



Department
for Business
Innovation & Skills

**ENHANCING CONSUMER
CONFIDENCE: IMPROVING LOCAL
AUTHORITY TRADING STANDARDS
SERVICES**

IMPACT ASSESSMENT: FINAL

JUNE 2013

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Title: Enhancing consumer confidence : Improving Local Authority Trading Standards Services IA No: BIS0336 Lead department or agency: Department for Business, Innovation & Skills Other departments or agencies: Department for Communities and Local Government, Local authority Trading Standards Services	Impact Assessment (IA)		
	Date: 20/03/2013		
	Stage: Final		
	Source of intervention: Domestic		
	Type of measure: Primary legislation		
Contact for enquiries: consumerbill@bis.gsi.gov.uk			
Summary: Intervention and Options			RPC Opinion: NOT ASSESSED

Cost of Preferred (or more likely) Option				
Total Net Present Value	Business Net Present Value	Net cost to business per year (EANCB on 2009 prices)	In scope of One-In, One-Out?	Measure qualifies as NA
£0.62m	£0	£0	No	NA

What is the problem under consideration? Why is government intervention necessary?

In July 2011 the National Audit Office (NAO) estimated that 70% of consumer detriment¹ is likely to arise out of activities which cross local authority boundaries. Data indicates that the cost of this consumer detriment is in excess of £4.8 billion. Legal cases have thrown some doubt in the minds of Trading Standards enforcers on their ability to investigate and prosecute cases outside their own local authority area. To be safe, many tend to seek formal authorisation to operate on another authority's territory or even double up with local enforcers to ensure propriety. There is a need to reduce this bureaucracy and clarify the position to make such cross-boundary enforcement easier and simpler, by removing current legal restrictions.

What are the policy objectives and the intended effects?

Government aims to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of local authority Trading Standards Services (LATSS). This will be achieved by ensuring that cross-boundary working is as simple and efficient as possible for LATSS, so that authorisations are clear and court actions do not fail due to a lack of proper authorisation. It will reduce the bureaucracy on LATSS in seeking authorisations from neighbouring local authorities which hinders their ability to tackle cross-boundary consumer detriment effectively and efficiently.

What policy options have been considered, including any alternatives to regulation? Please justify preferred option (further details in Evidence Base)

The following options were considered: 0: Do nothing (i.e. Maintain the current legislative provision governing the ability of local authorities to enforce and take legal proceedings); 1: To remove current restrictions in legislation and enable LATSS to enforce or take legal proceedings outside their own local authority. 2: Introduce a national authorisation scheme for LATSS. The majority of responses to the consultation from LATSS support the need for clarification of the law. Therefore, the Government has decided to deregulate and remove the current restrictions in the law (Option1). There will be no costs to business. LATSS will benefit from less time spent seeking formal authorisation from neighbouring authorities. This will improve the effectiveness of the consumer enforcement regime in the most cost efficient way.

Will the policy be reviewed? It will be reviewed. If applicable, set review date: 12/2019

Does implementation go beyond minimum EU requirements?			No		
Are any of these organisations in scope? If Micros not exempted set out reason in Evidence Base.	Micro No	< 20 No	Small No	Medium No	Large No
What is the CO ₂ equivalent change in greenhouse gas emissions? (Million tonnes CO ₂ equivalent)			Traded:		Non-traded:

I have read the Impact Assessment and I am satisfied that, given the available evidence, it represents a reasonable view of the likely costs, benefits and impact of the leading options.

Signed by the responsible Minister: _____ Jo Swinson _____ Date: _____ 4 June 2013 _____

¹ Consumer detriment arises e.g. where a customer suffers as a result of being misled or treated unfairly by a business

Summary: Analysis & Evidence

Policy Option 1

Description: To remove the restrictions in legislation and enable LAs to enforce legislation or take legal proceedings outside their own local authority

FULL ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

Price Base Year 2009	PV Base Year 2009	Time Period Years 10	Net Benefit (Present Value (PV)) (£m)		
			Low: £0.47	High: £0.76	Best Estimate: £0.62

COSTS (£m)	Total Transition (Constant Price) Years	Average Annual (excl. Transition) (Constant Price)	Total Cost (Present Value)
Low	Optional	Optional	Optional
High	Optional	Optional	Optional
Best Estimate	0	0	0

Description and scale of key monetised costs by 'main affected groups'

Other key non-monetised costs by 'main affected groups'

For LATSS

Familiarisation costs are negligible.

