



## **The British Hallmarking Council response to the consultation on hallmarking by UK assay offices at overseas sub-offices**

### **Introduction**

This consultation was issued by the British Hallmarking Council (BHC) to understand whether stakeholders would wish articles of precious metals which are hallmarked by United Kingdom assay offices in their overseas sub-offices should carry a hallmark which is different from the hallmark applied in the United Kingdom. The aim was for responses to the consultation to help the Council develop guidance on this issue.

Hallmarking is designed to provide assurances to those involved in the selling and purchasing of items made from (or partly made from) silver, gold, platinum or palladium. Hallmarks are marks applied to precious metals to indicate the amount of pure precious metal in the alloy. In the UK there are four assay offices that are permitted to carry out this activity. It is one of the oldest forms of consumer protection and the provision of hallmarking services within the UK continues to be well regarded nationally and internationally.

In 2013 the law was changed to enable the UK assay offices to establish overseas sub-offices to conduct hallmarking operations outside the UK. The Government asked the BHC to issue guidance on this new development to ensure continued confidence and trust in the UK hallmarking system. The Government's current policy is that marks approved for use by the UK assay offices in their overseas sub-offices should be distinguishable from UK struck marks. The intention is that this guidance should set out the factors that the BHC will take into account when approving applications from the UK assay offices for the marks to be applied by their overseas sub-offices.

This consultation was aimed at:

- those involved in the jewellery industry, including relevant trade bodies;
- consumers who purchase jewellery and other items containing precious metal
- the UK assay offices

We also wanted to make sure that stakeholders:

- understand the significance of hallmarking items made from precious metals;
- communicate their views as to whether hallmarks applied in UK assay offices' overseas sub-offices should be distinguishable from those applied in the UK and

whether, in relation to consumers, if having a different hallmark would offer additional protection and hence would have an impact on their purchasing decisions;

- communicate their thoughts on what would make a hallmark struck overseas visually distinct from one struck in the UK;
- feel that their views have informed the development of the BHC's guidance.

More detail on the hallmarking process and the British Hallmarking Council is given at Annex A.

### **Conducting the consultation exercise**

The BHC's consultation on overseas hallmarking was launched on 14<sup>th</sup> July and closed on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2017.

Individual invitations to respond were sent to 15 official consultees, details of which are given at Annex B. Of the 15 official consultees, we received nine responses. However, the National Association of Jewellers (NAJ) responded also on behalf of the British Allied Trade Federation (BATF) and the Institute of Registered Valuers (IRV). All four UK assay offices responded. Those not responding were the Anti-Counterfeiting Group; Citizens Advice; Consumers Association and National Pawnbrokers Association.

There were also 113 people or organisations responding who were not official consultees. Of these, 46% identified as consumers or individuals, 14% identified as UK manufacturers and 8% identified as retailers.

Links to the survey were placed on the home page of the BHC website and official consultees were encouraged to invite anyone with an interest to respond. The consultation document made it clear that responses were not to be restricted to official consultees.

We understand that an article appeared in the Antiques Trade Gazette inviting people to respond and that a website – [www.savebritishhallmarking.co.uk](http://www.savebritishhallmarking.co.uk) – was set up with a link to the consultation document.

The BHC received over 120 responses, including from or on behalf of eleven of the fifteen official consultees.

Supplementary information was received from two of the respondents:

- The International Association of Assay offices (IAAO) submitted the results of a survey they had sent to their international members
- The British Hallmarking Protection Alliance (BHPA) submitted details of the 3331 signatures they had received in response to their petition, together with results of a separate consumer survey they had carried out.

In addition, we understand that BEIS held their own consumer panel. This was carried out without the knowledge or involvement of the British Hallmarking Council.

## Responses

There was a full response to the key question of the consultation: Should UK-struck and offshore-struck marks be distinguished?

