

Charging heavy goods vehicles – Frequently Asked Questions v1

Will my vehicle pay more than now?

Q. Why should I support charging UK vehicles? They already pay enough.

A. In practice, most UK-registered vehicles won't pay more, because we would introduce compensation measures at the same time. This is most likely to be reductions in Vehicle Excise Duty. If charging were introduced now, more than 9 in 10 vehicles would pay no extra. Only around 2 vehicles in every hundred would pay more than £50 a year extra.

Q. I understand that only around 6% of vehicles will pay more, but I'm concerned that my vehicle will be in that 6%

A. We have now published, for illustration, a detailed breakdown of proposed charges, and what the reductions in VED would look like if charging were introduced now. See the table on the consultation website.

For example, a rigid 3 axle vehicle registered at 19 to 21 tonnes currently pays £200 in VED (band B). Under the proposals, such a vehicle would pay £230, £30 more than now, made up of £125 VED and £105 charge (called band B4 for illustration). There were 1,056 such vehicles in June 2010. However, by downplating to 19 tonnes, this £30 additional cost could be reduced to just £1.

Alternatives to the current proposals

Q. Why charge UK vehicles at all? Why not just charge foreign vehicles? And why not charge foreign cars as well?

A. It would be illegal to charge foreign vehicles while not charging UK ones, as this would be discriminatory. That is why we are proposing charging all lorries, and having a compensation package so that, for the most part, UK vehicles end up paying no more than now.

Q. Why not increase the charge to have a greater impact on foreign hauliers? For example by having a charge based on distance driven?

A. We can't increase the daily charge beyond £10, because this is set by European law. We could, however, introduce a charge based on distance, which would result in more revenue from foreign hauliers. However it would also cost UK hauliers more, and introducing a compensation package would be more difficult. See the consultation document, paragraphs 50 to 54.

Q. Is this a step towards road pricing for all vehicles?

A. No. The Government has ruled out national road pricing for all vehicles for this Parliament, and any preparation for such a scheme during this Parliament.