BENEFITS (£m)	Total Transition (Constant Price) Years	Average Annual (excl. Transition) (Constant Price)	Total Benefit (Present Value)
Low	Optional	£0.1m	£0.5m
High	Optional	£0.1m	£0.8m
Best Estimate	Optional	£0.1m	£0.6m

Description and scale of key monetised benefits by 'main affected groups'

For LATSS

Savings on seeking authorisations estimated in the range £0.5-0.8m, with a best estimate of £0.6m. These estimates are based on the expected time savings for Trading Standards Officers.

Other key non-monetised benefits by 'main affected groups'

LATSS, in addition to the quantified time savings noted above, will also benefit from increased flexibility to organise themselves regionally and specialise locally.

Businesses will gain from improved enforcement against rogue traders operating across LATSS boundaries and a more level playing field among competitors. There will also be more choice as to which LATSS to use for equipment verification services, and potentially quicker, more convenient verification appointments.

Key assumptions/sensitivities/risks

Discount rate (%)

3.5

We tested the estimates provided by the Yorkshire and Humber Scambuster team using our survey of LATSS to check if they are representative of all 11 Trading Standards regions, and also to test the impact of removing restrictions under the Weights and Measures Act. This is not a large sample, but it does provide an estimate. We will use the Post Implementation Review to help us refine costs and benefits estimates.

BUSINESS ASSESSMENT (Option 1)

Direct impact on business (Equivalent Annual) £m:			In scope of OIOO?	Measure qualifies as
Costs: 0	Benefits: 0	Net: 0	No	NA

Evidence Base (for summary sheets)

Introduction

1. The consultation on Consolidating and modernising consumer law enforcement powers in March 2012¹ proposed changes so that Trading Standards are able to enforce or take legal proceedings outside their own local authority. The majority of responses to the consultation from Trading Standards, businesses and consumer groups support the Government's preferred approach to clarify the law. This will enable Trading Standards Services and Trading Standards regional teams and national units sited within local authorities to operate more effectively across local authority boundaries. Therefore, Government has decided to remove restrictions in existing legislation (Option1), thereby reducing bureaucracy for Trading Standards Services in seeking authorisations from neighbouring authorities, and enabling them to tackle rogue traders which operate across local authority boundaries more effectively and efficiently. This will not add any additional burden on businesses.
2. This forms a package of measures to simplify consumer law which aims to reduce burdens on business and enforcers. The other measures include consolidating and simplifying the investigatory powers of consumer law enforcers, including Trading Standards professionals, into a single generic set to ensure they are fit for the modern trading environment, and allowing local authorities more flexibility in how they train their Trading Standards staff to provide assurance to businesses of officers' competence and focuses on local needs. This package of measures is a key response to the Retail theme of the Government's Red Tape Challenge and we aim to make any legislative changes through the proposed Consumer Bill of Rights.

Background

3. Local authority Trading Standards Services often work across traditional enforcement boundaries to respond to local and regional needs. In order to do this they often develop memoranda of understanding with neighbouring local authorities or work with local enforcers. Government has financially supported regional coordination of Trading Standards and regional collaboration to develop intelligence on regulatory threats to reduce the burden on honest businesses and to prioritise enforcement against rogue traders. Government has also funded specialist regional Scambuster teams and Illegal Money Lending teams, which work across local authority boundaries to tackle scams and rogue traders.
4. In April 2012, the Government established the National Trading Standards Board (NTSB) which has responsibility for prioritising national and cross-local authority boundary enforcement in England and Wales.² BIS provides funding to the NTSB which they deploy for a number of national schemes aimed at protecting consumers to strengthen regional coordination and leadership of Trading Standards. This offers opportunities for increased specialisation and substantial efficiency gains in individual Trading Standards offices as threats can be tackled in an integrated way and each local authority can focus efforts on where it can make the most difference locally, regionally and nationally. In order to maximise these gains, however, Trading Standards professionals must be able to operate across local authority boundaries.
5. The ability of Trading Standards Services to carry out verification of instruments regulated by national law is also limited to the geographical area of the local authority, and so is the responsibility for inspection. However, this is not the case in relation to local authorities appointed as notified bodies to verify instruments under legislation which transposes EU measuring instruments Directives.³ This model already allows greater choice over which local authority verification service a business might use.