For the purposes of reporting, each of the nine official respondees was treated as one response, regardless of size. However, the British Hallmarking Council was aware that some responses could potentially be regarded as having more weight than others, for example the NAI has 1800 members and is part of a much wider grouping representing many millions of pounds worth of UK business. Supporting information, including consumer and member surveys were also submitted as part of other official consultatee submissions.

All official consultees responding answered this question. Six of the nine respondees were in favour of a distinguishing overseas mark, including three of the four assay offices. Those who were against the suggestion were Birmingham Assay office, CTSI and the NAI (responding also on behalf of the British Allied Trade Federation (BATF) and the Institute of Registered Valuers (IRV)).

Strong views were expressed by three official consultees who were in favour of a distinguishing mark and one consultee who was strongly against the idea.

We received a separate submission from the IAAO which had carried out its own survey of members in order to respond. The IAAO position was that they would like to see a distinguishing hallmark. In addition, 43% of countries responding said their country would treat UK hallmarks differently were a distinguishing hallmark not to be applied. 23% would want to apply additional administrative measures to ascertain where pieces had been marked.

We also received supplementary information from the British Hallmarking Protection Alliance in the form of a survey and proof of signature from an online petition.

We received 108 responses to this question from people not responding as official consultees. 95 of these (88%) were in favour of a distinguishing mark.

88% of those identifying as UK manufacturers, 90% of retailers and 89% of consumers wanted to see a distinguishing hallmark.

Strong views in favour of a distinguishing mark were expressed by 83% of those responding as non-official consultees, and by one non-official consultee who disagreed strongly with the proposition.

Those against a distinguishing mark pointed out that consumers tend to confuse a UK hallmark with a place of origin rather than a guarantee of purity. Most jewellery sold in the UK was imported in any case and may still bear a UK hallmark. Internationally it was felt that there was no differentiation of quality marks and therefore a distinguishing mark would be of no practical benefit to the consumer. In addition, overseas hallmarking is now

enshrined in legislation and high standards in assaying were guaranteed by the British Hallmarking Council. Finally, if the quality of overseas produced jewellery is poor, a distinguishing hallmark would be of little help.

Many of those in favour of a distinguishing mark saw a UK hallmark as part of the UK heritage, in some cases being unaware that British hallmarks can and are applied to imported pieces. They felt that other countries would view UK hallmarks less favourably were marks not to be distinguished and they felt a need to protect smaller UK manufacturers. Many felt that there was a risk of misleading the customer were hallmarks not distinguished. Some respondents also pointed to the Hansard debates where they argued that 'a distinguishing hallmark is what was promised.'

Further details of responses to all consultation questions are given at Annex C.

### **BHC Response**

The results of the consultation were discussed by the British Hallmarking Council at its meetings in October 2017, January 2018 and March 2018 and by a Joint Assay office Committee in March 2018. The Council also commissioned a consultant, John Bridgeman, to assist members to identify the issues and potential consequences raised by the consultation. John Bridgeman had been Director General of Fair Trading in the 1990s and has since held chairmanship positions of various public and private sector organisations.

For the purposes of reporting, each of the nine official respondees was treated as one response, regardless of size. However, in their discussions, BHC members were invited to weight some of these responses differently to take account of relative size and influence. For example, the NAJ response was also on behalf of the BATF and IRV (as the NAJ is part of the BATF; and the IRV is part of the NAJ). The BATF represents approximately 2,500 enterprises from the jewellery, giftware, surface engineering and travel goods and accessories industry sectors. Collectively BATF members employ an estimated 46,000 people and produce annual sales worth in the region of £22 billion. However, it is not clear what proportion of the BATF sales and staff relate to jewellery and precious metals.

At its meeting in March 2018, the British Hallmarking Council decided to change its policy on overseas hallmarking to ensure that in future, there would be a single overseas hallmark to be applied in addition to the current assay office mark, where items were stamped overseas. Each assay office would be able to apply to the BHC for approval of its additional mark, which would be unique to each of the four assay offices in the UK. However, there was to be a single distinguishing mark, unique to the assay office applying it, but not to the country in which the mark was applied.

