

The Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) leads on the regulatory reform drive across Government. BERR has responsibility for a number of key regulatory sectors including company law, employment rights, consumer protection and energy regulation – all areas where simplification and regulatory savings have the capacity to make a real difference to businesses, employees and consumers.

Our 2007 Simplification Plan sets out both the savings that we have already delivered, as well as detailed proposals that will achieve our target of a 25 percent reduction in administrative burdens by 2010. Taken together, these will deliver savings worth more than £1 billion per year.

The five projects that will deliver the bulk of these reductions are:

- Implementation of the Companies Act 2006
- Delivery of an improved employment dispute resolution system
- Improved guidance for employers on their employment law obligations
- Implementation of the EU Unfair Commercial Practices Directive
- A consumer law simplification review.

Key Measures delivered May 2006 - October 2007

Employment Law:

- Changes to National Minimum Wage regulations saving employers £5m per year (implemented October 2006).
- Revised Business Link tools and guidance on how to produce a statement of employment particulars and a new Business Link tool to enable employers to produce a statement of redundancy terms (implemented May 2007).

Company Law

- Enabling electronic communication with shareholders – estimated savings of around £66m per year (implemented January 2007).
- Removal of the requirement for private companies to hold an AGM – projected savings of over £45m per year (implemented October 2007).

Specific Measures to be implemented October 2007 - May 2008

- Implementation of the UCPD will lead to the repeal of a number of pieces of consumer legislation and their replacement with a general duty not to trade unfairly – projected savings of about £216m per year (due in April 2008).
- The various guidance projects in employment law will be rolled out starting in 2007. These projects have the potential to deliver up to £365m in administrative burdens reductions – dependent on take-up by business.

Key Measures to be implemented May 2008 – May 2010

- Companies Act measures – including simplifying rules on capital maintenance; and codification of directors' general duties – projected savings over £150m per year (due in October 2009).
- Insolvency measures – simplified Individual Voluntary Arrangements and consolidated secondary legislation – with projected savings of £23m per year (due in 2008).
- Employment law measures included in the Employment Relations Bill – including the outcome of the dispute resolution review, which has the potential to deliver administrative burdens savings up to £132m per year.

Other initiatives:

BERR is leading on two major cross-Whitehall projects:

- Implementation of the Services Directive (due by end 2009) will benefit the UK economy by £4-6 billion.
- The Business Support Simplification Programme (BSSP) which will simplify business support by reducing the current 3000 odd schemes to fewer than 100 by 2010.

BERR is also committed to reducing regulatory burdens on the Public and the Third Sectors and has implemented its obligations under the Hampton Report.

We will continue to look for measures to cut red tape and reduce burdens. Keep on sending your ideas for simplification through your usual contacts.