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To: Line Managers of School Travel Advisers
Cc School Travel Advisers

Dear Colleague

School Travel Adviser Funding 2007/8

We are writing to advise you about changes to the arrangements for providing local authority revenue funding to support schools with the development and implementation of School Travel Plans (STPs) – part of our work to cut car use on the journey to school

Since April 2005, the Government has introduced the concept of Local Area Agreements (LAAs) with a view to rolling these out nationally by April 2007. LAAs are based on local Sustainable Community Strategies that set out the priorities for a local area, agreed between central government (via Government Offices) and the local area. The primary objective of LAAs is to deliver genuinely sustainable communities through better outcomes for local people. Additional objectives include enhanced efficiency through pooled funding streams and streamlined monitoring and strengthened partnership working.

As announced in the Budget on 22 March 2006, a total of 26 funding streams will, from 1 April 2007, be automatically pooled into LAAs (either as part of a separate block for Children and Young People or in a single pot pooled with other funding, e.g. health). This will be delivered by the new Department for Communities and Local Government. School Travel Adviser (STA) funding previously paid via DfES Standards Fund will be part of the pooled funding. Amounts paid in 2007-8 will be the same as the STA allocations paid annually since 2004.

While the LAA mechanism provides additional financial flexibility for authorities and a less onerous reporting mechanism, LAs are required to set certain targets and monitor progress against them. In order to encourage that resources continue to be directed towards cutting car use on the school run, all authorities will be required to have a mandatory indicator on modal share in travel to school, and to collect data for Local Transport Plan monitoring purposes. From the 2006-7 academic year this data can be efficiently collected from schools as part of the annual school census. – detailed guidance is at <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/ims/datacollections/sc2007/>

Information about numbers of school travel plans in place will continue to be provided to DfES/DfT as part of the School Travel Plan capital grant process (capital grants are payable to schools and do not fall within LAAs).

The LAA guidance, at <http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1164930> indicates that local authorities should now be beginning their preparatory work and engaging with relevant stakeholders in their area about local priorities that the LAA should address.

You are encouraged to contact your local authority's LAA coordinator to ensure that they are aware of the pooled STA funding, the mandatory indicator and the recommended method of data collection.

School Travel Plans engage the wider school community and identify priorities for action at a local level. Since the *Travelling to School* project began in 2003 more than 10,000 schools have developed travel plans with the advice and support of LA based STAs, and been allocated more than £55m in capital grants. We see a clear and continuing need for local authorities to support schools in developing and maintaining STPs if the potential health and environmental benefits from more children travelling to school by sustainable means are to be realised. Data obtained from STPs and the annual school census will also feed into Local Transport Plans (which include a mandatory school travel indicator) and the school travel strategy that local authorities will be required to produce as part of the information package made available to parents under new statutory provisions included in the Education and Inspections Bill, currently before Parliament. More information about the travel and transport parts of the Bill is at www.teachernet.gov.uk/schooltransport

Yours sincerely



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Sustainable Travel Initiatives



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