The Dealers Notice would be amended to include details of the overseas-stamped mark and would also state that this mark was not to be regarded as a statement of origin of the article in question.

The British Hallmarking Council agreed that communications and education will be

important, particularly in relation to information for the trade, as this change in policy comes into effect.

The intention is for this change in policy to take effect within one year of the distinguishing mark being agreed by the British Hallmarking Council.

### **Next Steps**

A communications strategy is being prepared to inform consumers and the industry.

### **Contact details**

- British Hallmarking Council Secretary [britishhallmarkingcouncilsec@gmail.com](mailto:britishhallmarkingcouncilsec@gmail.com)
- Or via British Hallmarking Council c/o Shakespeare Martineau 60 Gracechurch Street London EC3V 0HR

### **Annexes**

**Annex A: About Hallmarking**

**Annex B: Official consultees**

**Annex C: Responses to all consultation questions**

## Annex A:

### About Hallmarking

Hallmarking is one of the oldest forms of consumer protection, which has been in place in the UK for approximately 700 years. Hallmarking is essentially an empirical process in which an item is tested to ascertain its precious-metal content, which is not discernible to the consumer by the naked eye. Most articles described in the course of a business or trade as made wholly or partly of gold, silver, platinum or palladium must carry an approved hallmark.

There are four assay offices in the UK that are authorised by the BHC to apply approved hallmarks. They are located in Birmingham, Edinburgh, London and Sheffield.

Approved hallmarks are made up of the following symbols:

- Assay office mark – a mandatory mark identifying the Assay office that carried out the hallmarking. This mark provides a guarantee of independent testing;
- Fineness mark – a mandatory mark indicating the precious metal fineness of the article expressed as parts per thousand;
- Sponsor's mark – a mandatory mark indicating the maker or sponsor of the article;
- Fineness symbol – an optional mark denoting the particular precious metal;
- Date letter – an optional mark which indicates the year in which the article was hallmarked.

These hallmarks and their explanations are displayed in a notice that all dealers are required by law to display. The content of the notice is determined by the BHC and is intended to make sure that consumers are aware of the legal requirements when they buy items made wholly or partly of precious metal. A copy of the current dealer's notice, which was approved by the BHC, can be found on any of the UK Assay office websites:

[https://www.assayofficelondon.co.uk/media/1431/dealers\\_notice\\_2015.pdf](https://www.assayofficelondon.co.uk/media/1431/dealers_notice_2015.pdf)

<https://theassayoffice.co.uk/legislation/dealers-notices>

<http://www.assayoffice.co.uk/our-services/hallmarking-act-1973>

<https://www.edinburghassayoffice.co.uk/resources>

The Hallmarking Act 1973 permits the assay offices to conduct hallmarking in places additional to their main premises (i.e. at sub-offices), subject to the approval of the BHC and to any conditions which it imposes. All four assay offices have provided hallmarking services through sub-offices, using their assay office mark (i.e the mark applied in the main sub-office).

The integrity of the assay process at all assay offices and their sub-offices is audited by the Queen's Assay Master.

### The British Hallmarking Council

1. The BHC was established by the Hallmarking Act 1973. It is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by Regulatory Delivery, a directorate of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. Including an independent chair, its 19 members represent a broad range of interests covering the trade,

consumer interests and the four UK assay offices. It also has a secretary, who is not a member.

