



Identity cards: status

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This note provides background on the status of the Government's identity cards programme together with information on the Home Office's¹ plans for its further development. It includes the Home Secretary's announcement of 30 June 2009 that ID cards would be voluntary for British citizens.

Contents

1	Background	2
2	Costs	3
3	Roll-out	3
4	Secondary legislation: consultation	4
5	ID cards in practice	5
6	Statutory instruments	5
7	Written statement	6

¹ Principally via the agency of the Identity and Passport Service

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1 Background

Three key documents are:

- *National Identity Scheme Delivery Plan*, March 2008
- *National Identity Cards Service Cost Report*, May 2009
- *Identity Cards Act Secondary Legislation: A Consultation*, November 2008

The first of the above documents (and an earlier cost report, one of which is produced at least every six months)² was referred to in written answers (October 2008) that sought to establish the status of the programme:

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what estimate she has made of the number of identity cards that will be in circulation by the end of 2015; [219770]

(2) what estimate she has made of the percentage of the total eligible population that will have an identity card by 2016-17 under the March 2008 delivery plan; and what estimates were made under previous implementation plans. [219771]

Meg Hillier: The following table summarises the estimated volumes published in the May 2008 National Identity Cards Scheme Cost Report, combining the total volume of Identity Cards and Passports issued by IPS to British and Irish Citizens resident in the UK.

<i>Estimated passport and identity card products issued to British and Irish citizens resident in the UK</i>	
	<i>Product volume (million)</i>
2015-16	12.9
2016-17	13.1
2017-18	12.3

This is the most recently published information on product volumes that is currently available. Previous estimates of product volumes are included in National Identity Scheme Cost Reports that may be found at:

<http://www.ips.gov.uk/identity/publications-legislative.asp>

The Identity and Passport Service is currently developing the product choice offered to customers, as indicated in the National Identity Scheme Delivery Plan published in March 2008. The figures for the projected product volumes are currently being recalculated and will be published in due course.

² Section 37 of the *Identity Cards Act 2006* requires the Government to lay before Parliament at least every six months an estimate of the likely public expenditure on the National Identity Scheme for the following ten years.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when she plans to publish the updated timetable for the roll-out of identity cards to UK citizens. [221390]

Meg Hillier: The most recent timetable for the rollout of the National Identity Scheme was published in the National Identity Scheme Delivery Plan in March 2008, an electronic copy of which may be found on the Identity and Passport Service website at:

<http://www.ips.gov.uk/identity/downloads/national-identity-scheme-delivery-2008.pdf>

The Identity and Passport Service is continuing to work with its partners and suppliers, along with responses received following the recent public consultation, in order to further define the detail of those plans and will publish the result of this work in due course. In addition an updated report on the estimated cost of the identity cards scheme over the next 10 years will be presented to Parliament and published in November 2008.³

2 Costs

A more recent (November 2008) *Identity Cards Scheme Cost Report* raised the cost estimate of implementing the scheme for foreign nationals, over the period April 2008 to April 2018, from £311m to £319m. No adjustments (for the same period) were made to the cost estimates (£4,740m) in relation to British and Irish citizens resident in the UK. These are gross costs: the Government's intention is that the majority of these will be covered by income from products and services.

According to the most recent (and slightly renamed) *National Identity Service Cost Report* (May 2009) the following estimates are given for the period April 2009 to April 2019:

- Total (set up and operational) cost for foreign nationals: £379m (2009/10 prices)
- Total cost for British and Irish Citizens resident in the UK: £4,945m (2009/10 prices)

3 Roll-out

A parliamentary question in relation to Irish citizens in the UK elicited an answer that provided information on the wider roll-out of ID cards:

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate she has made of the number of Irish citizens who will take up the UK identity card. [209972]

Meg Hillier: The National Identity Scheme will be available to people aged 16 years and above who legally reside or work in the UK. In the second half of 2009, we will start to issue cards to British and foreign nationals including European Economic Area citizens including Irish nationals working in sensitive roles or locations, starting with airport workers. Irish citizens who have dual British/Irish citizenship will be able to choose to apply for a UK citizens ID Card or an identification card which does not include citizenship and is not valid for travel.

