

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO

The Spring Traps Approval Order (Northern Ireland) 2012

2012 No. 25

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Explanatory Memorandum has been prepared by the Department of the Environment to accompany the Statutory Rule (details above) which is laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly.
- 1.2. The Statutory Rule is made under powers contained in Article 12A of the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 and is subject to the negative resolution procedure.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. This Order revokes and replaces the Spring Traps Approval Order (Northern Ireland) 1996.
- 2.2. The purpose of the Order is to update the list of the makes and models of spring traps that are authorised for use in Northern Ireland. The Order adds a further 16 types of traps to those approved under the previous Order.
- 2.3. The Order also describes those traps authorised solely for the destruction of rats, mice or other small vermin.

3. Background

- 3.1. Spring traps are devices used to take or kill certain species of animal regarded as pests, for example, rats. Gamekeepers and pest controllers are most likely to use these traps. Householders often use traditional break-back spring traps for mice and rats.
- 3.2. The sale and use of spring traps was formally regulated under the Welfare of Animals Act (NI) 1972 ('the 1972 Act'), administered by the Department for Agriculture and Rural Development. The Spring Traps Approval Order (NI) 1996 ('the 1996 Order'), made under the powers contained in the 1972 Act, listed those traps that were approved for use in Northern Ireland.
- 3.3. The powers to regulate the use of spring traps transferred to the Department of the Environment through provision contained in Wildlife and Natural Environment Act 2011 ('the WANE Act') which has also coincided with the repeal of the 1972 Act.
- 3.4. The 1996 Order replicated similar legislation in place throughout the United Kingdom (UK). Since then, the other UK administrations have added a number of newly approved spring traps to their 'Spring Traps Approval' Orders. It is important that all of the UK administrations act in unison in terms of authorising particular makes of traps for use as it affects trade in such mechanisms (subject to EU trade rules and the EU Technical Standards Directive).

3.5. For these reasons it is necessary to make a new Order to update the list of traps approved for use in Northern Ireland.

4. Consultation

4.1. A consultation on the proposed Regulations took place between 17th August and 14th October 2011. Eight responses were received.

5. Equality Impact

5.1. There are no equality impact implications arising from the Regulations.

6. Regulatory Impact

6.1. The impacts of these Regulations are technical updates and are not expected to place any direct additional burdens on businesses, charities, voluntary bodies or the public sector.

7. Financial Implications

7.1. There are no anticipated financial implications.

8. Section 24 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

8.1. These Regulations do not contravene Section 24 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

9. EU Implications

9.1. These regulations were notified in draft to the European Commission in accordance with Directive 98/34/EC, as amended by Directive 98/48/EC.

10. Parity or Replicatory Measure

10.1. These Regulations will ensure parity with legislation being introduced by the other UK administrations and achieve a consistent approach in relation to the authorisation of spring traps.

11. Additional Information

11.1. None.