2. The BHC is responsible for supervising the work of the UK assay offices and their established sub-offices (including any sub-offices offshore), approving hallmarks and ensuring there are effective arrangements in place to enforce the provisions of the Hallmarking Act.
3. In February 2013, the Hallmarking Act 1973 was amended through the Legislative Reform (Hallmarking) Order 2013, to allow the four UK assay offices to provide hallmarking services in sub-offices set up overseas, subject to the BHC's approval and to any conditions it imposed.
4. Sheffield Assay Office opened the first overseas sub-office, which was located in Malpensa, Italy in 2014. In response to representations made by Sheffield Assay Office, the BHC approved the use of the Sheffield Assay office mark (the rose) in Malpensa on 7 April 2014. The Malpensa sub-office is no longer operating. The Birmingham Assay office gained approval from the BHC to establish sub-offices in Mumbai and Jaipur India in 2015 and 2016 respectively. The BHC approved the use of the Birmingham Assay Office mark on items marked in Mumbai and Jaipur.
5. The rationale for the legislative change was that the geographical limitation placed UK assay offices at a competitive disadvantage in relation to their counterparts in European Economic Area countries, where laws permit hallmarking to be conducted overseas. The processes for assaying and hallmarking of precious metal overseas are the same as those that apply to assay offices in the UK. These processes are accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service, to ensure consistency and quality.
6. In introducing the provisions to allow hallmarking to take place overseas, an undertaking was provided by the Minister, Viscount Younger of Leckie, during the debate on the draft Legislative Reform (Hallmarking) Order 2103 on 29 January 2013 that the BHC *"will authorise offshore-struck marks, which will be clearly distinguishable from the existing domestically struck marks. In order to make clear the distinction between the two sets of marks, the Council will also issue guidance to [sic] the new offshore marks."* The changes to the Hallmarking Act did not expressly provide for a distinguishable, overseas hallmark and the BHC was given a discretion to determine what marks should be applied in the circumstances.
7. At its meeting on 10 October 2016, the BHC agreed to consult stakeholders on the issues surrounding overseas hallmarking. The results will inform the BHC's future policy and guidance on the matter.

The value placed on hallmarking by consumers will be a significant factor that the BHC will consider when developing guidance on offshore hallmarking.

## **Annex B: List of Official Consultees**

Anti-Counterfeiting Group  
Association for Contemporary Jewellery  
Birmingham Assay Office  
British Hallmarking Protection Alliance  
British Jewellery and Giftware International  
Chartered Institute of Trading Standards  
Citizens Advice  
Consumers Association  
Edinburgh Assay Office  
Institute of Registered Valuers  
International Association of Assay Offices  
London Assay Office  
National Association of Jewellers  
National Pawnbrokers Association  
Sheffield Assay Office



## Annex C: Responses

The consultation’s questionnaire took the form of open-ended questions, beginning with whether UK-struck and offshore-struck marks be distinguished. This was followed by questions around the factors to be taken into account by the BHC when approving an overseas mark; the impact any change in policy might have and any information and further work needed to support it; and how the BHC might best ensure that consumers continue to be well informed about any change.



Responses came in a number of ways, some by post, some by e-mail only and some by e-mail accompanied by the official form. In order to process the volume of responses specialist survey software was used to help generate a yes/no/other response for the prose-based responses where possible. The percentage based results given below should therefore be taken as indicative only as there was no direct input by respondents into a yes/no framework of this kind. In general however, the responses were clear and views were at times strongly expressed.

### Responses by Question



**A: The Government has been clear that in enabling UK Assay offices to conduct hallmarking operations at overseas sub-offices, there will be no diminution of reputation or quality. As the BHC is responsible for approving overseas hallmarks, we are keen to understand what factors our stakeholders believe should be considered by the BHC when approving an overseas mark.**


#### 1. Should UK-struck and offshore-struck marks be distinguished?

Indicative Official Consultee Responses

1	Yes		66.67%	6
2	No		33.33%	3
3	Don't know		0.00%	0
4	Not answered		0.00%	0
5	Other (please specify):		0.00%	0




Indicative Other responses:

Indicative other responses	Yes		87.96%	95
2	No		6.48%	7
3	Don't know		0.00%	0

4	Not answered		0.00%	0
5	Other (please specify):		5.56%	6

- 2. What factors should the BHC take into account when approving hallmarks for use by UK Assay offices at overseas sub-offices? Factors that may be relevant include:**
- i. **How extensive will the overseas operations be in comparison to the operation of the main UK-based assay office?**
  - ii. **If precious-metal items manufactured overseas carry different marks depending on whether the Assay office applied the mark in the UK or in its overseas sub-office, could it mislead or confuse consumers?**
  - iii. **Could a different, overseas mark be confused with an existing hallmark?**
  - iv. **What quality assurance processes will ensure hallmarking that occurs overseas is as robust as hallmarking that occurs in the UK?**
  - v. **How distinct would a different hallmark need to be?**
  - vi. **Are there additional factors that you believe should be considered?**
  - vii. **How extensive will the overseas operations be in comparison to the operation of the main UK-based Assay office?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses




1	Yes		25.00%	2
2	No		25.00%	2
3	Don't know/ not answered		0.00%	0
4	Other		50.00%	4

Indicative other responses






Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Yes		20.00%	7
2	No		42.86%	15
3	Don't know/ not answered		11.43%	4
4	Other		25.71%	9

**viii. If precious-metal items manufactured overseas carry different marks depending on whether the Assay office applied the mark in the UK or in its overseas sub-office, could it mislead or confuse consumers?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses

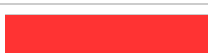


1	Yes		28.57%	2
2	No		42.86%	3
3	Possibly		28.57%	2
4	Not known/ no answer		0.00%	0
5	Other (please specify):		0.00%	0

Indicative Other responses

Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Yes		22.22%	10
2	No		57.78%	26
3	Possibly		6.67%	3
4	Not known/ no answer		6.67%	3
5	Other (please specify):		6.67%	3

**ix. Could a different, overseas mark be confused with an existing hallmark?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses

1	Yes		42.86%	3
2	No		14.29%	1
3	Possibly		42.86%	3
4	Don't Know/ not answered		0.00%	0
5	Other (please specify):		0.00%	0

Indicative other responses

Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Yes		25.00%	11
2	No		52.27%	23
3	Possibly		11.36%	5
4	Don't Know/ not answered		2.27%	1
5	Other (please specify):		9.09%	4

x. **What quality assurance processes will ensure hallmarking that occurs overseas is as robust as hallmarking that occurs in the UK?**

In general, respondents felt that the quality assurance processes could and should be identical to those applied in the UK. The guarantee of this would be the processes put in place by the parent UK Assay Office working within the existing framework set by the British Hallmarking Council. However, some respondents made the point that there was also the question of context. The prevailing business norms and practices of the country in question may mean any safeguards would need to be rigorously applied. This may be particularly difficult if the remote office is some distance away from the oversight of its UK parent.





The point was also made that a recent EU judgement made clear that hallmarks struck outside the EU, even where struck by an Assay Office of an EU state, do not have to be recognised by member states as offering an equivalent level of guarantee. Demonstrating as well as ensuring equivalence of quality assurance would therefore also be important.

xi. **How distinct would a different hallmark need to be?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses



1	Very distinct		28.57%	2
2	Distinct		28.57%	2
3	Quite distinct		14.29%	1
4	Subtle		0.00%	0
5	Not answered		0.00%	0
6	Other (please specify):		28.57%	2

Indicative other responses




Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Very distinct		48.78%	20
2	Distinct		34.15%	14
3	Quite distinct		0.00%	0
4	Subtle		4.88%	2
5	Not answered		0.00%	0
6	Other (please specify):		12.20%	5

**xii. Are there additional factors that you believe should be considered?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses

1	Yes		87.50%	7
2	No		12.50%	1
3	Not answered/ don't know		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		0.00%	0

Indicative other responses

Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Yes		91.43%	32
2	No		2.86%	1
3	Not answered/ don't know		2.86%	1
4	Other (please specify):		2.86%	1




There was a wide range of replies to this question but themes included:

- Respecting and protecting the heritage and reputation currently enjoyed by UK hallmarks
- Recognising that enforcement of current hallmarking legislation is weak
- A feeling that not having a distinguishing hallmark could be the 'thin end of the wedge' for british hallmarking and could precede the opening of many more overseas sub-offices
- Ensuring that retailers fully understand any change to the system





