

INTERNATIONAL DRIVING PERMIT FEES AND DRIVING LICENCE CHANGES - CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

INTRODUCTION

1. This consultation paper seeks your views on proposals to:
 - A. Increase the fee for International Driving Permits (IDPs) and International Certificates for Motor Vehicles (ICMVs); and
 - B. Make minor changes to the Motor Vehicles (International Circulation) Order 1975¹ (ICO), as amended, concerning the arrangements for non-European Economic Area (EEA) licence holders who want to drive during temporary visits to Great Britain.
 - C. To allow holders of driving licences issued in the Falkland Islands who become resident in Great Britain, to exchange their licences for the British equivalent.
2. EEA countries include Austria, Italy, Belgium, Denmark, Luxembourg, France, Finland, Netherlands, Germany, Portugal, Greece, Spain, Sweden, Ireland, United Kingdom, Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein.
3. The changes apply to England, Scotland and Wales. Separate provisions apply to Northern Ireland.

¹ Statutory Instrument 1975 No.1208

A. PROPOSED INCREASE TO THE FEE FOR AN INTERNATIONAL DRIVING PERMITS (IDPs) AND INTERNATIONAL CERTIFICATE FOR MOTOR VEHICLES (ICMVs)

Background

4. IDPs and ICMVs are documents which may be issued to drivers who are visiting a country outside the EEA. The former translates driving licence details into several languages enabling foreign authorities to interpret the entitlement held and licence validity periods. The latter translates details of British registered vehicles being taken temporarily to another country.
5. The issue of these documents is a statutory function deriving from international obligations (the Paris convention of 1926 and the Geneva Convention of 1949). They are issued in Great Britain by the Automobile Association (AA), Royal Automobile Club Motoring Services (RACMS), Green Flag and the Royal Scottish Automobile Club.
6. The fee for an IDP or ICMV is presently £4, having been raised from £3 in 1996.

The Proposed Change

7. To take account of increased administrative costs for issuing IDPs and ICMVs, it is proposed to increase their fee by £1.50 to £5.50. As the fee is prescribed in The Motor Vehicles (International Circulation) Order 1975 (ICO), a change to the fee would require an amendment to that piece of legislation.

B. OTHER PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE ICO

Background

8. The ICO also governs the driving in this country by visitors who hold non-EEA driving licences. The legislation stems from the international agreements, as explained in paragraph 5 above.
9. At present, non-EEA licence holders who visit Great Britain may drive small vehicles (motorcycles and cars up to 3.5 tonnes and with no more than 8 passenger seats) and medium sized vehicles (3.5 to 7.5 tonnes with between 9 and 16 passenger seats (not for hire or reward)) on the strength of their valid national driving licence, provided they have the relevant entitlement to drive such vehicles, for a period of 12 months from the date they last entered the country. Conversely, those who become resident here are restricted to driving small vehicles (motorcycles and cars up to 3.5 tonnes and with no more than 8 passenger seats) during their first 12 months of residence.

The Proposed Change

10. It is proposed to correct this anomaly, so that non-EEA licence holders who visit Great Britain are restricted to driving small vehicles. This would require a change to Article 2(1) of the ICO. Visitors with the relevant entitlement would be allowed to drive vehicles between 3.5 and 7.5 tonnes and with 8 to 16 passenger seats (not for hire or reward), only where they have brought the vehicle temporarily into the country, as is the case with regard to driving large vehicles.

C. EXCHANGE OF DRIVING LICENCES FROM THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

Background

11. Persons coming to live here from outside the European Community/European Economic Area (EC/EEA) may drive small vehicles (vehicles up to 3500kgs or with up to 8 passenger seats) for up to a year on their valid national driving licences. After this time they must pass a British driving test in order to continue to have the right to drive, unless they hold a licence issued in a country or territory designated by law for the purpose of exchange of licences. Once a country has been designated, its licences may be exchanged for British equivalents subject to the holders meeting the normal British requirements for health and minimum ages.