¹Enhancing consumer confidence through effective enforcement, A consultation on consolidating and modernising consumer law enforcement powers, Department for Business, Innovations and Skills, March 2012, <http://www.bis.gov.uk/Consultations/consultation-on-consumer-law-enforcement-powers>

² Empowering and protecting consumers: Government response to the consultation on institutional reform, Department for Innovation and Skills, April 2012, <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/consumer-issues/docs/e/12-510-empowering-protecting-consumers-government-response.pdf>

³ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:135:0001:0080:EN:PDF>

Problem under consideration

6. In June 2011, the National Audit Office (NAO) report estimated that 70% of consumer detriment is likely to arise out of activities which cross local authority boundaries. Consumer detriment occurs, for example, where a customer suffers as a result of being misled or treated unfairly by a business.⁴ The cost of consumer detriment at regional and national level where offences occur across local authority boundaries is in excess of £4.8 billion.⁵
7. The current law enabling Trading Standards to work across local authority boundaries is open to different interpretations and this is causing confusion amongst enforcers. To be safe, many tend to seek formal authorisation to operate on another authority's territory or even double up with local enforcers to ensure propriety. This problem was highlighted in the NAO report and is most acute for the specialist regional Scambuster teams and Illegal Money Lending teams. For example, the Yorkshire and Humber Scambuster team estimate it takes the manager 4-6 weeks each year to obtain around 50 MOUs / authorisations for officers in the team. This increases bureaucracy for Trading Standards thereby reducing their efficiency and effectiveness to tackle cross boundary threats. An example given by Surrey Trading Standards in their response to the Consumer Law Review illustrates the problem:⁶

"[Scambuster] officers devoted 12 months investigating a prolific offender trading across most of the south of England only to find that the authority who had agreed to take the action were then advised by their Legal Services that they could only deal with one local offence."
8. Under the Weights and Measures Act 1985, officers' powers are specifically restricted to the local authority area in which the inspector is appointed.⁷ Feedback from some Trading Standards stakeholders indicates that this restricts businesses' choice of local authority when requesting verification of traders' weighing and measuring equipment regulated under domestic weights and measures law. Domestic law is thus more restrictive than EU weights and measures law.

Rationale for intervention

9. Evidence indicates that the majority of consumer harm occurs across local authority boundaries therefore, local authority Trading Standards Services need to be able to respond to local, regional and national threats. There is likely to be more need for cross boundary working with the increasing importance of internet and cross border sales. Improving Trading Standards cross boundary cooperation and authorisation supports the National Trading Standards Board (NTSB) which was established in April 2012⁸ with a responsibility for prioritising and coordinating national and cross-local authority boundary enforcement in England and Wales. The Government considers that the confusion caused by the current law reduces the effectiveness and efficiency of the consumer law enforcement regime.
10. Cross-boundary integration and co-ordination also enables local authority enforcers to take advantage of economies of scale. This is demonstrated by the Government supported Scambuster teams, which operate on a regional or national level with local authorities and other enforcement agencies. An OFT led evaluation of the impact of Trading Standards has been used to provide an estimate of a return on investment of the Scambuster teams of almost 8:1.⁹
11. Restrictions under the Weights and Measures legislation not only hampers effective and efficient enforcement of weights and measures legislation across local authority boundaries, for example, it can prevent inspection of businesses such as mobile fish or meat traders that happen to cross into another local authority area. It also restricts businesses' choice of local authorities when requesting verification of weights and measures equipment regulated under domestic law.

⁴ See <http://www.oft.gov.uk/news-and-updates/press/2006/detriment>

⁵ Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, the Office of Fair Trading and Local Authority Trading Standards Services Protecting consumers – the system for enforcing consumer law, Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General, HC 1087SesSlon 2010–2012, page 25, National Audit Office, 15 June 2011, http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/1012/protecting_consumers.aspx

⁶ Consumer Law Review: Call for Evidence: Responses S-Z, page 9, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), July 2009, <http://www.berr.gov.uk/files/file52000.pdf>

⁷ Section 79(1) Weights and Measures Act 1985

⁸ Empowering and Protecting Consumers: Consultation on institutional changes for provision of consumer information, advice, education, advocacy and enforcement, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, June 2011, <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/consumer-issues/docs/e/11-970-empowering-protecting-consumers-consultation-on-institutional-changes.pdf>

⁹ Using the Office of Fair Trading methodology from - An evaluation of the impact of the fair trading work of local authority Trading Standards Services in the UK, Office of Fair Trading, June 2009, http://www.oft.gov.uk/shared_oft/about_oft/oft1085.pdf

Policy objective

12. Government policy in this area aims to improve the effectiveness of enforcement. Reform is aimed at ensuring cross boundary working is as simple and efficient as possible for local authority Trading Standards Services, so that authorisations are clear and court actions do not fail due to a lack of proper authorisation.

