

 <b>Regulatory Policy Committee</b>	<b>Validation of the One-in, Two-out Status and the Net Direct Impact on Business</b>
<b>Validation Impact Assessment (IA)</b>	Access to Intermediary Services by Descendants and Relatives of Adopted People
<b>Lead Department/Agency</b>	Department for Education
<b>IA Number</b>	-
<b>Origin</b>	Domestic
<b>Expected date of implementation</b>	October 2014 (SNR 8)
<b>Date of Regulatory Triage Confirmation</b>	14 March 2014
<b>Date submitted to RPC</b>	23 July 2014
<b>Date of RPC Validation</b>	28 August 2014
<b>RPC reference</b>	RPC14-FT-DfE-2042(2)
<b>Departmental Assessment</b>	
<b>One-in, Two-out status</b>	Zero Net Cost
<b>Estimate of the Equivalent Annual Net Cost to Business (EANCB)</b>	N/A
<b>RPC assessment</b>	<b>VALIDATED</b>
<b>Summary RPC comments</b>	
<p>The Validation IA is fit for purpose. The IA provides satisfactory evidence that this proposal should be considered as a permissive measure and therefore that the benefits to voluntary adoption agencies should at least match the monetised costs.</p> <p>On this basis, we are able to validate the proposal as Zero Net Cost.</p>	
<b>Background (extracts from IA)</b>	
<p><b>What is the problem under consideration? Why is government intervention necessary?</b></p> <p><i>“There is an anomaly in current legislation about who may access ‘intermediary services.’ An intermediary service currently enables adults who were adopted before 30 December 2005 to obtain information about their adoption, and can facilitate contact between them and their birth relatives. However, direct descendants (i.e. children and grandchildren) of an adopted person cannot use an intermediary service to facilitate contact with the birth relatives of that adopted person. Likewise, other persons such as spouses and adoptive siblings of the adoptee are also denied the service. Intervention is required in order to extend the number of people who can use this service.”</i></p>	

**What are the policy objectives and the intended effects?**

*“The objective is to correct the anomaly in legislation which currently leaves a number of people in the dark about their family history, and will allow a wider category of relatives to apply to an intermediary service. This will allow direct descendants (i.e. children and grandchildren) and ‘prescribed persons’ (such as spouses and adoptive siblings) to access an intermediary service for the purpose of facilitating contact with birth relatives of an adopted person. This means that prescribed persons, who may have good reasons for wishing to make contact with the adopted person’s birth relatives, will have the right to apply to an intermediary service.”*

**RPC comments**

The proposal is to enable direct descendants and other persons with a prescribed relationship to adopted people to have access to intermediary services for adoptions.

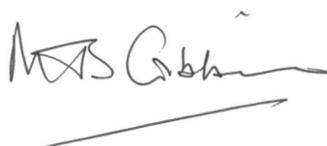
The Department has used the consultation period to gather further information on the likely impact of this proposal. Information provided by voluntary adoption agencies has led to a revised estimate of the gross cost to business/civil society organisations, of between £0.032 million and £0.152 million each year. This appears to be a reasonable estimate.

The IA explains that the proposals are permissive and would not force businesses to undertake the service. On this basis, the Department assumes that the benefits to voluntary adoption agencies of the proposal will at least equal the costs. The Department therefore classifies the proposal as zero net cost.

The IA provides evidence that the majority of agencies do not actually charge a fee for the service, and those who do, charge a small amount. While voluntary adoption agencies may feel obliged to provide the service requested, often without charge, it is reasonable to assume that this will be of benefit to them in terms of furthering their objectives. The Department’s assessment is therefore reasonable and consistent with the Better Regulation Framework Manual (paragraph 1.9.21).

On this basis, we are able to validate the estimated EANCB.

**Signed**



**Michael Gibbons, Chairman**