

Summary of Resonse on the Fees for the Issue of Digital Tachograph Cards.

DVLA and DVLNI issued a consultation document 'DVLA/DVLNI Consultation on Fees for the Issue of Digital Tachograph Cards' on 21 December 2004. The document sought views on the proposed fee structures developed by DVLA and DVLNI in preparation for the introduction and issue of digital tachograph cards. This document was also posted on this site. The consultation ended on the 15 February 2005.

Analysis of Responses

438 consultation documents were issued and a total of 32 responses were received. Nine of the respondents did not wish to comment and two were happy with either option. Only seven of the respondents stated a preference for either of the proposed fee structures with three choosing Option one, and four choosing Option two. There was also an opportunity in the consultation for respondents to declare that they did not support either proposal and 14 of them took this option.

Option One

Option one provides for some subsidy of driver's fees by the companies. Those who considered this to be the fairer option included TRO Logistics who stated that "companies should take the brunt of the costs". This was also the preferred option of the Institute of Transport Administration as it was felt that "if costs had to be carried by the operator then Option one was the lowest cost".

Option Two

Option two provides for a greater degree of subsidising of the system by the driver. The Freight Transport Association (FTA) stated that their members favoured this option, as discussions they had held with their members indicated that most operators expected to bear the majority of the costs, including, at least the first, driver digital tachograph cards. They also felt that Option two was more transparent and would make it easier for them to monitor fee increases. The British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association were also in favour of Option two as they "believe it would pose less of a burden" on their Members.

Neither Option

The replies we had that were in favour of neither Option were mainly from drivers and their representative bodies who felt that they should not have to pay towards a card, which they had to have in order to be able to work. The Road Haulage Association also felt that they could not support either of the proposals as they are questioning the assertion in the consultation that the full costs of system development and card production should be recovered through fees levied for the issue of tachograph cards.

Conclusion

In response, Ministers have decided that the fee structure set out in Option One should be introduced. The key benefit of this option is that it offers a fair distribution of the costs. Although slightly more responses were in favour of Option two, the strength of feeling from those who favoured neither option on the basis that drivers should not be asked to pay a fee at all could not be ignored. As Option one proposes lower fees for drivers it is felt that this can be interpreted as the option representing the majority view.