

AIM

Promote opportunity and independence for all.

OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Objective I: Ensure the best start for all children and end child poverty by 2020.

1. *Halve the number of children in relative low-income households between 1998-99 and 2010-11, on the way to eradicating child poverty by 2020, joint with HM Treasury, including:*
 - *reducing the proportion of children living in workless households by 5% between spring 2005 and spring 2008; and*
 - *increasing the proportion of Parents with Care on Income Support and income-based Jobseeker's Allowance who receive maintenance for their children to 65% by March 2008.*

(The Government will also set a target as part of the next Spending Review to halve by 2010-11 the numbers of children suffering a combination of material deprivation and relative low income. The target will be met if there is an equivalent proportional reduction to that required on relative low income between 2004-05 and 2010-11.)

2. *Improve children's communication, social and emotional development so that by 2008 50% of children reach a good level of development at the end of the Foundation Stage and reduce inequalities between the level of development achieved by children in the 20% most disadvantaged areas and the rest of England. **Sure Start Unit target, joint with the Department for Education and Skills.***
3. *As a contribution to reducing the proportion of children living in households where no-one is working, by 2008:*
 - *increase the stock of Ofsted-registered childcare by 10%;*
 - *increase the take-up of formal childcare by lower income families by 50%; and*
 - *introduce by April 2005, a successful light-touch childcare approval scheme.*

Sure Start Unit target, joint with the Department for Education and Skills.

Objective II: Promote work as the best form of welfare for people of working age, while protecting the position of those in greatest need.

4. *As part of the wider objective of full employment in every region, over the three years to Spring 2008, and taking account of the economic cycle:*
 - *demonstrate progress on increasing the employment rate, joint with HM Treasury;*
 - *increase the employment rates of disadvantaged groups (lone parents, ethnic minorities, people aged 50 and over, those with the lowest qualifications and those living in the local authority wards with the poorest initial labour market position); and*
 - *significantly reduce the difference between the employment rates of the disadvantaged groups and the overall rate.*

5. *By 2008, improve health and safety outcomes in Great Britain through progressive improvement in the control of risks in the workplace.*

Objective III: Combat poverty and promote security and independence in retirement for today's and tomorrow's pensioners.

6. *By 2008, be paying Pension Credit to at least 3.2 million pensioner households, while maintaining a focus on the most disadvantaged by ensuring that at least 2.2 million of these households are in receipt of the Guarantee Credit.*

7. *Improve working age individuals' awareness of their retirement provision such that by 2007-08 15.4 million individuals are regularly issued a pension forecast and 60,000 successful pension traces are undertaken a year.*

Objective IV: Improve rights and opportunities for disabled people in a fair and inclusive society.

8. *In the three years to March 2008:*

- *further improve the rights of disabled people and remove barriers to their participation in society, working with other government departments, including through increasing awareness of the rights of disabled people;*
- *increase the employment rate of disabled people, taking account of the economic cycle; and*
- *significantly reduce the difference between their employment rate and the overall rate, taking account of the economic cycle.*

Objective V: Ensure customers receive a high quality service, including high levels of accuracy.

9. *Improve Housing Benefit administration by:*

- *reducing the average time taken to process a Housing Benefit claim to no more than 48 days nationally and across the bottom 15% of local authorities to no more than 55 days, by March 2008;*
- *increasing the number of cases in the deregulated private rented sector in receipt of Local Housing Allowance to 740,000 by 2008; and*
- *increasing the number of cases in receipt of the Local Housing Allowance where the rent is paid directly to the claimant to 470,000 by 2008.*

10. *Reduce overpayments from fraud and error in Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance and in Housing Benefit.*

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR DELIVERY?

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions is responsible for the delivery of this PSA. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is jointly responsible for delivering the children in low-income households element of target 1 and the overall employment rate element of target 4. The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and the Secretary of State for Education and Skills are jointly responsible for targets 2 and 3.

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions is also responsible for delivering the agreed efficiency target set out in the Department for Work and Pensions chapter of the 2004 Spending Review White Paper.