

Changes to Impact Assessment and Regulatory Policy Committee Scrutiny

Quick start guide for Policy Makers

Summary

1. Ministers have agreed immediate improvements to the system for impact assessment and RPC scrutiny. The aim is to speed up implementation of deregulatory measures and to focus scrutiny on measures that have the biggest impact on business.
2. A fast track process is now available for deregulatory and low-cost regulatory measures. Fast track means you do not need an RPC Opinion before seeking collective agreement. In some cases, where a change is trivial or mechanical and will not affect a department's One-In, One-Out balance, departments may choose to write to the RPC for agreement not to submit an IA at all. You can make this decision early in policy development and plan policy implementation accordingly.
3. Even if your policy fits the fast track criteria, you still need to judge what level of appraisal and scrutiny stakeholders, Ministers and Parliament will expect. For regulatory proposals, how will you demonstrate that the alternative options have been adequately considered, and that there is a clear justification for regulation based on a sound understanding of the likely costs and benefits? Is the proposal high profile, contentious or does it have a significant impact on a specific sector? Do you need to consider specific impact tests? Your departmental Better Regulation Team will help you decide what is appropriate.

Fast-track process – overview

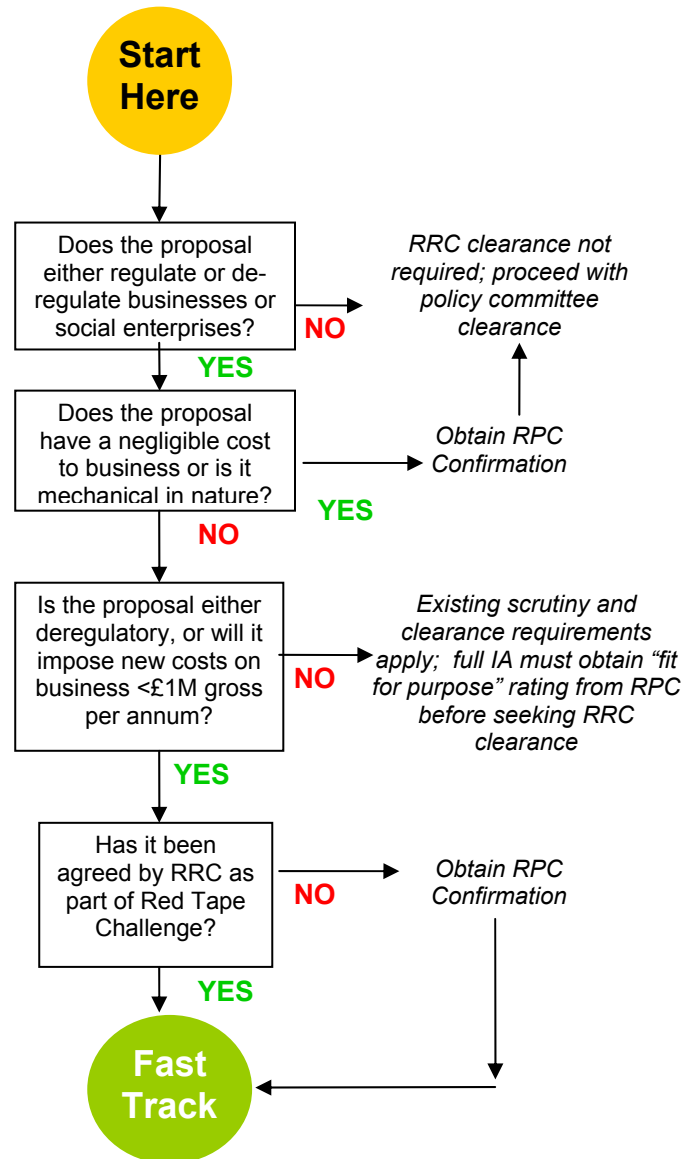
4. The following measures may be appropriate for fast-track:
 - Red Tape Challenge measures and other deregulatory measures; and
 - 'low-cost' regulatory measures with a very small impact on business.

5. Public sector regulation, and regulations that only affect private citizens are no longer in scope of RPC or RRC.
6. Fast-track measures still need collective agreement through the Cabinet committee system, including RRC. Ministers will want to understand the rationale for intervention, the impact of your proposal and the alternatives you considered, particularly for regulatory measures. However there is no requirement for an RPC Opinion when seeking collective agreement.
7. RPC will confirm whether measures are deregulatory or low cost, and so can be fast-tracked. Turnaround can be expected within 5-10 working days initially, moving towards 5 days as the system beds in. For measures that are in scope of One-in, One-out, RPC will also validate the final cost to business. This does not hold up collective agreement at final stage, or implementation. But you will need to provide a simplified, "validation stage" IA which sets out the analysis and cost to business calculation but does not need the analysis of alternatives etc.
8. Regulatory measures with a significant impact on business will continue to require a full impact assessment and RPC opinion before clearance, at consultation and final stage.
9. A full update to the IA Guidance will be issued in the autumn, following the conclusions from the Better Regulation Framework Review.

Better Regulation Executive
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
August 2012

Summary Decision Flow Charts

Does my proposal qualify for the Fast Track ?



What do I need to do for RRC clearance ?