From 2010 and 2011 we will offer identity cards on a voluntary basis to young people and those customers where there is the greatest personal benefit to them in their daily lives from having or using an identity card.

³ HC Deb 6 October 2008 cc143-4W

Specific data estimates for the number of Irish citizens who will volunteer to take up the UK identity card cannot be finalised at this point but will be kept under review.⁴

Further information is given in the *National Identity Scheme Delivery Plan 2008* (which also sought views on specific points by means of public consultation, ending 30 June). There the implementation “milestones” are given as follows:

SOME IMPORTANT MILESTONES IN THE DELIVERY OF THE SCHEME

- From 2008, we shall start to issue the first identity cards in the form of biometric immigration documents to foreign (non European Economic Area) nationals.

[On 25 November 2008, identity cards started to be issued to foreign nationals, in selected immigration application categories, from outside the EEA and Switzerland. The relevant powers to enable the issue of these cards are in the *UK Borders Act 2007*].

- In the second half of 2009, we shall start to issue cards to British and foreign nationals (including European Economic Area citizens) working in sensitive roles or locations (e.g. airport workers). [This scheme is now voluntary.] We will run a series of workshops with other sectors in the course of 2008 to identify in which sectors the best opportunities lie to develop plans to extend the Scheme to other sensitive roles or locations after airports.
- From 2010 we will issue identity cards on a voluntary basis to young people to assist them in proving their identity as they start out their independent life in society.
- From 2011/12 we shall start to enrol British citizens at high volumes offering a choice of receiving a passport, identity card or both.

4 Secondary legislation: consultation

Secondary legislation is needed to effect the first three milestones; and primary legislation will be needed to allow for consumer choice of receiving an identity card and/or passport.⁵ Of the groups targeted for early receipt of ID cards, there has been widely-reported opposition by the British Airline Pilots Association⁶ and the National Union of Students.⁷ Among the concerns of these bodies are those to do with necessity (or, rather, lack of it) and the difficulties (for example in opening bank accounts) that students without ID cards might subsequently face – a manifestation of what the scheme’s detractors would style compulsion by stealth.

A consultation on secondary legislation (referred to at the beginning of this briefing) was launched by the Home Office in November 2008. Annexes to *Identity Cards Act Secondary Legislation: A Consultation* comprise 12 draft statutory instruments and one Draft Code of Practice on Civil Penalties.⁸ The consultation (end date, 13 February 2009) relates to the secondary legislation needed to provide the detailed procedures, within the framework of the

⁴ HC Deb 6 October 2008 c 144W

⁵ *National Identity Scheme Delivery Plan 2008*, p 21

⁶ “ID cards plan in crisis as the ‘guinea pigs’ revolt”, *Observer*, 12 October 2008

⁷ “Airline industry warns on ID card costs”, *Financial Times*, 10 July 2008

⁸ A civil penalty may be issued for non-compliance with certain requirements imposed under the *Identity Cards Act 2006* – such as failure to notify the Secretary of State of changes (e.g. change of address) affecting the accuracy of the National Identity Register.

2006 Act, for introducing ID cards for British and EEA nationals, “starting in 2009 with a limited number of people [members of the general public] who may apply for ID cards on a voluntary basis and to people employed airside at specified airports.”⁹

5 ID cards in practice

So far as the practical operation of the National Identity Scheme is concerned, the *Delivery Plan* outlines the key steps of the process:

- You apply – you will need to provide biographical and biometric information.
- A small amount of personal data will be securely stored – the National Identity Register (NIR) is where your identity details will be recorded and maintained.
- A card or passport or both will be issued to you - from 2011/12 you will be able to choose to have a card, or passport or both issued. It or they will then be delivered securely or collected from an IPS office, as convenient for you.
- You will be easily able to prove your identity – you will be able to use your card to prove your identity whenever you need to through a variety of channels (e.g. internet, phone etc).