To remove the restrictions in legislation and enable Trading Standards Services to enforce or take legal proceedings outside their own local authority area (**Option 1**)

13. The majority of responses to the consultation from Trading Standards, businesses and consumer groups support clarification of law so that Trading Standards can investigate and take proceedings across local authority boundaries effectively and efficiently. Government has decided to achieve this by removing the restriction provided by section 222 of the Local Government Act 1972, whereby proceedings can only be taken where such action is for the promotion or protection of the interests of the inhabitants of their area. This Option provides a cost effective solution and will reduce burdens on Trading Standards Services by eliminating the need for formal authorisation and memoranda of understanding (MOUs) from neighbouring authorities.
14. In relation to weights and measures, there was some support in the Consultation from the National Measurement Office (NMO), some Trading Standards Services and their representatives for maintaining the current rule whereby businesses are obliged to use their local authority to verify their weighing and measuring equipment under domestic law, thereby effectively forcing each local authority to retain capacity for verification activity. However other respondents supported the change.
15. Government has decided to remove the restriction under the section 79(1) of the Weights and Measures Act 1985, which will enable Weights and Measures Inspectors to carry out enforcement and provide verification services outside their own local authority. Local authorities should not be inhibited from sharing services and specialising in order to maximise efficiency and businesses should, where possible, be able to choose which authority is best placed to provide the services they need. This is likely to lead to downward pressure on verification fees for businesses and will provide more choice for businesses as to verification providers. It will also enable Trading Standards Services to take advantage of increased specialisation and efficiency gains.
16. Of course it will still be necessary for Trading Standards Services to cooperate with each other to ensure a coordinated approach to cross boundary investigations and to guard against duplication of effort. This coordination already occurs through regional coordination mechanisms and shared intelligence systems, and under the Home Authority and Primary Authority arrangements. Coordination of national and cross boundary enforcement in England and Wales has already been strengthened with the establishment of the National Trading Standards Board (NTSB).

Costs

1. Familiarisation costs for Trading Standards Services

17. Trading Standards professionals are well-informed about their powers, so the familiarisation costs as a result of this slight change in the law are likely to be negligible.

2. Verification costs

For businesses

18. There are no direct costs to business from this measure. Fees charged by Trading Standards Services to verify traders' weighing and measuring equipment are levied on a cost recovery basis. These fees are not expected to rise as a result of the change, if anything, they are expected to decline over time. Although verification costs are levied on compliant business they are in the form of fees so they are not in scope of OIOO anyway. This is because they are based on cost recovery and do not mark an increase in regulatory activity (paragraph 16 x, OIOO Methodology).

19. In an attempt to strengthen our estimates we surveyed members of the Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers and the Society of Chief Trading Standards Officers in Scotland.¹⁰ Only 22 of the 56 respondents gave *some* information on costs or savings relating to verification fees. There was no consensus on the impact on costs with individual respondents providing figures for costs ranging from £3,000 to -£1,000. The majority told us that they were expecting no impact on costs. We could not obtain statistically robust estimates for total costs at a national level from this data, but the likeliest overall impact on costs is a decline as we will be introducing an element of competition between local authorities and allowing certain authorities to specialise in this sort of activity, potentially delivering efficiency gains.

For Trading Standards Services

20. As stated above, the responses to the Trading Standards survey did not indicate any consensus on the impact on costs. The majority indicated that they were expecting no impact on costs, so it is likely that there will be no cost increases.

Benefits

1. Savings in costs of officers' authorisations

For businesses

21. Making it easier for Trading Standards to work across local authority boundaries will mean that compliant businesses will gain from improved enforcement against rogue traders who operate across local authority boundaries. This will lead to a more level playing field among competitors. It should deliver more specialised teams, leading to faster, more effective and risk-based enforcement, and reducing burdens on compliant businesses. It should also lead to greater public service efficiency in tackling cross-boundary consumer detriment, which will benefit the long-term business operating environment. We have not attempted to quantify this benefit.