12. The countries which so far have been designated are: Australia, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Canada, Republic of Cyprus, Hong Kong, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malta, Monaco, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, and Zimbabwe.
13. In all cases of licence exchange, the following are mandatory requirements:
 - i) Applicants must show that they did not obtain the licence by way of exchange for one issued in a third country whose requirements are not as strict as in Great Britain;
 - ii) Licences issued as a result of a test passed in a vehicle with automatic transmission will be exchangeable for a British licence giving entitlement to drive automatic vehicles only and;
and
 - iii) Licences must be valid at the time of application.

The Proposed Change

14. The driving licence arrangements and testing standards in the Falkland Islands have been considered and found to be satisfactory and it is proposed to designate the Falkland Islands as being acceptable for driving licence exchange purposes.

Benefits of the proposed amendments

15. The main benefit will be to allow the grant of a full British licence to holders of licences issued in the Falkland Islands without the time and expense involved in passing a driving test.
16. The above proposal concerns only those persons taking up residence in Great Britain. It does not affect the right to drive in Great Britain for 12 months by other persons visiting from overseas, nor the right to drive here indefinitely enjoyed by the holders of licences from countries in the EC/EEA.

REGULATORY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

17. A draft regulatory impact assessment is at Annex D.
18. A questionnaire summarising the proposals and seeking your views is provided at Annex A. Please send any comments on the proposals in this consultation paper by 7th July 2003 at the latest to:-

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SWANSEA
SA7 0EP

E-mail – gill.bevan@dvla.gsi.gov.uk
Fax: 01792 765244

Comments received after that date would only be taken into account in exceptional circumstances. A list of all those being consulted is at Annex B.

19. Representative groups are asked to provide a summary of the people and organisations they represent.
20. A copy of this document can be found on DVLA's website at: <http://www.dvla.gov.uk/public/consult/idpf.htm>.

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

21. DVLA may be asked to make public the content of replies it receives to this document. When submitting comments please state whether or not you would be content for your reply to be included in a summary of responses which the Agency may compile or divulge on request. No reference to this in your response will be taken by us as agreement.
22. DVLA may also be asked, under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, to provide copies of individual responses. Subject to the consent of the person submitting the comments, the Agency proposes to do so, making a reasonable charge for processing and copying. Please make it clear if you do not wish this to happen with regard to your response. Again, no reference to this in your response will be taken as agreement.

CODE OF PRACTICE ON WRITTEN CONSULTATION

23. This document complies with the “Code of Practice on Written Consultation” issued by the Cabinet Office. If you consider that this document does not comply with the consultation criteria reproduced at Annex C, please write setting out the areas where you feel the document departs from the criteria to:

Mrs A McAleer
Vehicle Policy Group
Swansea Vale 2
Sandringham Park
Llansamlet
SWANSEA
SA7 0EP

ANNEX A

RESPONSE FORM

PLEASE PROVIDE ANSWERS TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ON THE PROPOSALS OUTLINED IN THIS CONSULTATION EXERCISE. PLEASE TICK THE BOXES TO INDICATE YOUR PREFERENCE.

Your details

Name _____

Address _____

Post town _____

Postcode _____

Are you prepared to allow your responses or name to be quoted, or made available to the public? (If you do not answer this question it will be assumed that you are prepared to allow your response or name to be quoted or made available to the public).

Yes No

A. International Driving Permits (IDPs) and International Certificates for Motor Vehicles (ICMVs)

It is proposed to increase the fee for IDPs and ICMVs from £4 to £5.50.

Do you agree to this?

Yes No

Comments _____

B. Amendments to Motor Vehicles (International Circulation) Order 1975.

Arrangements for non-EEA licence holders who want to drive during temporary visits to Great Britain.

It is proposed to restrict visiting non-EEA licence holders to driving small vehicles (motorcycles, cars up to 3.5 tonnes with up to 8 passenger seats), to bring them into line with such licence holders who are new residents in Great Britain. Do you agree to this?

Yes No

Comments _____

C. Falkland Islands

It is proposed to allow the exchange of Falkland Islands small vehicle driving licences for the British equivalent.

Do you agree to this? Yes No

Comments _____

Other Comments

Please write below any comments you have on the issues raised in this document.

