

## LATS — Local authority visits

**We will be visiting 43 local authorities between October and April as part of our ongoing commitment to improving data consistency and accuracy.**

**We are now in the third year of LATS. Local authorities have a good understanding of reporting requirements and use of WasteDataFlow. We now want to work more closely with individual authorities to improve consistency and accuracy of data.**

We will visit all 121 Waste Disposal and Unitary Authorities by May 2009 to look at the processes and systems in place to collect, quality assure and report LATS data. Last year we visited 24 local authorities throughout England. This year we will visit another 43 authorities.

In February, we used a risk-based approach to rank all 121 local authorities so that we could prioritise individual visits. This was done as a desktop exercise using 20 criteria. The criteria included:

- reporting and validation compliance
- training and succession planning of staff to use WDF
- communicating with the WDF helpdesk
- varying quantities of municipal waste reported year or year
- recycling and diversion rates
- exporting municipal waste
- using MRFs

Reports from our first round of visits, with specific recommended actions for individual Authorities, were published on our website in July. We are currently putting together 'Frequently Asked

Questions' as another outcome of the visits. This includes FAQs on the definition of municipal waste for LATS. We have also adapted our programme in response to feedback from authorities who took part in the first visits.

Between now and the end of November we will contact the 43 local authorities that we want to take part in visits during this scheme year. We will explain to these 43 authorities the purpose and content of our visits and also what information and records we will need to see.

We will need help and support from local authorities to achieve our timetable and to produce meaningful recommendations.

In summary, our aim is to:

- Identify best practice
- Share common issues
- Look at possible ways of improving consistency and accuracy

If you do not hear from us, and have not already had a visit, then we plan to visit you sometime between 2008/2009.

Environment Agency's LATS web site is: <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/> click on Waste > Local Authority > LATS

You can contact us at:

The National Customer Contact Centre:  
0870 850 6506