- Some respondents misunderstood the link between the hallmark and country of origin and mistakenly believed at a UK hallmark proved the item had been made in the UK.
- The risk that consumers may perceive an item hallmarked with a distinguishing mark may take this to mean that it is inferior.
- The recent EU court ruling which suggested that a UK Assay Office mark when struck outside the EU may not necessarily have to be accepted by other EU states.
- The risk of a UK Assay Office mark being counterfeited in the overseas territory before being imported from countries with less stringent anti-counterfeiting laws than our own.
- The difficulties in enforcing rigorous quality assurance processes in small operations in overseas territories.
- The expense of procuring additional punches and equipment for overseas offices.

**3. UK accreditation marks (e.g. CE mark and UKAS) are the same regardless of whether they are applied in the UK or overseas. Should hallmarks be treated in the same way or is there a case for treating them differently?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses

1	Treat the same		33.33%	2
2	Treat differently		50.00%	3
3	Don't know/ not answered		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		16.67%	1

Indicative other responses

1	Treat the same		9.52%	4
2	Treat differently		76.19%	32
3	Don't know/ not answered		9.52%	4
4	Other (please specify):		4.76%	2

***B: Businesses are currently required by the Hallmarking Act 1973 to display notices in the form approved by the BHC describing approved hallmarks (a “Dealer’s Notice”). In issuing guidance about overseas hallmarking operations, the BHC will inform businesses of the***

*process for approving offshore hallmarks and if a distinguishable mark is used, set out their responsibilities when selling items that have been hallmarked in an overseas sub-office. We are keen to ensure that our guidance does not impose unnecessary burdens on businesses in meeting their responsibilities and therefore we want to understand better the views of business in this regard and to ensure that misleading information is not provided to consumers.*

- i. **Should additional information be provided by the BHC to provide clarity to businesses supplying items that have been hallmarked at an overseas sub-office if a distinguishable hallmark is required?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses



1	Yes		100.00%	7
2	No		0.00%	0
3	No opinion/ don't know/ not answered		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		0.00%	0

Indicative other responses





Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Yes		94.29%	33
2	No		2.86%	1
3	No opinion/ don't know/ not answered		2.86%	1
4	Other (please specify):		0.00%	0

- ii. **If so, should this be by means of the Dealer's Notice alone?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses


1	Yes		16.67%	1
2	No		83.33%	5
3	Don't know/ no answer		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		0.00%	0

Indicative other responses




Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Yes		12.90%	4
2	No		70.97%	22
3	Don't know/ no answer		6.45%	2
4	Other (please specify):		9.68%	3

**iii. If not, by what other means should this be done e.g. guidance on the BHC's website?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses



1	should be done		100.00%	5
2	should not be done		0.00%	0
3	Other (please specify):		0.00%	0

Indicative other responses

Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	should be done		73.08%	19
2	should not be done		3.85%	1
3	Other (please specify):		23.08%	6




**iv. Should the BHC provide guidance to businesses about steps they can take to avoid providing misleading information to consumers and therefore reduce the risk of breaching consumer protection and fair trading legislation?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses

1	Yes		83.33%	5
2	No		0.00%	0
3	Don't know/ no opinion		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		16.67%	1

Indicative other responses





1	Yes		66.67%	22
2	No		0.00%	0
3	Don't know/ no opinion		3.03%	1
4	Other (please specify):		30.30%	10

**C: The BHC aims to provide information to assist consumers in understanding hallmarking, including hallmarking at overseas sub-offices, when purchasing precious metals in the UK. In order to achieve this, the BHC is keen to understand how this information can best be provided to consumers in particular if a distinguishable hallmark is used overseas.**

**How can the BHC ensure consumers have access to clear information prior to making a purchase of precious metals? We have considered the following factors and we are keen to understand from our stakeholders whether these are appropriate or whether there are additional factors that we should consider:**