ANNEX B

LIST OF CONSULTEES

ASSOC. OF BRITISH CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE
ASSOC. OF BRITISH INSURERS
ASSOC. OF CHIEF POLICE OFFICERS
ASSOC. OF CHIEF POLICE OFFICERS (SCOTLAND)
ASSOC. OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESSES
ASSOC. OF INDUSTRIAL ROAD SAFETY OFFICERS
AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION

BRITISH SCHOOL OF MOTORING
B V R L A

CBI
CBI WALES
CSMA
CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF TRANSPORT
CONFEDERATION OF PASSENGER TRANSPORT
CONSUMERS ASSOC.
CONVENTION OF SCOTTISH LOCAL AUTHORITIES
COUNCIL OF CIVIL SERVICE UNIONS
CRONERS BUS & COACH OPERATIONS

DOE (NI)
DRIVING INSTRUCTORS ASSOC.
DRIVING STANDARDS AGENCY
DVLNI

FED. OF SMALL BUSINESSES
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

GREEN FLAG

INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS
ISLE OF MAN HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT BOARD

JUSTICES CLERKS SOCIETY

LAW SOCIETY
LIBERTY

MAGISTRATES' ASSOCIATION
MOTOR SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR WALES
NATIONAL ASSOC. OF ADI
NATIONAL ASSOC. OF CITIZENS ADVICE
BUREAUX
NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES

RAC MOTORING SERVICES
ROYAL SCOTTISH AUTOMOBILE CLUB
ROSPA
ROAD TRANSPORT ASSOC.

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT
STATES OF GUERNSEY ISLAND TRAFFIC CTTE
STATES OF JERSEY MOTOR TRAFFIC OFFICE

TRADES UNION CONGRESS
TRANSPORT WEEK MAGAZINE

CODE OF PRACTICE ON WRITTEN CONSULTATION

- timing of the consultation should be built into the planning process for policy (including legislation) or service from the start, so that it has the best prospect of improving the proposals concerned, and so that sufficient time is left for it at each stage
- it should be clear who is being consulted about what questions, in what timescale and for what purpose
- a consultation document should be as simple and concise as possible. It should include a summary, in two pages at most, of the main questions it seeks views on. It should make it as easy as possible for readers to respond, make contact or complain
- documents should be made widely available, with the fullest use of electronic means (though not to the exclusion of others), and effectively drawn to the attention of all interested groups and individuals
- sufficient time should be allowed for considered responses from all groups with an interest. Twelve weeks should be the standard minimum period for a consultation.
- responses should be carefully and open-mindedly analysed, and the results made widely available, with an account of the views expressed, and the reasons for decisions finally taken
- Departments should monitor and evaluate consultations, designating a Consultation Co-ordinator who will ensure the lessons are shared.

DRAFT REGULATORY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Title

Proposal to amend the Motor Vehicles (International Circulation) Order 1975.

Purpose and effect

To increase the fee for International Driving Permits (IDPs) and International Certificates (ICMVs), to ensure that the administrative cost of issuing these documents is met and to amend the arrangements for non-European Economic area (EEA) licence holders who want to drive during temporary visits to great Britain.

IDPs and ICMVs are documents which may be issued to drivers who are about to visit a non-EC/EEA country. The IDP translates driving licence details into several languages, enabling foreign authorities to interpret driving licence entitlements held and licence validity periods. The ICMV translates details of British registered vehicles being taken temporarily to another country.

The proposed change will increase the overall cost of an IDP and ICMV by £1.50 to £5.50.

The revised fee is associated with:

- an increase in the costs related to the production and issuing of the documents and general business overheads.

Compliance cost for business, charities and voluntary organisations

Although some organisations elect to pay the cost of their drivers' fees, on the whole fees for IDP/ICMVs, are considered to be a matter for individual drivers. It is not expected that there will be significant compliance cost to industry and commerce in general.

The decision to restrict visiting non-EEA licence holders to the driving of vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes and with up to 8 passenger seats will not result in any costs to businesses.

Impact on small businesses

Any impact on small businesses as a result of a fee increase for IDPs/ICMVs would be minimal.