



Home Office

Rt Hon Dame Diana Johnson DBE MP
Minister of State for Policing, Fire
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By email only ACMD@homeoffice.gov.uk

11 February 2025

Dear Owen and Roger,

Government response to ACMD advice on reform to hemp licensing fees

I am grateful to the ACMD for its advice in response to the proposal to increase the maximum THC permitted in seed types used to grow industrial hemp varieties in the UK from the current level of 0.2% to 0.3%, which would bring the UK in line with the European Union, as well as countries such as the US, Canada and China. I have set out each conclusion and recommendation, and the government's response, below.

ACMD's Conclusion 1

"The ACMD is supportive of the proposed change to increase the maximum THC content of industrial hemp grown outdoors for seed production or in order to use the non-controlled parts of the plant to produce fibre for use in the construction and textile industries from 0.2 to 0.3%, as the potential benefits outweigh an increased risk of harms."

ACMD's Conclusion 2

"The ACMD foresees no issues with applying the lower fee of £580 to a raised level of THC not exceeding 0.3%, to align with other international examples."



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ACMD's Recommendation 1

"The Home Office to conduct an assessment of the impact of the legislative change after two years.

Measure of outcome: Published assessment of the impact of the legislative change."

Government response

The government welcomes the conclusions and intends to make the legislative changes necessary to implement the increased level of THC in industrial hemp, subject to Parliamentary procedures. Once implemented as part of the package of reforms to the industrial regime published on 6 November 2024, the change is expected to yield economic advantages by providing access to more hemp varieties. The potential environmental benefits include contributions to the Government's emissions targets due to hemp's high rate of carbon sequestration in comparison to most other crops.

The increase in THC level will only apply to cannabis grown under the industrial hemp regime and will only take effect after the legislative changes have been made. The controlled parts of the cannabis plant (e.g. leaves and flowers) will remain controlled under UK legislation no matter what their THC percentage. It will remain unlawful to cultivate the cannabis plant, including hemp and regardless of the level of THC that it contains, without a licence.

The government also accepts the recommendation that an assessment be conducted two years after the changes come into force and therefore commits to carrying out this assessment.

I remain extremely grateful for the expert advice provided by the ACMD.

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Dame Diana Johnson DBE MP
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