**i. Is point-of-sale information (i.e. the Dealer's Notice) sufficient?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses


1	Yes		57.14%	4
2	No		14.29%	1
3	Don't know/ no opinion		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		28.57%	2

Indicative other responses

Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Yes		13.89%	5
2	No		72.22%	26
3	Don't know/ no opinion		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		13.89%	5





**ii. Would it help to provide information on the GOV.UK website?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses

1	Yes		100.00%	7
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2	No		0.00%	0
3	Don't know/ no opinion		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		0.00%	0

Indicative other responses




Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Yes		77.78%	28
2	No		13.89%	5
3	Don't know/ no opinion		2.78%	1
4	Other (please specify):		5.56%	2

- iii. **Would a short communications programme, raising awareness be effective? For example, coverage in social media, press notices and articles in trade press.**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses




1	Yes		42.86%	3
2	No		14.29%	1
3	Don't know/ no opinion		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		42.86%	3

Indicative other responses





Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Yes		62.16%	23
2	No		13.51%	5
3	Don't know/ no opinion		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		24.32%	9

- iv. **Should the statutory information that must be displayed in retail premises selling hallmarked items be changed?**

### Indicative Official Consultee Responses




1	Yes		66.67%	4
2	No		0.00%	0
3	Don't know/ no opinion		16.67%	1
4	Other (please specify):		16.67%	1

### Indicative other responses




Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Yes		82.35%	28
2	No		5.88%	2
3	Don't know/ no opinion		2.94%	1
4	Other (please specify):		8.82%	3

**v. What benefit if any would it be to consumers to have an additional mark to denote hallmarking overseas by a UK Assay office?**

### Indicative Official Consultee Responses



1	some benefit		71.43%	5
2	no benefit		14.29%	1
3	don't know/ not answered		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		14.29%	1

### Indicative other responses



Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	some benefit		53.85%	21
2	no benefit		20.51%	8
3	don't know/ not answered		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		25.64%	10

vi. Is there anything else that needs to be done to enable consumers to make informed choices?

Indicative Official Consultee Responses


1	Yes		75.00%	3
2	No		0.00%	0
3	Don't know/ no opinion		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		25.00%	1

Indicative other responses





Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Yes		64.52%	20
2	No		0.00%	0
3	Don't know/ no opinion		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		35.48%	11

3. UK accreditation marks (e.g. CE mark and UKAS) are the same regardless of whether they are applied in the UK or overseas. Should hallmarks be treated in the same way or is there a case for treating them differently?

Indicative Official Consultee Responses

1	Treat the same		33.33%	2
2	Treat differently		50.00%	3
3	Don't know/ not answered		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		16.67%	1

Indicative other responses


1	Treat the same		9.52%	4
2	Treat differently		76.19%	32
3	Don't know/ not answered		9.52%	4
4	Other (please specify):		4.76%	2

**B: Businesses are currently required by the Hallmarking Act 1973 to display notices in the form approved by the BHC describing approved hallmarks (a "Dealer's Notice"). In issuing**

**guidance about overseas hallmarking operations, the BHC will inform businesses of the process for approving offshore hallmarks and if a distinguishable mark is used, set out their responsibilities when selling items that have been hallmarked in an overseas sub-office. We are keen to ensure that our guidance does not impose unnecessary burdens on businesses in meeting their responsibilities and therefore we want to understand better the views of business in this regard and to ensure that misleading information is not provided to consumers.**

- v. Should additional information be provided by the BHC to provide clarity to businesses supplying items that have been hallmarked at an overseas sub-office if a distinguishable hallmark is required?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses



1	Yes		100.00%	7
2	No		0.00%	0
3	No opinion/ don't know/ not answered		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		0.00%	0

Indicative other responses





Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Yes		94.29%	33
2	No		2.86%	1
3	No opinion/ don't know/ not answered		2.86%	1
4	Other (please specify):		0.00%	0

- vi. If so, should this be by means of the Dealer's Notice alone?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses


