

EqIA Screening Proforma

Name of the function, policy or strategy: Reform of the Blue Badge Scheme	Current or Proposed: Proposed						
Person completing the assessment: Robert Ringsell	Date of assessment: 29 th October 2010						
<p>Purpose of the function, policy or strategy: The objectives of the reform programme are to address current problems, especially those relating to fraud and abuse. We aim to improve operational efficiency, reduce public sector costs and improve customer service. The programme supports freedom and fairness and is targeted at addressing the mobility needs of those disabled people who need the most help to travel.</p> <p>There are currently 2.5 million badges on issue. The number has trebled in the last 20 years and demand is forecast to increase further as the population ages. Blue Badges in England are issued by 152 top tier issuing authorities.</p>							
Questions – Indicate Yes, No or Not Known for each group	Gender	Religion or Belief	Age	Disability	Ethnicity and Race	Sexual Orientation	Transgender
Is there any indication or evidence that the different groups (indicated on the right) have different needs, experiences, issues or priorities in relation to the particular policy?	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N
Is there potential for, or evidence that, this policy may adversely affect equality of opportunity for all and may harm good relations between different groups?	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Is there any potential for, or evidence that, any part of the proposed policy could discriminate, directly or indirectly?	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Is there any stakeholder (staff, public, unions) concern in the policy area about actual, perceived or potential discrimination?	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or better community relations by altering the policy or working with other government departments or the wider community?	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Is there any evidence or indication of higher or lower uptake by different groups?	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N
Do people have the same levels of access? (this includes overcoming non-physical barriers such as access to the website)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

If you have answered “no” to all the questions, an EqIA is not required.

If your answer is “yes” or “not known” to any of these questions then consider the proportionality aspect in terms of providing a lower standard of service or offering a service on different terms than you would to other people. After considering the proportionality aspects you will need to decide whether an Initial Equality Impact Assessment is needed.

Initial Equality Impact Assessment Proforma

Name of the function, policy or strategy to be assessed: Reform of the Blue Badge Scheme

Current or Proposed: Proposed

Person completing the assessment: Robert Ringsell

Date of assessment: 29/10/10

1. Aims, objectives and purpose of the function, policy or strategy

We aim to address current problems relating to fraud and abuse, improve operational efficiency, reduce public sector costs and improve customer service. The programme supports freedom and fairness and is targeted at addressing the mobility needs of those disabled people who need the most help to travel. The proposed reform includes the following proposals:

1. Supporting the transfer of eligibility assessments from an applicant's GPs to independent mobility assessors. This involves: a transfer to local authorities of current NHS spend on Blue Badge assessments. It is hoped that the transfer can begin in 2011/12.;
2. Requiring the use of independent mobility assessments in more cases when eligibility is in doubt.
3. Issuing new good practice guidance to local authorities to help them make improvements in scheme administration, eligibility assessment and enforcement.
4. Implementing from September 2011 a new badge design that is harder to copy, forge and alter. Arrangements for printing, personalising and distributing the badge will also be changed to prevent fraud from happening in the first place and to introduce more effective monitoring of cancelled, lost and stolen badges.
5. Raising the maximum fee for a badge that local authorities can charge from £2 to £10. Local authorities have discretion over whether or not to charge the fee. For those that do, a fee of £10 will allow for the new badge design to be produced and will help to cover local authority costs more appropriately.
6. Amending primary and secondary legislation to provide improved powers for local authorities to tackle abuse and fraud and address other issues. This will involve:
 - extending the grounds available to local authorities to refuse to issue and to withdraw badges
 - providing local authorities with a power to cancel badges that have been lost, stolen or that have expired
 - providing local authority-authorized officers with a power to confiscate, on-the-spot, badges that have been cancelled or misused
 - amending existing legislation to clarify wrongful use of a badge and the powers to inspect badges

- amending residency requirements for Armed Forces personnel and their families posted overseas on UK bases
- possibly, making it an offence not to return a badge when given notice to do so by a local authority. This is subject to further discussions
- possibly, amending the route of appeal against badges being withdrawn that currently means appeals are dealt with by the Secretary of State. Options for these appeals to be dealt with locally are currently being explored

7. Establishing with local authorities a common service delivery project [known as the Service Improvement Project] that will deliver operational efficiency savings, help to reduce and prevent abuse and improve customer services. The project will also result in an on-line application facility and should result in faster, more automatic renewals for people whose circumstances do not change between renewal periods.
8. Extending eligibility to more disabled children under the age of 3 with specific medical conditions and providing continuous automatic entitlement to seriously disabled service personnel and veterans.
9. Investigating, through further research, whether eligibility should be extended to people with a severe temporary mobility impairment lasting at least one year. If such an extension is taken forward then eligibility in such cases is likely to be confirmed through an independent mobility assessment.

