Service Management Board (CSMB) and the Association and its members.

In undertaking the above ACE will neither seek to involve itself in policy development nor representative lobbying. Neither will ACE have the power to make decisions that would bind one, any or all, of the members.

ACE is funded from member subscriptions.

The ACE London headquarters is located in the heart of Westminster and provides a range of facilities for members. This quiet and private location is ideal for relaxing, reading the current journals, meeting a colleague or simply having a cuppa. You can use the dedicated computer terminal to access the internet and read your emails.

■ For a location map click [here](#).





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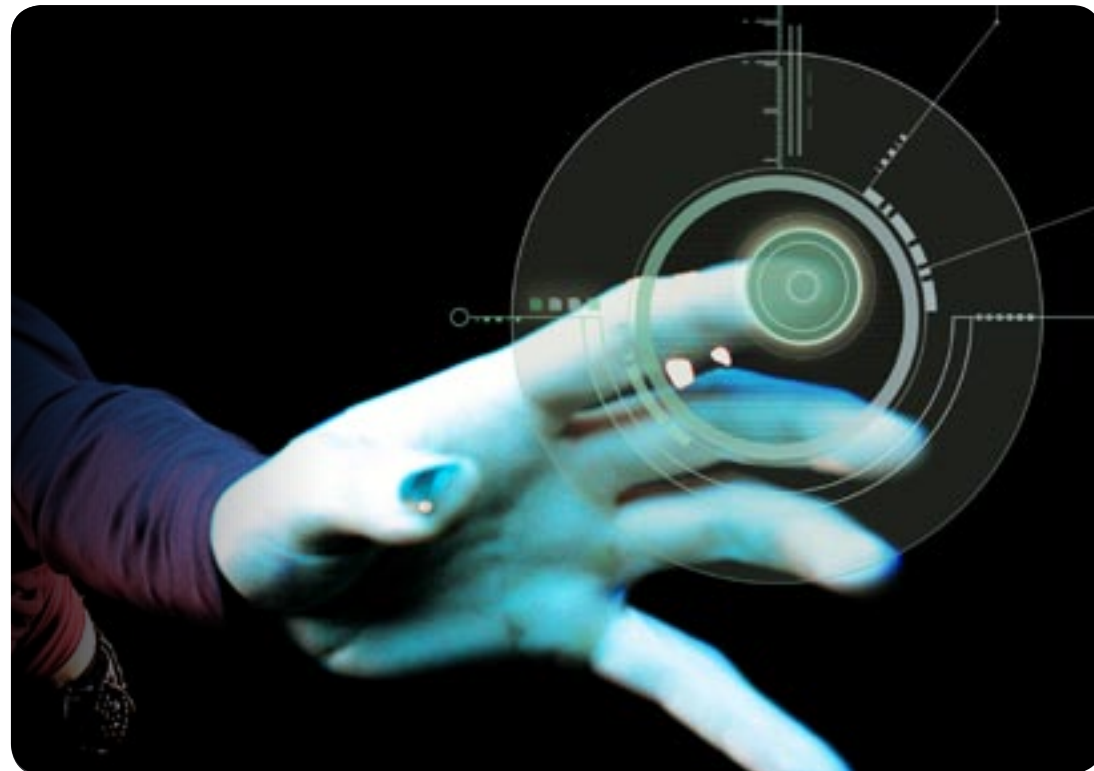
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