
DEFRA Data Reforms (2016)
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
RPC rating: fit for purpose

Description of proposal

The Department proposes to minimise business data reporting so that only data required to meet the aims of regulation will be requested and any reported data is shared by DEFRA and its agencies. The intended effect is to reduce the burden on business and make best use of the information collected.

The measure aligns data collection requirements from DEFRA and its agencies, in order to minimise the burden of data collection on business. In particular, it:

- removes the requirement for businesses to submit data which is no longer required (e.g. the Resource Efficiency Pollution Index) or can be derived from administrative data already held (e.g. information on premises for the disposal of hazardous waste);
- standardises several reports and licence applications, and makes automatic licence renewals much easier;
- alters data collection to focus clearly on their intended purpose and reduce the need for bespoke additional data collection (e.g. polychlorinated biphenyls, where businesses will be asked to report on plans for reducing their stock, rather than on the stock); and
- implements a data collection system which is intended to be easier for businesses to use and will allow DEFRA and its agencies to share data effectively.

Impacts of proposal

The Department explains that the proposal leads to a reduction in the resource costs to business of compiling information and submitting it to the Department and its agencies. This benefit has been monetised on the basis of a series of reports commissioned by the Department on individual systems, drawing on the experience of businesses. The estimates have been further refined following a consultation with business.

For each measure, the time saving is based on the number of returns, the time taken per return, and the estimated time saving from the measure. These time savings were then multiplied by an average wage rate of £23 per hour. Overall, the benefit to business is estimated to be £7.4 million per annum (2013 prices).

There are also some non-monetised costs and benefits concerning changes to businesses' IT systems; improved data quality leading to improved compliance; and reduced costs to both business and government of clarifying overlapping data requirements.

The RPC verifies the estimated equivalent annual net direct cost to business (EANDCB) of £7.3 million. This is a qualifying regulatory provision that will score under the Business Impact Target.

Quality of submission

The analysis presented in the IA is proportionate to a measure of this scale. The IA sets out clearly how the Department has arrived at its figures for time savings and for costs of time. A Small and Micro Business Assessment is not formally required, as the proposal is deregulatory. Nevertheless, the Department has provided one, and notes that a high percentage of affected businesses will fall into this category.

Departmental assessment

Classification	Qualifying regulatory provision (OUT)
Equivalent annual net direct cost to business (EANDCB)	-£7.3 million
Business net present value	£63.7 million
Societal net present value	£63.7 million

RPC assessment

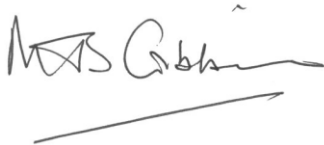
Classification	Qualifying regulatory provision (OUT)
EANDCB – RPC validated ¹	-£7.3 million
Business Impact Target (BIT) Score ¹	-£36.5 million

¹ For reporting purposes, the RPC validates EANDCB and BIT score figures to the nearest £100,000.

Opinion: Final IA
Origin: Domestic
RPC reference number: RPC15-DEFRA-3556(1)
Date of implementation: 2016

Small and micro business assessment

Not required (deregulatory)



Michael Gibbons CBE, Chairman