

SEEDA WORK HELPS EASE IMPACT OF RECESSION

18 August 2009

A total of 8,000 jobs were created or saved with help from the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) in 2008-9, despite the economic downturn.

[SEEDA's annual report summary](#), published today, shows how successful work to attract new employment and to offer extra support for businesses has helped ease the effects of the recession in the South East.

Highlights in the year included:

- 8,000 jobs created or saved in the South East – more than double the target
- Direct involvement in attracting 90 new inward investment projects working with UK Trade & Investment. These investments will secure a further 3,800 jobs over the next three years
- Increased support via the SEEDA-funded Business Link service – including more than 7,000 business health checks from October-March and information or help for 145,000 customers in total over the year
- Launch of a £15million package to help businesses survive the downturn, including grants, advice and loans
- Help for 17,000 people to find work, against a target of 10,000
- Help for 22,000 people to improve their skills, against a target of 15,000

Rosie Winterton, Minister for Regional Economic Development said: "This report shows that SEEDA is playing a key role at the frontline of our response to the global economic downturn. It has risen to the immediate challenge of the recession with one eye firmly fixed on the future and the upturn.

"The agency has done this while improving the overall economic outlook for the South East. By working with their local and national partners, SEEDA is making a real difference."

Robert Crawford, SEEDA's Chief Operating Officer, added: "The South East remains one of the most attractive locations for the world's leading companies even in such a difficult operating climate. These excellent results highlight the unique strength of our region for successful businesses. These are demanding times and we are determined to do everything we can to ensure that South East companies approach the inevitable economic upturn from a position of strength."

...ENDS...

Notes to Editors

- **SEEDA, the South East England Development Agency**, is the Government-funded agency responsible for the sustainable economic development of the South East of England – the driving force of the UK's economy. Through supporting businesses, encouraging innovation, developing skills and engaging with public and private partners, we aim to create a successful, sustainable future for the region.
- **SEEDA's support helped deliver the following** over the period 2005-2008:
 - o 17,500 jobs created or safeguarded
 - o 32,500 people helped to get work
 - o 10,000 businesses created or attracted to region
 - o 137,500 businesses assisted
 - o £638m investment, 45% levered from private sector
 - o 200ha Brownfield land remediated
 - o 148,500 people assisted in skills development
- The SE has the lowest unemployment rate of any region, at 5.9% compared to 7.8% in the UK.
- The employment rate in the SE is still the highest of any region, at 77.3% compared to the UK average of 72.7%.
- Unemployment has increased by 78,000 over the past year in the SE, which is the third largest increase of any region (behind the West Midlands - 118,000 and London- 80,000).
- The Annual Report summary can be found at:
http://www.seeda.co.uk/Publications/Annual_Reports/docs/seeda_annualreportsummary_2008_9.pdf
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