

[News story: Changes anticipated for marine licensing fees and charges](#)

The costs associated with marine licence applications made to the Marine Management Organisation are planned to change from 1 September 2018.

This follows a consultation held by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) [on proposals](#) to revise marine licensing application fees, held between December 2017 and February 2018. The consultation outlined changes needed in order to maintain marine licence applicant fee rates in-line with the costs incurred by the MMO in determining a marine licence application.

The fee rate for a marine licence has not been changed since 2014. Since that time, the cost of determining a marine licence application has increased. These changes will help to ensure that the cost of a marine licence is not subsidised by the UK tax payer.

Defra has now published its [response to the consultation](#) and [laid a Statutory Instrument in Parliament](#) to provide the legal basis for the changes to take place.

Marine licensing fees from 1 September

The planned implementation date for the changes to marine licence application fees is 1 September 2018. The impact of the changes depend on the band of marine licence applied for and when the application is received/determined.

The MMO will soon [update its guidance](#) to reflect the new proposed fees. The main change is a revision of the hourly fee rate from £94 to £122 for Band 2 and 3 applicants.

From 1 September onwards:

- New Band 2 and 3 applications received by the MMO will be charged the new hourly rate.
- Travel costs will be charged at the new hourly rate and will no longer be capped. Travel and subsistence costs will also be charged. MMO will publish details of their travel and subsistence policy shortly.

There will be a number of Band 2 applications ongoing at 1 September 2018 where the MMO has not yet made a determination. The MMO will introduce transitional arrangements for these and will provide bespoke advice and calculation of fees to applicants.

Band 2 applicants will continue to be charged under the old fee regime until they are determined. However the cap on total costs payable for the existing 2E category will be based on the new arrangements as this is set at a lower level than under the existing scheme.

There will be no transitional arrangements for Band 3 applications, ongoing cases will be charged at the new rate from 1 September.

Improvements to the marine licensing service

The consultation and Government response explain how the MMO has continued to improve marine licensing systems and processes and is committed to further enhancing these. Such changes, introduced since 2015 as part of a marine licensing improvement programme, are estimated to have collectively saved businesses around half a million pounds a year.

One such change was a [self-service approach for some low-risk applications](#), which was included in the consultation.

In responding to the consultation the Government has made a number of commitments to further improve the marine licensing process and systems to make them more transparent and efficient. These commitments include:

- Ensuring service standards are published on the MMO website and the delivery against these standards is monitored and reported
- Ongoing monitoring of the marine licensing regime, with any opportunity to pass on efficiency savings to be considered under the next review of marine licensing application fees
- Reviewing and publishing guidance on travelling relating to marine licence applications, using comments received as part of the consultation to inform this
- Considering whether other specific activities could be added to the list of Band 1 activities when regulations are next reviewed.

The MMO welcomes feedback from marine licensing customers in order to further improve the system to meet their needs and continue to offer value for money.