6 Statutory instruments

Some of the secondary legislation referred to above was debated in, and approved by, the 10th Delegated Legislation Committee on 1 July 2009. The relevant statutory instruments were:

Draft Identity Cards Act 2006 (Fees) Regulations 2009; Draft Identity Cards Act 2006 (Information and Code of Practice on Penalties) Order 2009 and the Draft Identity Cards Act 2006 (Provision of Information without Consent) Regulations 2009

This legislation has also been considered by the House of Lords Merits of Statutory Instruments Committee. The Committee’s summary begins:

The Committee has considered the following instruments and has determined that the special attention of the House should be drawn to them on the grounds specified.

A. Draft Identify Cards Act 2006 (Designation) Order 2009

Draft Identity Cards Act 2006 (Fees) Regulations 2009

Draft Identity Cards Act 2006 (Provision of Information without Consent) Regulations 2009

Draft Identity Cards Act 2006 (Information and Code of Practice on Penalties) Order 2009

Summary: The secondary legislation under the Identity Cards Act 2006 ("the 2006 Act") will establish the detailed procedures required to introduce ID cards under that Act. These four instruments, all subject to the affirmative procedure, are the first to have been laid before Parliament under the 2006 Act which will allow for the introduction of ID Cards. In addition, two further affirmative instruments and four instruments subject to the negative procedure will be laid before Parliament later in June 2009. These four affirmative instruments have a broad range of provisions, including: prescribing government departments which may be provided with information in connection with specified functions; the fees to be charged for

⁹ Home Office (Identity and Passport Service), [Identity Cards Act Secondary Legislation: A Consultation](#), November 2008

applications; and designation, for the purpose of the 2006 Act, of a "criminal conviction certificate" when this is applied for by an airside worker. The Government intend that these instruments, together with the instruments to be laid later this month, will permit the issuing of ID cards to airside workers: initially at Manchester and London City airports, and volunteers in Manchester, from Autumn 2009.¹⁰

The purpose of these, and other statutory instruments, is to give effect to the introduction of identity cards to parts of the UK population. A Home Office press release of 30 June 2009 states:

Residents of Greater Manchester will be able to apply for an ID card before the end of this year, and residents in the northwest will be able to apply from early next year.

From 2011-12, ID cards will roll out to the wider population on an entirely voluntary basis.¹¹

As a result of a series of deferred divisions five sets of regulations were approved by the House of Commons on 8 July 2009:

[Draft Identity Cards Act 2006 \(Provision of Information without Consent\) Regulations 2009](#) yes

[Draft Identity Cards Act 2006 \(Information and Code of Practice on Penalties\) Order 2009](#) yes

[Draft Identity Cards Act 2006 \(Fees\) Regulations 2009](#)

[Draft Identity Cards Act 2006 \(Application and Issue of ID Card and Notification of Changes\) Regulations 2009](#)

[Draft Identity Cards Act 2006 \(Prescribed Information\) Regulations 2009](#)

The regulations were also approved by the House of Lords on 13 July. A sixth order, the *draft Identity Cards Act 2006 (Designation) Order 2009*, was withdrawn following the Home Secretary's written ministerial statement on 30 June (see below). The effect of withdrawing this sixth order will be to make entirely voluntary the acquisition of ID cards by British citizens.

7 Written statement

More details appeared in a written statement (30 June 2009) by the Home Secretary:

Identity and Passport Service

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Alan Johnson): I am pleased to announce today the next steps in the implementation of the National Identity Service. This started with the introduction of identity cards for foreign nationals in November 2008 and will continue later this year with the introduction of the first identity cards for British citizens including the roll out of voluntary identity cards at a fee of £30 to people living in the Greater Manchester area.

There will be significant benefits to individuals from holding an identity card which will become the most convenient, secure and affordable way of asserting identity in

¹⁰ Merits of Statutory Instruments Committee - Nineteenth Report , HL 109 2008-09, 10 June 2009

¹¹ Home Office press notice, *ID card roll-out to be accelerated*, 30 June 2009

everyday life. Identity cards will also be valid for travel throughout Europe in place of a British passport.

I have reviewed the plans for introducing identity cards to the wider public and have decided to accelerate the roll out of cards by extending the initial coverage from Greater Manchester to other locations in the North-West early next year. Anyone resident first in Greater Manchester and then in the wider areas to be specified will be entitled to apply for an identity card. Initially this will be through Identity and Passport Service Offices based in central Manchester and at Manchester airport.

