

Bus Services Act Update

This update is to give you the latest information regarding implementation of the Bus Services Act and the associated regulations and guidance.

Consultation

Between 8 February 2017 and 21 March 2017, the Government consulted on nine draft regulations and key pieces of guidance. Since the consultation closed we have been reviewing the responses received, and considering whether or not to make amendments to the draft regulations and guidance in light of the views expressed.

We have now published our response to this consultation, setting out our analysis of the consultation responses, and the changes we will now be making to the regulations and guidance following the consultation. The document can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/bus-services-bill-draft-regulations-and-guidance>

Secondary legislation

We are in the process of finalising the regulations in line with our response to the consultation, and they then need to undergo a series of legal checks before they can be laid in Parliament. Our intention is to bring the key regulations into force and to publish the final guidance this autumn.

One of the regulations – the Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes (Objections) (England) Regulations 2017 – is subject to the affirmative resolution procedure, which means that a debate must be held in Parliament before the regulations can be finalised. It is therefore likely come into force shortly after the others, given the need to secure Parliamentary time for a debate.

The Public Service Vehicles (Registration of Local Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2017 – which will introduce a new pre-notification period before operators can vary, cancel or register a service and provide authorities with the ability to request certain data in connection with a proposed variation or cancellation – will be finalised and laid before Parliament this autumn. However our intention is to bring these particular regulations into force from April 2018, to give operators and local authorities time to adapt to the changes.

Further regulations setting out details on how the appeals process to the Traffic Commissioner will work, together with how the registration process will work where it has been devolved to a local authority are currently being developed. A further consultation on these draft regulations is planned for later in the year, subject to Ministerial approval.

In the meantime, we would encourage local authorities and operators to consider how the powers contained within the Act could be used to improve local services and

grow passenger numbers. We are happy to discuss the opportunities and options available with both authorities and operators, where that would be helpful.

Open data and audio-visual information

Work is ongoing to develop the detail of the policy in relation to open data and audio visual information. We expect to share further information about our plans for developing those policies later this year.

Any comments or questions in relation to this update should be sent to:

busbillconsultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk

**Bus Services Act Implementation Team
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