

Impact Assessment, The Home Office

Title: The Registration of Births and Deaths etc. (Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage) Order 2021

IA No: HO0400

RPC Reference No: N/A

Other departments or agencies:

Date: 2 November 2021

Stage: FINAL

Intervention: Domestic

Measure: Secondary legislation

Enquiries: Linda.Edwards@gro.gov.uk

RPC Opinion: Not Applicable

Business Impact Target: Not a regulatory provision

Cost of Preferred (or more likely) Option (in 2021/22 prices)

| Net Present Social Value NPSV (£m) | 15.5 | Business Net Present Value BNPV (£m) | 3.1 | Net cost to business per year EANDCB (£m) | -0.4 |
|------------------------------------|------|--------------------------------------|-----|---|------|
|------------------------------------|------|--------------------------------------|-----|---|------|

What is the problem under consideration? Why is government intervention necessary?

The provisions for registering a birth or death are contained in the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953 (the Act). The Coronavirus Act 2020 amended the Act to put easements in place for the registration of deaths and allowed paper-based processes to be carried out electronically during the pandemic. These easements will cease to operate by March 2022 at the latest, owing to the provisions being time limited (due to a sunset clause). Legislation is required to enable the electronic transmission of documents to continue and to extend the electronic transmission of documentation to births as well as deaths.

What is the strategic objective? What are the main policy objectives and intended effects?

The strategic objective is to **take forward the lessons learned from the pandemic**. The policy objective is to enable any notice, declaration, certificate, requisition or other document required by the Act to be transmitted electronically instead of in paper form. Electronic transmission includes:

- The medical practitioner sending the Medical Certificate Cause of Death (MCCD) to the registrar, in the sub-district where the death took place.
- The registrar-issued disposal certificate sent to the person effecting the disposal (burial or cremation) of the body.
- The responsible person sends the notification that the disposal has taken place to the register office.

What policy options have been considered, including any alternatives to regulation? Please justify preferred option (further details in Evidence Base)

Option 1: Do nothing. To maintain a paper-based system for the transfer of documentation relating to the registration of a death.

Option 2: To allow for the documentation required in relation to the registration of births and deaths to be transmitted electronically instead of in paper form. **This is the Government's preferred option.**

Main assumptions/sensitivities and economic/analytical risks

Discount rate (%)

3.5%

From 2022 to 2031 in England and Wales, the number of births decrease by about one per cent per year and the number of deaths increase by one per cent per year, following a long-term trend. The volume of birth and death declarations are assumed to be constant at 45,000 and 5,895 per year. About 88 per cent of all deaths the disposal of the body is by cremation and the remainder is mostly burial. There is significant uncertainty over salaries and grades for registrars and administrative staff in the 174 local registration services. Ranges have been estimated based on volumes, wage and time data.

Will the policy be reviewed? It will not be reviewed. **If applicable, set review date:** N/A

I have read the Impact Assessment and I am satisfied that, given the available evidence, it represents a reasonable view of the likely costs, benefits and impact of the leading options.

Signed by the responsible Minister: _____ Kevin Foster _____ Date: 18th November 2021

Summary: Analysis & Evidence

Policy Option 2

Description: To allow for the electronic transfer of documentation required in relation to the registration of births and deaths

FULL ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|-----------------------|------------|---|
| Year(s): | Price Base | 2021/22 | PV Base | 2021/22 | Appraisal | 10 | Transition | 1 |
| Estimate of Net Present Social Value NPSV (£m) | | | | | | Estimate of BNPV (£m) | | |
| Low: | 11.7 | High: | 18.4 | Best: | 15.5 | Best BNPV | 3.1 | |

| COSTS, £m | Transition Constant Price | Ongoing Present Value | Total Present Value | Average/year Constant Price | To Business Present Value |
|---------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Low | 0.0 | 56.8 | 56.8 | 6.6 | 5.4 |
| High | 0.6 | 103.3 | 103.9 | 12.1 | 11.3 |
| Best Estimate | 0.1 | 76.1 | 76.2 | 8.9 | 7.8 |

Description and scale of key monetised costs by 'main affected groups'

Over 10 years the main estimated costs (all **£ million, PV**) are to the Local Registration Service (LRS), in a range of **£46.1 to £80.7**, with a central estimate of **£60.4**. Business costs are estimated in a range of **£5.4 to £11.3**, with a central estimate of **£7.8**. Costs to other services (medical practitioners and burial authorities) are estimated in a range of **£5.3 to 12.0**, with a central estimate of **£7.9**

Other key non-monetised costs by 'main affected groups'

