

# BMF RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON MOTORING SERVICES

## ABOUT THE BMF

The British Motorcyclists Federation is the UK's oldest and largest representative body for motorcyclists having been formed in 1960 and currently having around 80,000 paying members around the United Kingdom.

## MOTORING SERVICES

For the most part, the BMF believes that the motoring services currently in existence do an adequate job, although we can point to numerous instances whereby the services have fallen far short of what is required or caused serious additional burdens to the public and business. In particular, we would focus on the DVLA's loss of motorcycle entitlements (and their refusal to admit it) and the DSA's inability to introduce a motorcycle test that serves the whole country to an acceptable level. These two failures in particular have had a dramatic effect on the confidence of motorcyclists in the system and the difficulty in getting the DSA or DVLA to admit their mistakes is very telling.

As a representative body, we also have to comment on just how hard it is to get any government agency to enter into a process of change. For example, despite having a very, very clear mandate, the motorcycle test review has spent nearly 3 years doing very little. Most of this inertia has come from the DSA not wishing to make any changes without taking a very long time to think about it first. Government agencies seem to have a licence to do just about whatever they want and the instability caused by a high turnover in ministers may have something to do with this. More departmental and ministerial control is required and it may be pertinent to bring policymaking and higher level decisions on delivery back to the DfT or at least offices in London to make this happen. It should also be noted that taking this function away from the DfT and moving it around the country has had a significant negative impact on the way representative organisations (most of whom are in London or the South East) have been able to engage with the agencies with travel cost and time rising. This may have had a serious impact on the way the agencies have responded to customer feedback.

Finally, we fully support making more services available on line. This is much more convenient for the public and saves money and time all round. However, "off line" services do need to be maintained as government agencies provide a national service and access can be patchy, especially in rural areas. Also, some members of the public have differing needs that cannot be fulfilled properly with an online service only. Many of our members, for example, have unusual vehicles which can cause all sorts of problems with regards to registration, driving licences and taxation to name a few issues and an easy to use simplified website cannot necessarily help.