

News story: Implementation of the Trade Mark Directive 2015

A [consultation on changes to UK trade mark law](#) has launched. These changes result from the [Trade Mark Directive 2015](#) which helps to minimise the differences between national and EU trade mark systems.

The changes we plan to make are consistent with the Directive. They include:

- removing the requirement for a trade mark to be presented graphically. Marks then could be filed in contemporary file formats, like moving images, provided they are presented in a clear and precise manner
- restricting the scope of the 'own name' defence against infringement to individuals only
- removing expired trade marks from the definition of an 'earlier trade mark'

This will make the framework across Europe more accessible and effective for business, to support innovation and economic growth. It will also future proof the system in terms of file formats.

We seek views on how we should make these changes. We have also included a draft statutory instrument, which sets out the proposed changes in detail.

If you have any comments on any aspects of the consultation please send them to TMDirective@ipo.gov.uk before 16 April 2018.

Press release: Illegal angler hooks £600 penalty

Anglers are being urged to obey the law after a Lincolnshire man was ordered to pay more than £600 for fishing illegally.

Shaun Hammond, 28, of Mariners Arms Flats, Keadby, was caught fishing without a licence at Hibaldstow Bridge on the River Ancholme in October last year.

He was discovered by an Environment Agency enforcement officer carrying out a routine patrol to enforce the law and protect the environment for people and wildlife.

Hammond committed an additional offence by refusing to give his name and address to the officer.

Enforcement officers are considered in law to be the same as police

constables. Obstructing one effectively doubled the amount Mr Hammond was fined.

Hammond was proved guilty in absence at Grimsby Magistrates' Court on 9 February. He was fined £440 – £220 for each offence – and ordered to pay costs of £127, as well as a victim surcharge of £44, bringing the total penalty to £611.

Caroline Tero, fisheries team leader at the Environment Agency, said:

Not only was Mr Hammond fishing illegally, he also obstructed a law enforcement officer who was doing his duty to protect the environment for people and wildlife. We and the courts take this very seriously and will always look to protect the wellbeing of our officers.

It makes no sense to have the embarrassment of a court visit, a criminal conviction and a bill for potentially thousands of pounds when an annual licence is currently just £30. We hope this will make people think twice before picking up a rod illegally and if they don't, our officers are ready and waiting.

Steve Powell, Enforcement Once team manager for the Environment Agency, said:

The case acts as a reminder of the importance of having a fishing licence – and shows how seriously the courts take these offences. We hope the outcome will deter any angler who is thinking of fishing without a licence.

The yearly fishing licence Mr Hammond required would have cost just £30. Other types of licence are available, including one-day for £6, eight-day for £12, and a free one for those aged 12 to 16.

The money from licence sales supports fish, fisheries and fishing, and protects the future of angling. A small number of people refuse to buy one, cheating the sport and their fellow anglers.

For the minority who flout the rules, the most common offence is fishing without a valid licence, which could land them with a fine of up to £2,500 and a criminal record.

Last year in England, the Environment Agency checked more than 63,000 fishing licences and prosecuted 2,330 for rod and line offences, resulting in fines in excess of £335,000.

Any angler aged 12 or over, fishing on a river, canal or still water needs a licence. They are available online via gov.uk or by calling the Environment Agency on 0344 800 5386.

Anyone with information about suspected illegal fishing activities can contact the Environment Agency Incident Hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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Press release: UK Visa Services now at your doorstep in Bangladesh

The Dhaka ODMV is part of UK Visas and Immigration's proactive approach to constant improvement in customer service.

The ODMV uses the UK Visas and Immigration's mobile Biometric Enrolment System (BES) equipment to take biometric data (finger scans and digital photograph). This service is delivered by the UK Visas and Immigration's commercial partner, VFS Global.

Alison Blake, British High Commissioner, said:

“UK Visas and Immigration seeks constantly to improve the service we offer. I am delighted to announce that the UK is the first country to launch the VFS Global mobile facility in Bangladesh.

“This service allows Bangladeshis to submit their visa application and biometric data outside our current network of Visa Application Centres.

“For customers in Dhaka, it means they no longer have to travel to the Visa Application Centre in Dhaka to submit their applications.

“Bangladesh and Britain are close friends and partners and this development is a further step in enabling stronger people-to-people relationships.”

NOTES TO EDITORS

On Demand Mobile Visa service is optional and applicants will have to pay an additional fee.

Research and analysis: State of the environment

Updated: Added report: State of the environment: air quality.

These reports cover the key environmental issues relating to:

- air quality – the concentrations of pollutants in our air, and their effects on the environment and health
- water resources – how much clean water we have available
- water quality – including rivers, estuaries, coasts and groundwater

The reports include the:

- status and trends
- current and future pressures