



# Greening the NHS

Making the case for implementing an  
Environmental Management System

# Sustainable development and the NHS

Climate change is a serious threat to life, health and the wellbeing of the world's population. The government introduced the Climate Change Act with a target to cut carbon emissions by at least 80 per cent by 2050, with a minimum reduction of 26 per cent by 2020. As the UK's largest employer, the NHS is committed to meeting these targets.

## Background

The NHS Carbon Reduction Strategy for England (CRS) sets an ambition for the NHS to help drive change towards a low-carbon society. The strategy shows the scale of reduction in carbon required for the NHS to progress towards the Climate Change Act requirements, and recommends key actions for the NHS to become a leading sustainable and low-carbon organisation.

The NHS has a carbon footprint of 18 million tonnes CO<sup>2</sup> a year.<sup>1</sup> Achieving the Climate Change Act target of a 26 per cent reduction by 2020 and an 80 per cent reduction by 2050 presents a tough challenge for all NHS employees.

The carbon footprint can be broken down into:

- 60 per cent procurement
- 22 per cent energy
- 18 per cent travel

Every NHS organisation has to develop a board approved sustainable development management plan and to start measuring and monitoring progress towards a 10 per cent carbon reduction by 2015 on 2007 levels.

To achieve the government's 2020 reduction targets, NHS organisations need to implement effective planning now. However, data gathered from 17 directors of estates and facilities, energy managers, and environmental managers within NHS Trusts – via a self-assessment GAP analysis at a recent Blackmores *Greening the NHS* event – highlights the lack of environmental procedures and the communication of environmental requirements [see graph on page 3].

<sup>1</sup> NHS England Carbon Emissions; Carbon footprint study, 2008. London: Sustainable Development Commission & Stockholm Environment Institute.

## Making the case for ISO 14001

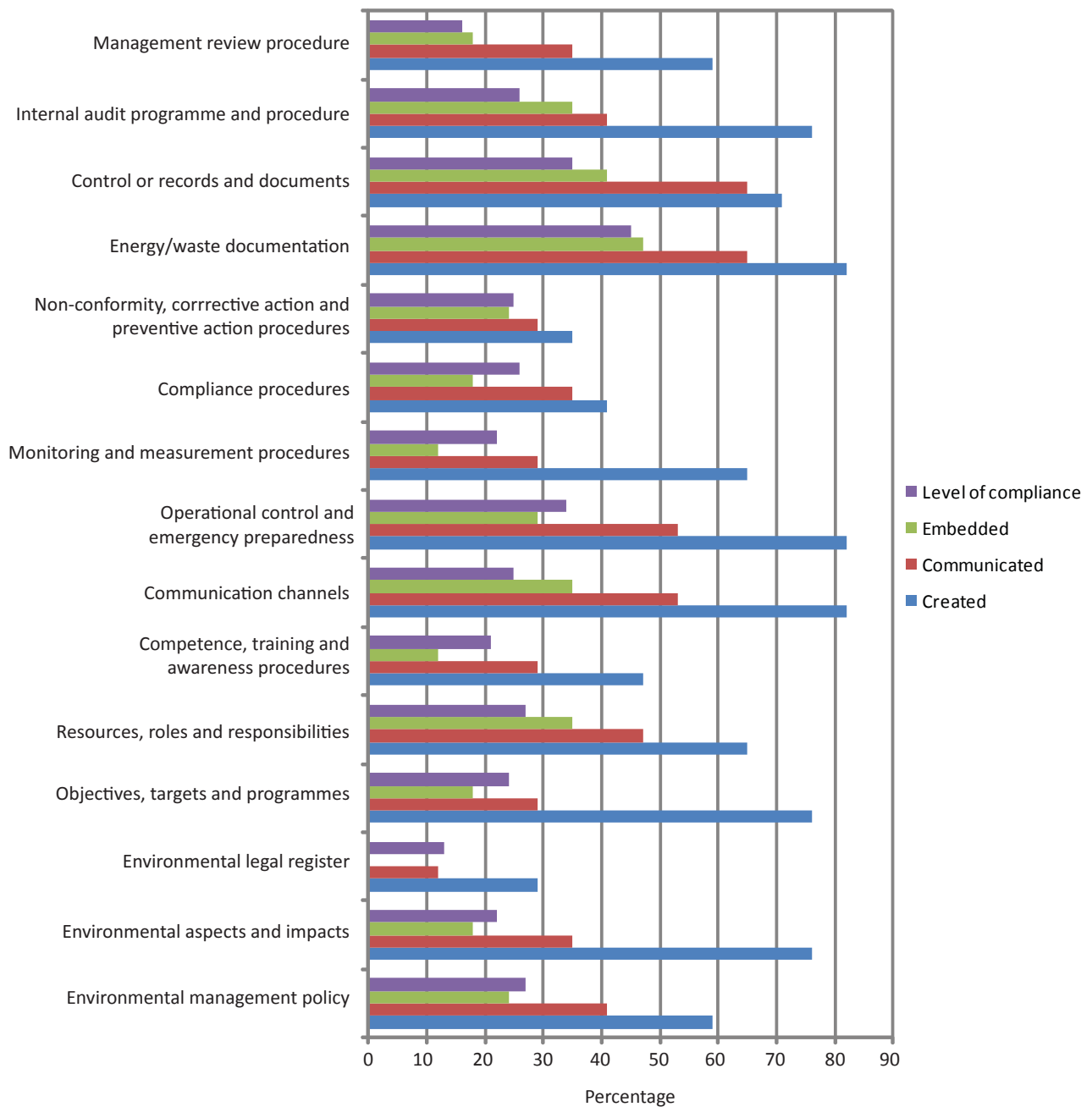
The data from the GAP analysis indicates that many trusts lack a necessary framework, and need a coherent system that supports the identification, monitoring and measurement of applicable statutory, regulatory and contractual requirements. There is an increasing number of environmental legislative acts (over 400 to date), with more than 90 of these being applicable to NHS Trusts.

A survey undertaken by The Carbon Trust in 2007 found that implementation of an Environmental Management System (EMS) provides a robust strategic framework for Trusts to address environmental concerns through the allocation of resources, assignment of responsibilities and ongoing evaluation of practices, and to manage environmental affairs effectively.

ISO 14001 is the most widely recognised environmental quality standard in the world and provides a sound framework for implementing an EMS to help meet the various pressures that trusts are under at present. The integration of an EMS within NHS organisations provide a systematic way of managing environmental impact.



# EMS Workshop GAP Analysis



## Data source

The data was taken via a self-assessment GAP analysis at a Blackmores *Greening the NHS* Event from a sample of 17 directors of estates and facilities, energy managers, environmental managers within NHS Trusts, including Acute Care Trusts, Primary Care Trusts and Foundation Trusts.

“An Environmental Management System is the perfect tool to demonstrate commitment to the environment and provides a practical framework within which environmental issues can be managed. An EMS will not only make a positive impact on NHS organisations from an environmental point of view, but it also delivers commercial benefits.”

Melanie Blackmore  
Managing Director  
Blackmores



## About Blackmores

Blackmores specialises in implementing Environmental Management Systems. Blackmores can help NHS organisations successfully achieve ISO 14001 certification and as a result help them plan for significant reductions in environmental impacts, energy usage and costs and meet the NHS Carbon Reduction Strategy for England targets.

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