

South West of England RDA
Submission for the Allsopp Review

SWRDA agrees with the points raised in Brian Ham's (ONE) discussion paper on the Allsopp review on regional Statistics.

SWRDA affirms the headline emphasis, with these additional points:

- The growth and productivity agenda. Ideally, there needs to be consistency and comparability of data provision, within and between regions.
- Quality and timeliness. Ideally, accuracy and "fit for purpose" are more important than frequency – good, consistent annual numbers may be better than late, approximate, later extensively revised quarterly sets. In practice, data needs will be largely driven by the reporting/target cycle set by government/EU.
- Data restrictions and other data. Regional Outcome Indicators are available on government intranet but not to the RDAs because of traffic lighting!

All RDAs need more detailed and more up-to-date data on the key economic variables:

- GDP or proxy indicators on expenditure, income and output.
- Price series - retail, producer, input and traded.
- Labour and monetary figures - including productivity, unit labour costs, household and corporate finances etc.
- International and inter-regional trade and financial flows, and
- Sector and sub-regional business and community indicators on productivity drivers.

In the South West, we are particularly keen to capture more detailed knowledge of:

- Intra-regional differences in output/growth, productivity, investment and the other key macro variables across such a large geographical area,
- Our differentiating sectors, such as tourism and agriculture
- Our major employers (public admin, education and health: distribution, hotels and restaurants: manufacturing: and banking and business services)
- Our targeted sectors (aerospace: food and drink: ICT: tourism: marine technology: creative industries: biotechnology: and environmental technologies)
- Data related to the key drivers of our RES, i.e. skills, innovation and environment.
- Data to inform policy specification on resource productivity and sustainable development
- Corporate survey data on outputs, employment, costs, prices, investment, profitability, confidence at an SME and micro-business level.
- Data on key spatial issues, such as housing, transport flows et al.

Nigel F Jump, Economics Manager, July 2003