

'Review of Taxi Accessibility Regulations: Effects of Compliance',

Context:

The report, 'Review of Taxi Accessibility Regulations: Effects of Compliance', was produced by Cranfield University for the (then) Department of the Environment, Transport & the Regions. It covered the compliance costs which would have arisen from the application of the Government's initial, informal proposals to introduce taxi accessibility regulations under Part 5 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, on which the Government consulted in 1997. Following consideration of this report, and the 750 responses received to the consultation paper, it was concluded that the initial proposals would be unworkable and would cause undue hardship to the trade in some licensing authority areas. In light of these findings, the Government announced in November 2000 that it would not be pursuing the initial proposals and would instead produce a revised package with the aim of striking a more reasonable balance between the mobility needs of disabled people and the operational requirements of the taxi trade.

The revised policy proposals for introducing taxi accessibility regulations were subsequently announced on 28 October 2003, to coincide with a statement to Parliament earlier the same day. A copy of that statement is also enclosed. Having established the revised policy approach, we are currently developing the technical requirements which will form the basis of the accessibility regulations. As part of that process we commissioned a detailed ergonomic assessment of the access needs of disabled people in relation to taxi design. We published that report in July 2004. Delegates at that event, which included representatives of the trade as well as vehicle manufacturers and converters, regulators and disability organisations, were invited to submit their comments on the findings. We are currently considering the comments we have received together with the findings.

Before taxi accessibility regulations are introduced there will be a full public consultation on the revised draft regulatory package including a new detailed Regulatory Impact Assessment which will reflect the final proposals. It is therefore important to note that this report published here has no relevance to or bearing on the current policy development which we are considering in relation to taxi accessibility and that its contents are, of course, significantly out of date.