The overall programme of measures result in estimated yearly benefits of £43.2 million and costs of £15.4 million.

2. Who is intended to benefit from the function, policy or strategy and in what way?

Local authorities will benefit from being able to charge a higher fee for a badge that more appropriately covers costs, efficiency savings from the service delivery system and social benefits from improvements to enforcement and the new badge design. Badge holders will benefit from free parking and increased mobility due to the proposed eligibility extensions and measures to tackle misuse and abuse.

3. Stakeholder Management: responsibility and ownership

Adam Simmons has accountability for this function or policy at senior management level.

Sally Kendall and Caroline Fish have responsibility on a day to day basis and are responsible for implementation.

Local Authorities and DPTAC have also influenced the development of this policy.

Local authorities are responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Blue Badge scheme.

3. Potential Project Management and Risks Issues?

We have a programme and project risk registers to identify the risks throughout the reform and measures to mitigate them where possible. (e.g. To promote stakeholder support for the programme and ensure buy in, representative organisations and local authorities are invited workshops and receive newsletters updating them on proposals.)

5a. Will the aim of the function, policy or strategy, along with any of its intended outcomes:

- If you have identified any low or medium adverse impacts then please go to Q6.
- If you have identified any high adverse impacts then you will need to complete a full impact assessment please go to Q8 now.

6. Is there any action that could be taken to minimise or remove any low or medium adverse impact identified in Q5b

Yes please go to Q7 No please explain why below?

N/A

7. Please complete the table below with details of the actions & monitoring arrangements that will be put in place to address the not known response(s) in Q5b.

Action	By Whom	By When
<p>The Blue Badge reform programme will be reviewed in 2015 to ensure that improvements have been delivered by local authorities, and that disabled people are benefitting from the changes.</p> <p>The following monitoring information arrangements will be put in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports from the Service Improvement project on, for example, turnaround times, use of on-line versus paper applications, and levels of enforcement activity; • The DfT's annual statistical return from local authorities will identify numbers of badges issued, rejection rates, numbers of badges reported as lost or stolen, uptake of independent mobility assessments, numbers of prosecutions taken and numbers of badges withdrawn by local authorities for mis-use; • Subject to resources, periodic surveys of local authorities and badge holders; <p>Reports from other organisations. Eg. The National Fraud Authority estimate periodically the current costs of fraud from abuse of blue badges.</p>	<p>Department for Transport</p>	<p>2015</p>

Please seek clearance from the Press Office to publish this EqIA on the DfT Website.

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/eqias/>

Signed off by (SCSPB1 or above): Name: Adam Simmons

Job Title: Divisional Manager

Full Equality Impact Assessment Proforma

This proforma is a continuation from Q5 in the initial impact assessment proforma

8. Consideration of alternatives to minimise adverse impact or eliminate unlawful discrimination.

Please summarise the changes that you propose to make or have made to the policy, strategy or function.

9. Consultation on possible impact (adverse) or action plan with stakeholders affected.

Who needs to be, or has been, consulted and involved (disabled people only) to assist you to make a judgement about the policy/function or, in the proposed changes, to mitigate the adverse impact as outlined in your Action Plan? **Please record your findings from the consultations including methods used, numbers, groups targeted etc in section 12 at the end of this proforma.**

10. Determine if any further research/new evidence from experts and/or interested groups is required

Are there any gaps in your previous or planned consultation and research? Yes No

Are there any experts/relevant groups that can be contacted to get further views or evidence on these issues? Yes No

11. Identification of an action plan with proposed changes to mitigate adverse impact

If an action plan already exists, covering similar headings, please attach. Alternatively, please list any recommendations for action that you plan to take as a result of this impact assessment under the given headings.

Action Required	By Whom	By When	Resources Implications

12. Consultation on possible impact (adverse) or action plan with stakeholders affected

Please record your findings from the consultations including methods used, numbers, groups targeted etc.

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Signed off by (SCSPB1 or above): Name_____

Job Title:_____