

Press release: Continuity of planning (environmental) requirements when the UK leaves the European Union

The government has today (24 October 2018) published statutory instruments in relation to environmental assessments and the planning regime.

These instruments make no substantive changes of policy, but when the UK leaves the European Union (EU) these instruments will ensure the continued smooth operation of the following regimes relating to the environment and the planning system:

- Environmental Impact Assessment – which aims to ensure that environmental considerations are taken into account at the development consent stage of the planning process
- Strategic Environmental Assessment – which aims to ensure that environmental considerations are taken into account at the strategic plan-making stage of the planning process
- Hazardous Substances Regulations – these ensure that the objectives of preventing major accidents, and limiting the consequences of such accidents, are taken into account in land-use planning

These instruments also make a small number of amendments to other planning legislation, for example where there are references to obligations in EU law which are redundant or no longer appropriate.

The amendments in these instruments:

- will ensure that these regimes will continue to operate as they did before the date we leave the EU
- will not be retrospective, and so there will be no need to re-examine any decisions made before our EU exit purely as a result of these changes

We have also taken this opportunity to bring up to date some references to other legislation. Those provisions come into force on 31 December 2018. All other provisions come into force at the point the UK leaves the European Union on 29 March 2019.

Before these statutory instruments are formally laid in Parliament, they have to go through a sifting process. A new committee in the House of Commons and the Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee in the House of Lords will consider the suitability of the relevant procedure.

The UK government is committed to maintaining the highest environmental standards after we leave the EU, and will continue to uphold international obligations through multilateral environmental agreements.

Further information

See the statutory instruments that the government has laid:

- [Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2018](#)
- [Planning \(Hazardous Substances and Miscellaneous Amendments\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2018](#)

The UK government has also laid a [statutory instrument which applies in Northern Ireland](#).

The negative parliamentary procedure is proposed for these statutory instruments. Negative SIs do not need active approval by Parliament. They will automatically come into effect as law unless either House stops (annuls) them within a fixed period after they have been laid (usually 40 sitting days).

The UK will leave the EU at 11pm on 29 March 2019.

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[Press release: FCO statement on UN action against North Korea sanctions breaches](#)

An FCO spokesperson said:

The UK welcomes the announcement by the UN's 1718 Committee that it has listed three vessels for engaging in sanctions evasion. The vessels, the Shang Yuan Bao, New Regent and Kum Un San 3, are subject to deflagging and a port entry ban. Their activity demonstrates that North Korea continues to flout UN sanctions through prohibited ship-to-ship transfers.

The UK is contributing to the enforcement of UN sanctions through monitoring and surveillance activities to detect and prevent illicit ship-to-ship transfers in partnership with Australia, Canada, France, Japan, New Zealand and the United States.

We are also concerned that recent US assessments indicate that North Korea has breached the UN-mandated cap on imports of refined petroleum through illicit transfers and we therefore call on all Member States to halt all sales and transfers of refined petroleum to North Korea.

Full enforcement of UN sanctions is vital to ensure we achieve the goal of complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of North Korea as agreed by the UN Security Council.

Further information

- Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)
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[Press release: Rapist has sentence increased following Solicitor General's referral](#)

A man who sexually assaulted a woman celebrating her 19th birthday in Falmouth has had his sentence increased today after the Solicitor General, Robert Buckland QC MP, referred his sentence to the Court of Appeal as unduly lenient.

Joseph Ahmed, now 32, forced his victim to have unprotected sex with him after they met at a house party. He ignored her pleas for him to stop. The victim was estimated to have been twice the legal drink drive limit at the time of the assault.

Ahmed was originally sentenced at Truro Crown Court in August, where he was given 5 years imprisonment with an extended licence period of 3 years. Today, after the Solicitor General's referral, the Court of Appeal increased his sentence to 7 years imprisonment with an extended licence period of 3 years.

Speaking after the hearing, the Solicitor General said:

"Ahmed put his victim through a terrible ordeal, showing a complete disregard for her clear protestations. I am pleased that the Court of Appeal has today agreed that Ahmed's sentence should have been higher, and hope it will bring some comfort to the victim."