1	Yes		16.67%	1
2	No		83.33%	5
3	Don't know/ no answer		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		0.00%	0

Indicative other responses




Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Yes		12.90%	4
2	No		70.97%	22
3	Don't know/ no answer		6.45%	2
4	Other (please specify):		9.68%	3

**vii. If not, by what other means should this be done e.g. guidance on the BHC's website?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses



1	should be done		100.00%	5
2	should not be done		0.00%	0
3	Other (please specify):		0.00%	0

Indicative other responses




Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	should be done		73.08%	19
2	should not be done		3.85%	1
3	Other (please specify):		23.08%	6

**viii. Should the BHC provide guidance to businesses about steps they can take to avoid providing misleading information to consumers and therefore reduce the risk of breaching consumer protection and fair trading legislation?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses

1	Yes		83.33%	5
2	No		0.00%	0
3	Don't know/ no opinion		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		16.67%	1

Indicative other responses




1	Yes		66.67%	22
2	No		0.00%	0
3	Don't know/ no opinion		3.03%	1
4	Other (please specify):		30.30%	10

**C: The BHC aims to provide information to assist consumers in understanding hallmarking, including hallmarking at overseas sub-offices, when purchasing precious metals in the UK. In order to achieve this, the BHC is keen to understand how this information can best be provided to consumers in particular if a distinguishable hallmark is used overseas.**

**How can the BHC ensure consumers have access to clear information prior to making a purchase of precious metals? We have considered the following factors and we are keen to understand from our stakeholders whether these are appropriate or whether there are additional factors that we should consider:**

**vii. Is point-of-sale information (i.e. the Dealer's Notice) sufficient?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses

1	Yes		57.14%	4
2	No		14.29%	1
3	Don't know/ no opinion		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		28.57%	2

Indicative other responses

Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Yes		13.89%	5
2	No		72.22%	26
3	Don't know/ no opinion		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		13.89%	5





**viii. Would it help to provide information on the GOV.UK website?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses

1	Yes		100.00%	7
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2	No		0.00%	0
3	Don't know/ no opinion		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		0.00%	0

Indicative other responses




Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Yes		77.78%	28
2	No		13.89%	5
3	Don't know/ no opinion		2.78%	1
4	Other (please specify):		5.56%	2

- ix. Would a short communications programme, raising awareness be effective? For example, coverage in social media, press notices and articles in trade press.**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses

1	Yes		42.86%	3
2	No		14.29%	1
3	Don't know/ no opinion		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		42.86%	3




Indicative other responses

Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Yes		62.16%	23
2	No		13.51%	5
3	Don't know/ no opinion		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		24.32%	9





- x. Should the statutory information that must be displayed in retail premises selling hallmarked items be changed?**



### Indicative Official Consultee Responses




1	Yes		66.67%	4
2	No		0.00%	0
3	Don't know/ no opinion		16.67%	1
4	Other (please specify):		16.67%	1

### Indicative other responses


Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Yes		82.35%	28
2	No		5.88%	2
3	Don't know/ no opinion		2.94%	1
4	Other (please specify):		8.82%	3

- xi. What benefit if any would it be to consumers to have an additional mark to denote hallmarking overseas by a UK Assay office?**

### Indicative Official Consultee Responses



1	some benefit		71.43%	5
2	no benefit		14.29%	1
3	don't know/ not answered		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		14.29%	1

### Indicative other responses



Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	some benefit		53.85%	21
2	no benefit		20.51%	8
3	don't know/ not answered		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		25.64%	10

**xii. Is there anything else that needs to be done to enable consumers to make informed choices?**

Indicative Official Consultee Responses

1	Yes		75.00%	3
2	No		0.00%	0
3	Don't know/ no opinion		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		25.00%	1

Indicative other responses

Indicative other responses <sup>1</sup>	Yes		64.52%	20
2	No		0.00%	0
3	Don't know/ no opinion		0.00%	0
4	Other (please specify):		35.48%	11