

A programme of proposed actions

The four exercises that have led to this phase of WRC's TDM investigation have yielded a variety of possible actions. Responses to Phase A (Employers Survey) and Phase C (Residents Survey) suggest some general action points, Phase B (Known trials and case studies) suggests some possible results while the conclusions of Phase D (Infrastructure and Telecommunications Audit) help to focus where such actions should be targeted.

Although some of the action points mentioned below could stand alone, the effectiveness of each would be enhanced if a single agency was set up to co-ordinate the work involved. Such an agency could be charged with delivering against each of the action points, would provide a central contact point for work in this field, and would ensure that work was phased appropriately.

General action points

A. Telework information kit

The provision of information increases telework usage. The objectives of the information kit are to:

1. answer the demand for further information expressed by 50% of Employer respondents,
2. remove the misunderstandings that are present (e.g. the *need* for sophisticated technology),
3. ensure that expectations are realistic, and
4. make it easier for employers & employees to initiate telework programmes.

The information kit should:

- build on employee benefits such as personal circumstances, the nature of the work, convenience, the absence of interruptions, time savings, lower congestion and reduced need to commute
- build on employer benefits such as productivity, staff retention, morale, lower overheads, and flexibility
- underline the advisability of making telework programmes formal
- ensure that these programmes are voluntary and responsive to changing circumstances
- aim to a) achieve changes in management mind set and b) create employee demand for telework
- the kit should also point out the potential saving in kilometres travelled (and the resultant decrease in air pollution, congestion, accidents, etc.) and commuting time. These figures were generated in Phase B of this project

- Phase B also provided some base information about the costs and benefits associated with telework – from the employer's perspective. These need to be presented in the information kit.

B. Assisted implementation programme

Once it is started, the usage of telework tends to grow on its own. An implementation assistance programme would help companies *start* implementing programmes. Phase B's analysis suggested that assistance with setting up programmes could boost trip reduction associated with telework by around 2.8%. The objectives of the assistance programme are to:

1. build on the positive interest in telework implementation expressed by 75% of employers
2. provide the assistance with implementation that was seen as a major key to further growth, and
3. ensure that 'executive homework' spreads to other employees.

The components of an implementation programme could include:

- adaptation of best-practice implementation guidelines
- qualification of applicant organisations, based on the number of potential teleworkers involved, the existence of a steering committee and champion within the organisation, and other possible pre-conditions
- face-to-face advice, mentoring and training (where necessary)
- measurement of results.

C. Telecentre development programme

Telecentres can provide a number of advantages:

- for employers they provide workspaces for teleworkers who do not have space at home and they help overcome many of the perceived problems associated with telework
- for communities and residents they provide access to technology and bandwidth where this is not available in the home
- for Councils they provide a cost-effective means of delivering services, reducing travel, and promoting more general use of telework approaches
- telecentres can also be invaluable nodes within community and telecity networks
- telecentres have been a successful component of traffic demand management strategies in a variety of international settings.

Two Wellington employers are already known to use a telecentre approach. Trip reduction (and other results) can already be accurately assessed. The availability of telecentres for staff was also identified as a major key to further growth in the use of telework by 10% of employer respondents (Phase A). In addition Phase D showed that there was considerable potential for telecentre developments in a number of locations around the region.

The objectives of this action point should therefore be to:

1. formally report on the experiences of the two employers already using a telecentre approach,
2. develop appropriate business plans, support materials and evaluation criteria, and
3. develop a roll out plan for a regional telecentre network. This would include the identification of potential users of telecentre developments and potential locations for telecentre developments (based on Phase A and D respectively).

Note: Considerable work has already been put into the design, establishment and operation of telecentres, both locally and internationally. Telework New Zealand holds much of this information and has already developed two models that could be adopted or customised as required. (It was also instrumental in setting up the existing telecentres within the Wellington Region.)

D. Public relations campaign

Publicity will be necessary to:

1. promote increased use of telework approaches
2. encourage those who have expressed an interest in implementing telework to do so sooner rather than later
3. support the information kit, and
4. generate interest in the implementation assistance programme.

Once the telecentre programme is in place, it also can be promoted through the PR campaign.

E. Telecity development framework

Not only did some residents express interest in this but also there is already some work under way in this field in Wellington, primarily at non-profit community group level, and in Masterton. Phase D also indicated that there was some value in pursuing such developments. There were a number of possible target areas for telecity developments, based on the size of the resident population.

A preliminary action plan would aim to:

1. establish the primary objectives a telecity is to meet (trip reduction is our motivation but it will not be sufficient on its own to ensure the viability of a telecity project)
2. assess status of existing developments in this field
3. identify relevant commercial and Government partners
4. form a steering group involving these partners
5. develop detailed action plan.