



Driver & Vehicle
Licensing
Agency

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency:

Exchange of Large Vehicles (Buses and Lorries)
driving licences issued in Switzerland

Public Consultation



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

EXCHANGE OF LARGE BUS AND LORRY DRIVING LICENCES ISSUED IN SWITZERLAND

INTRODUCTION

This consultation seeks your views on allowing drivers who hold a licence to drive large vehicles (buses and lorries), which was issued originally in Switzerland to exchange it for a British equivalent, if the driver becomes resident in Great Britain. The Swiss Licensing Authority currently exchanges British bus and lorry driving licences for the Swiss equivalent.

This change will apply in England, Scotland and Wales only. Driver licensing is a devolved matter in Northern Ireland. The Northern Ireland Assembly can pass laws affecting Northern Ireland on this issue.

BACKGROUND

Since June 1984 Swiss driving licences for cars and motorcycles can be exchanged for the British equivalent.

THE PROPOSAL

The DVLA is considering allowing licences to drive large buses and lorries that were issued in Switzerland to be exchanged for the British equivalent if the holders of such licences become resident in Great Britain. This will support the existing arrangements that provide for the exchange of licences to drive cars and motorcycles.

The current licensing and testing standards for driving buses and lorries in Switzerland have been assessed and the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency approved the standards for large buses and lorries only. The proposed arrangement will therefore exclude medium sized buses and lorries. The Certificate of Professional Competence is also required in Switzerland in line with European requirements. These factors ensure that the proposal raises no road safety concerns.

The proposal affects only holders of a licence to drive large buses and lorries issued in Switzerland who become resident in Great Britain. It does not affect the arrangements in place for those driving buses and lorries as visitors.

Subject to the outcome of this consultation, changes will be included in an order made in exercise of powers granted by sections 108 (2) to (2B) of the Road Traffic Act 1988.

BENEFITS OF PROPOSED CHANGE

The main benefit will be to allow the DVLA to grant a full British licence containing entitlement to drive large buses and/or lorries to holders of equivalent licences issued in Switzerland without the added time and expense involved in passing a further driving test in Great Britain. **Annex A provides** information on the benefits and costs.

CONSULTATION QUESTION

Do you agree that holders of a licence issued in Switzerland with entitlement to drive large buses and lorries can exchange their licences for the British equivalent if they have become resident in Great Britain? If you disagree, please explain why.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

At this stage, there are no identifiable savings or costs for UK businesses; the key beneficiaries are likely to be individuals so the change falls outside the better regulation framework. There is also no impact on private and voluntary sectors foreseen, and so, there is no need for an impact assessment.

DURATION

The consultation will run between 30 January 2015 and 27 February 2015. Any responses received after this date will be taken into consideration only in exceptional circumstances.

HOW TO RESPOND

You can respond in the following ways:

Respond online: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/driving-licence-exchange>

- By post to: Strategy, Policy & Communications Directorate, D16, Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, Swansea, SA6 7JL
- Email to: driverspolicy@dvla.gsi.gov.uk

When responding, it would be helpful if you could state whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please make clear who the organisation represents and where applicable, how the views of members were collated.

Please get in touch by email or by post if you would like a copy of the consultation in an alternative format, or if you have any questions.

Freedom of Information

Respondents are asked to note that we may publish some or all of the comments received in response to this consultation. Also that if a request from a third party for sight of such comments is received, we may be obliged by law (for example, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or Environmental Information Regulations 2004) to disclose such information to the applicant. If there are particular reasons why you would not wish your comments to be published or disclosed, please let us know. Although your wishes in this respect may not override any statutory requirement to disclose, they will be taken into account so far as possible. If you reply by email, the above overrides any confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system.

After the Consultation

All responses will be considered as part of the consultation process. We will explore the possibility of incorporating valid suggestions and comments. The summary of responses will be published within three months and before or alongside any further action, (e.g. laying legislation before Parliament). It will be available [online](#). We will notify those who responded to the consultation when this happens.

The Consultation Principles

Because of the limited impact and scope of this proposal we are carrying out a shortened consultation targeted towards key industry groups. We believe that this consultation complies with the Consultation Principles which are published by the Cabinet Office online at <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/consultation-principles-guidance>. A summary is shown below:

- Engagement should begin early in policy development.
- The evidence base for the proposed policy should be made available at an early stage.
- The timeframe for consultation should be proportionate and realistic to allow stakeholders sufficient time for a considered response.
- The amount of time required will depend on the nature and impact of the proposal and may typically vary between two and 12 weeks.
- Information should be presented in an accessible and useful form to stakeholders with a substantial interest in the subject matter.
- The choice of the form of the consultation will depend on the issues under consideration and the available time and resources.
- Information provided should be easy to comprehend, use plain language and clarify the key issues.
- Consideration should be given to more informal ways of engaging that may be appropriate.
- The objectives of the consultation process should be clear.

If you consider that this consultation does not comply with the consultation principles or you have comments about the consultation process please contact:

Hayley Bowen
Consultation Co-ordinator
Strategy, Policy and Communications Directorate
DVLA
Swansea
SA6 7JL

ANNEX A

Evidence – Benefits and Costs

In 2013 approximately 90,000 drivers held a licence to drive buses and lorries issued in Switzerland. The number of these drivers who take up residence in Great Britain, and exchange their licences is likely to be very small.

Any benefit will be to individual drivers who may wish to exchange their licences when they become resident in England, Scotland or Wales.

The only cost to the DVLA will be for processing applications, which will be met through the fee for an exchange licence application. There will be no regulatory savings or costs for business.