Press release: Independent Governor of WFD appointed

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs has appointed Mark Babington as Independent Governor of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD).

Mark Babington has 20 years' experience in the public sector and in policy and standard setting as a qualified FCA accountant. He brings with him strong audit experience in developing UK audit policy through his current role in the Financial Reporting Council, as a former Director in the NAO, and an Independent Co-Opted member of WFD's Audit and Risk Committee since 2017.

WFD is the UK public body dedicated to supporting democracy around the world. It is run independently of the UK Government, though works closely with it. WFD partners with political parties, legislative assemblies and electoral bodies and is active in over 30 countries. WFD's initiatives include the political engagement of vulnerable groups in 18 Commonwealth countries, building trust in democracy across the Western Balkans and combating violence against women in the Middle East and Northern Africa. On behalf of the UK Government, WFD also recruits UK nationals for international election observation missions.

Further information

- Follow the Foreign Secretary on Twitter [@Jeremy_Hunt](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)
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Press release: Business Secretary hosts first cross-government working group on future regulation

- Business Secretary outlines commitment to ensuring regulators are active, forward-thinking and ready to ensure UK is at the forefront of future industries
- Move reflects government drive to transform regulation to support innovators to bring new ideas to market

Business Secretary Greg Clark has outlined his commitment to building on the UK's exceptional reputation for regulation by ensuring UK regulators are ready for the industries of the future, at the first Ministerial Working Group on Future Regulation.

The Group, which convened for the first time yesterday, is a key commitment in the UK's modern Industrial Strategy and is responsible for ensuring the government can shape the right regulatory environment to put the UK at the forefront of future industries, from driverless cars to artificial intelligence. It will also take forward recommendations by the Prime Minister's Council for Science and Technology on how to make the UK regulations more favourable to innovation.

The Council's recommendations have been published, together with the government's [response](#). These include establishment of a new horizon-scanning function to ensure that regulation keeps pace with emerging technologies and better access to regulatory advice and support for innovators.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

We have a world-beating regulatory environment in the UK which has set standards that have been exported around the world. But we can't move forward by standing still and we must prepare for the technologies and industries of the future.

I am grateful to the work done by the Council and for their recommendations on how we can put the UK at the forefront of these industries. Through the Working Group on Future Regulation we are going to build on our exceptional foundations, ensuring our regulations keep pace with the technological advances that will reshape our economy.

By being the 'prime mover' in reforming regulation to support technological innovation, the government will be able to grow

domestic industries and attract investment from the rest of the world.

The new group reflects the government's drive to transform regulation to support innovators to bring new ideas to market. In early October the government announced that it would invest in £10 million in 15 projects through the Regulators' Pioneer Fund. Projects will help regulators keep pace with technological advances of the future from virtual lawyers to flying cars.

Members of the Ministerial Working Group on Future Regulation are:

- Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy – Rt Hon Greg Clark MP (Chair)
- Secretary of State for Health and Social Care – Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP
- Secretary of State for Transport – Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP
- Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport – Rt Hon Jeremy Wright MP
- Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth – Rt Hon Claire Perry MP
- Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation – Sam Gyimah MP
- Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury – Robert Jenrick MP
- Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Better Regulation) – Rt Hon Lord Henley
- Government Chief Scientific Advisor – Dr Patrick Vallance FRS, FMedSci, FRCP
- Chair of the Regulatory Policy Committee – Anthony Browne
- BEIS Director General for Market Frameworks – Jae Samant
- BEIS Director for Better Regulation – Carl Creswell

This group, which will meet on a quarterly basis, will be responsible for:

- Strengthening the Government's horizon scanning for emerging regulatory challenges arising from innovative products, services and business models
- Commissioning departments to develop regulatory reform proposals to enable innovative products, services and business models
- Promoting action by regulators to develop innovation-enabling regulatory approaches
- Seeking to resolve complex regulatory issues that cross sectoral, departmental or regulator boundaries; and
- Driving the exchange of best practice in innovation-enabling approaches across Whitehall