For Trading Standards Services

22. Clarification of the law will make it easier for Trading Standards to tackle rogue traders operating across local authority boundaries, by eliminating the need for bureaucratic MOUs with neighbouring local authorities. This leads to two forms of benefit for Trading Standards Services:

- Time savings from not having to obtain MOUs and authorisations.
- Flexibility for there to be greater specialisation of TSS activities in individual authorities

23. The time spent on obtaining MOUs / authorisations varies depending on how many local authorities a team works across. In the consultation, the Yorkshire and Humber Scambuster team estimated that the time spent by the manager obtaining necessary MOUs / authorisations for officers in the team cost £5,000 - £8,000 per annum, accounting for around 50 MOUs/authorisations in total.¹¹ We used our Trading Standards survey to help strengthen our estimate of the costs by asking if Trading Standards agreed with the estimate provided by Yorkshire and Humber Scambuster team. 24 of the 56 respondents agreed with the estimate. 8 respondents disagreed, reflecting either higher or lower costs depending on the number and frequency of authorisations sought. The remainder of respondents were unable to quantify the costs. On this basis, we consider that the estimate of £5,000 to £8,000 per annum per region remains a reasonable assumption.

24. Each of the 11 regions is covered by a Scambuster team. Extrapolating from the estimate provided by Yorkshire & Humber and applying it across the 11 regions, the total savings are estimated to be in the range of $11 \times (£5,000 - £8,000) = £55,000$ to £88,000 per annum or **£0.5m - £0.8m over 10 years**.

25. In addition to these time savings, in the long run we expect the bigger impact on local authorities will come from increased specialisation of officers in individual authorities, offering efficiency savings as

¹⁰ Non-response weighting has been applied to the survey responses in order to reduce the risk of non-response bias in our results. Confidence intervals calculations take into account the different types of local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland.

¹¹ Based on the costs of the manager's time of £62,500 per annum including pay and pension costs (giving a weekly wage of £1,202 over 52 weeks including pay and pension costs). Based on 50 authorisations. Rounded to nearest £100. Based on Senior officials in local government median weekly pay - Excluding overtime (£695.6). Source: ASHE 2010; plus 21% non-wage labour costs, in order to get total labour costs as suggested by Eurostat, http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/labour_market/labour_costs/main_tables, see table tps00113

not all authorities have to have expertise in every single area of legislation. The benefits will accrue over time. It is not possible to quantify and monetise this benefit with any certainty at this time, but we believe the benefits could be considerable. We will use the Post Implementation Review to refine our estimates.

2. Savings in verification costs

For businesses

26. If Trading Standards Services offer verification services across local authority boundaries, it will provide choice to businesses of providers of verification services. The costs of these services may be reduced through increased efficiency and competition between local authorities.

Savings for Trading Standards Services

27. Removing restrictions under the Weights and Measures Act and enabling Trading Standards Services to undertake enforcement and verification services outside their local authority area will enable local authorities to share resources and take advantage of economies of scale. This might lead not only to specialisation, but also enables competition between the specialised providers, which might lead to better quality and lower prices, which, in turn, will benefit business.
28. 40% of respondents to our Trading Standards survey indicate that are likely to take advantage of the ability to verify weighing and measuring equipment under domestic law outside their own local area; many of these already carry out verifications as notified bodies under EU weights and measures law. Some respondents commented that due to the low level of verifications carried out, it is likely that the work would simply be carried by some local authorities and not others, perhaps through local authorities developing centres of excellence.
29. As stated above, the majority of respondents to our Trading Standards survey felt that there would be no change to their costs due to the low level of verification work undertaken. 2 respondents indicated their verification costs are likely to reduce as they would not need to seek authorisations / MOUs to carry out verifications in neighbouring local authorities. As there was no consensus in the responses to our survey, we could not obtain statistically robust estimates for total savings at a national level from this data, but it is likely that there will be some savings.

Rationale and evidence that justify the level of analysis used in the Impact Assessment (proportionality approach)

30. There are likely to be benefits for business from this policy change, but these depend on future enforcement practice and are impossible to measure with any certainty at this stage. There are also likely to be benefits for Trading Standards from this change and to the extent that the removal of this barrier facilitates shared services and specialisation, the gains could be substantial over time, but they are also very difficult to measure at this stage, except in relation to the BIS-funded Scambuster teams.

