

Summary of responses for the Consultation Paper on Reducing Motorcycle Evasion of VED

This note summarises the outcome of the public consultation paper that commenced on 8 May and ended on 9 August 2002.

Number of responses

There were 513 responses and a list of the consultees is contained in the consultation paper at ANNEX A.

Breakdown of Responses

Question

Should we adopt a 'sticky licence' system adhered to the number plate or to a licence holder located on the rear of the motorcycle?

Advantages: -

- The 'sticky licence' removes the risk of theft for use on other classes of vehicles
- Will assist the police in identifying the licensing status of the vehicle for enforcement purposes
- The licence would be year coloured and contain expiry month, with security features that would restrict any possible counterfeiting.
- Method of relicensing could remain with the Post Office/Local Office as at present and would lend itself to electronic relicensing at a future date.
- Would not incur additional costs for the motorcyclist.

Disadvantages: -

- Lack of space on the number plate will determine shape and size of the licence. The minimum size of the number plate may have to be increased which could raise questions over road safety.
- There will be a need for a paper counterfoil displaying all relevant information to be retained by the owner to allow for refunds. Legislation would have to be changed as regulations currently say that the tax disc has to be surrendered before a refund can be considered.
- With the proliferation of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) systems it must be ensured that the systems will be able to read the number plate with the licence attached.
- There is a risk of the licence being maliciously damaged.

- Number plates may become a target for theft.
- Attached to the number plate?
- Yes 35.9% No 64.1%
- Adhered to the licence holder suitably placed on the rear of the motorcycle?
- Yes 28.8% No 71.2%

Question

Should we use the number plate as proof of licensing (laminated licensing details into the plate) and renew the number plate on relicensing?

Advantages: -

- It would assist the police in identifying the licensing status of the vehicle.
- Ensure that the character sizing of the numbering and lettering, margins etc. of the number plate complies with legislation.
- The licence would be secure.

Disadvantages

- Would make number plates more expensive which might prove unpopular amongst the motorcycling public.
- The number plate would need to be changed every time a vehicle was relicensed.
- The motorcyclist would be responsible for affixing the number plate to the vehicle.
- Number plates may become a target for theft.
- The number plate would need to be surrendered for a refund.
- The method of relicensing could not remain at Post Offices as at present. Other options would need to be examined e.g. relicensing at Local Offices or number plate manufacturers. This may not appear to be customer friendly.
- Pressed aluminium plates used for classic machines do not lend themselves to laminated number plates. A requirement to change from these is likely to be resisted strongly by the classic motorcycle fraternity.
- Yes 15.0% No 85.0%
- Should all off road motorcycles be registered?

- Yes 53.5% No 46.5%

Of the comments received the greatest concerns were of expense and inconvenience. It was felt that any change would be at the expense of motorcyclists and that any 'sticky licence' would be a target for vandals and create more inconvenience. Some felt that greater enforcement of the current system (including electronic enforcement of licensing and MoT compliance) would be better than creating another system. Many felt that the Agency was discriminating on the very motorists who are doing the most to promote an environmentally friendly mode of transport and alleviate congestion. Concerns were also expressed about increasing the size of the number plate to accommodate the licence and the environmental affect of disposing of number plates should we go down the laminated route.

No clear way forward was identified by the consultation exercise and a decision was taken to defer any changes involving motor cycle evasion and number plates for the present time. Further research will be carried out on improving the security of number plates and investigating alternative methods of analysing evasion levels