

[DCMS & Ofcom Letters on Ofcom provision of information regulations](#)

Under section 24A of the Communications Act 2003 (as inserted by the Digital Economy Act 2017), Ofcom has a statutory duty to share information with Government at least 24 hours before publication. To commence the duty, the Secretary of State for Digital, Media and Sport must specify by regulations what categories of information will be exempt from this duty, following consultation with Ofcom. As announced in a [Written Ministerial Statement](#) tabled by the Secretary of State, the Department's consultation with Ofcom has now concluded and the implementation of the duty via a negative Statutory Instrument is expected to take place in the Autumn. The following consultation correspondence between DCMS and Ofcom sets out the Secretary of State's final decision on what information will be listed as exempt from the duty in the regulations.

[Collaborating with Queen's University to improve coffee authenticity](#)

Coffee authenticity has been a topic of interest for the Government Chemist and its collaborators for quite some time, resulting in the publication of a [paper](#) in 2017 reviewing analytical methods to detect adulteration in coffee.

Following developments in analytical techniques, and on request by the publishing journal, [Dr Michael Walker](#) and Professor Duncan Thorburn Burns, Emeritus Professor in the [Institute for Global Food Security](#) have published an update of the original paper.

The updated paper reviews the driving factors for the commercial adulteration of coffee and analytical methods for detecting different fraudulent practices:

- dilution: adulteration of coffee with cheaper materials such as coffee husks, chicory, cereal grains, woody tissue, cocoa or soya beans, acai berries or exogenous sugars
- incorrect geographic origin stated in label
- substitution of the more expensive Arabica with cheaper beans

- authenticity of Kopi Luwak coffee (coffee produced from beans digested by civet cats)

A flow diagram, [Summary of approaches to coffee authentication](#) (PDF, 27.6KB, 1 page) has been developed to summarise the best approaches to deal with the authentication of coffee. Encouragement is given to the interlaboratory validation of spectroscopic approaches, the exploration of civet cat DNA for the identification of Kopi Luwak, and the development of appropriately large and well-curated datasets of authenticity information across multiple techniques.

[Burns, D.T. and Walker, M., Critical Review of Analytical and Bioanalytical Verification of the Authenticity of Coffee, Journal of AOAC International, Vol. 102, 2019](#)

For more information about the work of the Government Chemist contact

[Government responds to furniture consultation](#)

The government is to upgrade its Furniture Fire Safety regulations to further enhance safety provisions, enable newer and innovative materials to come onto the market and reduce the use of hazardous flame-retardant chemicals as a means of making furniture fire resistant – ensuring the UK continues to have the strongest product safety standards.

The government is committed to maintaining safety rules which protect households, consumers and the environment, with safety as its number one priority. The upgrade to existing regulations, which were introduced in the 1980s, reflect advances in technology in furniture manufacturing practices.

This will continue to ensure that manufacturers only place safe products on the UK market.

The approach will focus on safety of products, meaning furniture available for UK homes will be designed and manufactured to address risks in the modern home, keeping owners safer. This is consistent with the approach for other consumer products.

The move, recommended by an expert Advisory Panel, follows a consultation with fire chiefs, the public, manufacturers, suppliers and advice from Chief Scientific Advisors from across government. In addition to new regulations, standards will be developed by the British Standards Institution in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders, including those in industry, fire safety experts and consumer representatives.

This comes in response to the consultation on updating the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988. These regulations apply UK-wide and set fire resistance requirements for cover materials and fillings used to make upholstered furniture found in people's homes.

[Response to consultation on upgrading the Furniture and Furnishings \(Fire\) \(Safety\) Regulations 1988](#)

[**eAlert: 17 July 2019 – Urban Tree Challenge Fund application deadline**](#)

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[**Call for evidence: An inspection of the Home Office's identification and handling of irregular arrivals and entrants**](#)

Published 18 July 2019

Last updated 12 August 2019 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 12 August 2019 The closing date to submit evidence regarding the inspection of the Home Office's identification and handling of irregular arrivals and entrants has been extended to 18 August.
2. 18 July 2019 First published.