Precise arrangements for the extension of the roll-out are being developed, but will include the extension of identity card enrolment to other Identity and Passport Service offices in North-West England. There will be a particular focus on issuing identity cards at a fee of £30 to those who will most benefit, particularly young people.

The Government are committed to providing real help now to people in these difficult economic times. Those over 75 are particularly affected and as a consequence the Government will also be looking at options which could allow pensioners aged 75 and over to receive an identity card free of charge. These identity cards will assist in asserting identity and will enable travel throughout Europe

The Government already have arrangements in hand for the production of identity cards. Later this year, and subject to the normal procurement processes, a further contract will be signed to cover production of cards for the medium term. We are currently engaged in negotiations to ensure the best value for money. We now have a much clearer view of our costs in the future as we have entered into 10-year contracts to upgrade the Identity and Passport Service's application and enrolment system and build and run the database that will support passports and identity cards.

At the same time, we will continue to look at ways of reducing costs across both passport and identity card work. A further "Cost Report" on the estimated costs of the identity cards scheme over the next 10 years will be made to Parliament in the autumn. However, the expectation is that the costs specifically relating to identity cards will be less than the 30 per cent. of the total costs of the National Identity Scheme previously estimated.

However, holding an identity card should be a personal choice for British citizens—just as it is now to obtain a passport. Accordingly, I want the introduction of identity cards for all British citizens to be voluntary and I have therefore decided that identity cards issued to airside workers, planned initially at Manchester and London City airports later this year, should also be voluntary. I continue to believe that identity cards will help deliver enhanced security in the airside pass-issuing process at airports by making it easier and more certain to verify an individual's identity. In consultation with the airport operators, we will be encouraging anyone applying for an airside pass to obtain an identity card. There will be significant benefits from a large proportion of airside pass holders having their identity verified and being issued with identity cards. We have listened to what the unions, airlines and others in the aviation sector have had to say about our plans and as a result we will now seek to achieve these results by inviting applications to be made on a voluntary basis.

The Government will, therefore, be withdrawing the Identity Cards Act 2006 (Designation) Order 2009 which was laid before Parliament on 6 May 2009. This would have made it a requirement for anyone applying for a criminal conviction certificate, as part of the process for obtaining an airside pass to access the restricted area at a specified airport, also to obtain an identity card.

The Government believe that effective identity assurance is the foundation stone of a good personnel security regime in airports and elsewhere and that is why we will be offering identity cards to those working airside in our airports from later this year.

In December 2007, Stephen Boys Smith was commissioned by the Transport Secretary to conduct an independent external review of personnel security arrangements in the UK transport industry. His key conclusion was that effective personnel security starts with identity and that identity cards would play a useful addition to identity assurance at airports and elsewhere in the transport industry. We continue to believe that this is correct and that identity cards will provide and help with enhanced security but we believe that compulsion would be counter-productive given the need to ensure the right environment for their introduction.

We believe the evaluation of identity cards for airside workers will demonstrate the benefits that identity cards can bring to the pre-employment and airside pass issuing processes at Manchester and London airports and that these benefits will encourage airside workers to apply for an identity card. We will continue to work with the aviation industry to agree the ongoing roll out of personal identity cards to airside workers, so these process improvements can also benefit others.

For foreign nationals (from outside the European Economic Area), compulsory identity cards will play an increasingly important part in the delivery of an effective immigration policy and for proving identity and entitlement to work. Therefore I have asked the UK Border Agency to look at how it can speed up the rollout of identity cards for Foreign Nationals including to foreign national airside workers.

A further five Statutory Instruments under the Identity Cards Act 2006 have also been laid before Parliament. These will now be brought before the House for approval. These will be required to allow for the start of the issue of identity cards on a voluntary basis in the autumn.

I am determined to ensure that there is proper oversight of the way the National Identity Service is introduced in order to build public trust. We will shortly be announcing the appointment of the independent Identity Commissioner. I will also be introducing a Public Panel, made up from people from different regions, to ensure that the views of the public are properly reflected and to help us develop an identity rights charter. All of this work will fit within our strategy for safeguarding identity across Government.¹²

¹² HC Deb 30 June 2009 cc11-3WS