Risks and assumptions

31. We have used our survey of Trading Standards Services to refine the estimates provided by the Yorkshire and Humber Scambuster team. This evidence indicates that our assumption that the figures from the Yorkshire and Humber Scambuster team are representative of all 11 Trading Standards regions is broadly correct. Whilst this is not a large sample it does provide an estimate. We have used a number of assumptions to underpin the estimates of cost and benefits associated with this policy. We will use the Post Implementation Review to help us refine costs and benefits estimates.

Direct costs and benefits to business calculations (following “One-In, One-Out” OIOO methodology)

- 32. This measure is deregulatory.
- 33. The measure is out-of-scope for OIOO purposes. Although local authority Trading Standards Services (local government) may financially benefit from this simplification, the savings are not in scope of OIOO as Trading Standards Services are not part of business or civil society. This approach has been verified by the Better Regulation Executive. There should be benefits for business arising out of the reduced cost of compliance work, particularly verification of weights and measures equipment, as local authorities specialise, gain efficiencies of scale and compete for this work, but these could not be quantified at this stage.
- 34. A review of these proposals will be carried out as part of the Post Implementation Review in 2017-2019, outlined in Annex 1. As these proposals contribute to the improved enforcement effectiveness and efficiency which feed into the new consumer landscape proposals, any review will take account of these landscape changes. The review will incorporate stakeholders’ views that will include consumer groups, business groups, Trading Standards and the other consumer law enforcers. We will use the evidence from this review to firm up our understanding and quantification of the impacts.

Statutory Specific Impact Tests

- 35. After screening the potential impact of this proposal on race, disability and gender equality, it has been decided that there will be no impact. It is not expected to have any impact on the Convention Rights of any person or class of persons, it will not affect small firms, or have an effect on rural proofing.

Summary and preferred option

- 36. Government has decided to remove the restrictions in section 222 of the Local Government Act 1972 and section 79(1) of the Weights and Measures Act 1985 to enable local authorities to enforce or take legal proceedings in other local authorities (Option 1). The majority of responses to the consultation from Trading Standards, businesses and consumer groups support this approach. This is the most cost effective Option and will provide clarity for Trading Standards and reduce the bureaucracy of seeking authorisation between neighbouring authorities. It will also enable Trading Standards Services to operate more effectively and efficiently across local authority boundaries.

Annex 1: Post Implementation Review (PIR) Plan

A PIR should be undertaken, usually three to five years after implementation of the policy, but exceptionally a longer period may be more appropriate. If the policy is subject to a sunset clause, the review should be carried out sufficiently early that any renewal or amendment to legislation can be enacted before the expiry date. A PIR should examine the extent to which the implemented regulations have achieved their objectives, assess their costs and benefits and identify whether they are having any unintended consequences. The PIR Plan is detailed below. If there is no plan to do a PIR the reasons are given below.

Basis of the review:

The Government is proposing to bring forward a Consumer Bill of Rights which will be used to make any legislative changes proposed in this impact assessment. If the Consumer Bill of Rights is brought forward to Parliament, a review of these proposals would be carried out as part of the post-legislative review in 2017-2019.

Review objective:

The review of these proposals is intended to ensure that the measures taken to improve enforcement are achieving the desired objectives: improving the effectiveness and efficiency of enforcement, whilst reducing the regulatory burden on businesses and protecting civil liberties.

Review approach and rationale:

The review of these proposals would evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed changes within this impact assessment. As these proposals contribute to the improved enforcement effectiveness and efficiency which feed into the new consumer landscape proposals, any review will take account of these landscape changes. The review will incorporate stakeholders' views that will include consumer groups, business groups, including small businesses, Trading Standards Services, and the other consumer law enforcers. The level of cross local authority boundary consumer detriment will be monitored in the future as part of the consumer landscape changes.

Baseline:

Current costs for enforcers:

1. Trading Standards Services operating across local authority boundaries through memoranda of understandings as a result of lack of clarity of the law.
2. Costs for verification of weights and measures equipment for trade.

Success criteria:

The above costs are reduced.

Monitoring information arrangements:

Feedback from businesses, consumer groups, Trading Standards Services and other consumer law enforcers will be achieved through regular engagement. The Government will monitor the ongoing costs of the new arrangements through evaluation through existing funding arrangements, annual reports and management information.

More general information about the conditions facing consumers can be collected through surveys and the European Commission's Consumer Market Scoreboard, currently published bi-annually.

Reasons for not planning a review: N/A

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