None identified.

| BENEFITS, £m | Transition Constant Price | Ongoing Present Value | Total Present Value | Average/year Constant Price | To Business Present Value |
|---------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Low | 0.0 | 68.5 | 68.5 | 8.0 | 7.6 |
| High | 0.0 | 122.4 | 122.4 | 14.3 | 15.8 |
| Best Estimate | 0.0 | 91.7 | 91.7 | 10.7 | 10.9 |

Description and scale of key monetised benefits by 'main affected groups'

Over 10 years the main estimated benefits (all **£ million, PV**) are to the LRS, in a range of **£51.6 to £88.1**, with a central estimate of **£67.7**. Business benefits are estimated in a range of **£7.5 to £15.8**, with a central estimate of **£10.9**. Benefits to other services (medical practitioners and burial authorities) are estimated in a range of **£8.8 to 17.9**, with a central estimate of **£12.5**.

Other key non-monetised benefits by 'main affected groups'

The customer journey will be greatly improved when registering a death. All the relevant documentation will be able to be transmitted electronically leading to a more streamlined and efficient service. Informants who have provided the information by declaration will be able to obtain the birth/death certificate sooner. It has not been possible to monetise these benefits but reduced travel, less physical interaction and waiting time are the main benefits to the public.

BUSINESS ASSESSMENT (Option 1)

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-------------|-----|---------|-----|-------------|-----|-------|---|
| Direct impact on business (Equivalent Annual) £m: (benefits – cost) | | | | | | | | | |
| Cost, £m | 0.9 | Benefit, £m | 1.3 | Net, £m | 0.4 | | | | |
| Score for Business Impact Target (qualifying provisions only) £m: | | | | | N/A | | | | |
| Is this measure likely to impact on trade and investment? | | | | | N | | | | |
| Are any of these organisations in scope? | | Micro | Y | Small | Y | Medium | Y | Large | Y |
| What is the CO ₂ equivalent change in greenhouse gas emissions? (Million tonnes CO ₂ equivalent) | | | | Traded: | N/A | Non-Traded: | N/A | | |

PEOPLE AND SPECIFIC IMPACTS ASSESSMENT (Option 2)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Are all relevant Specific Impacts included? | Y | Are there any impacts on particular groups? | N |
|---|---|---|---|

Evidence Base (for summary sheets)

A. Strategic Objective and Overview

A.1 Strategic Objective

The strategic objective is to **take forward the lessons learned from the pandemic**. That is to legislate to move to digital solutions in line with the Government's '*digital by default*' agenda. COVID-19 had a significant impact on the local registration service and has highlighted a need to move away from paper-based processes and move to digital methods. This legislation will introduce reform in this area and enable current paper-based processes relating to the registration of births and deaths to be completed electronically

A.2 Background

The provisions for registering births and deaths are in the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953 (1953 Act), the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1926 (the 1926 Act), the Registration Service Act 1953 and the Registration of Births and Deaths Regulations 1987. The 1953 Act is a consolidation of legislation dating back to 1836 and is very much a paper-based system.

The registration of births and deaths in England and Wales is administered by the local registration service in 174 registration districts. There is an average of 700,089 births and 514,554 deaths each year.

All births in England and Wales must be registered within 42 days of the child being born, by a qualified informant, in the district in which the birth occurred and all deaths in England and Wales must be registered within 5 days, by a qualified informant, in the district in which the death occurred as required by the 1953 Act.

When someone dies, a medical practitioner will verify the cause of death and complete a 'medical certificate of cause of death' (MCCD). The MCCD is collected and taken by the informant to the registrar in a sealed envelope when attending to register the death. The registrar records the details of the death from the MCCD in the register entry alongside other relevant details. Once the registration is complete, the registrar issues the informant with a paper 'disposal document'. This document enables the cremation/burial to proceed and is taken by the informant to the person effecting the disposal of the deceased person. The informant can purchase death certificates at the time of registration.

Once the cremation/burial of the deceased person has taken place, the person effecting the disposal of the body will complete the 'tear off' slip from the disposal document and return it to the relevant registrar by post. This must be done within 72 hours.

Registration by declaration

Although all births and deaths are registered by a registrar in the sub-district in which the event occurred, it may be difficult or inconvenient for an informant to travel to that district. .

There is provision in the Act for a qualified informant to give the information relating to a birth or death by making a declaration, in writing, to an officer in a more convenient district closer to home. An officer within that district takes all the particulars required for the declaration, which the informant signs in the presence of the officer. The declaration is posted by Royal Mail 1st class, to the registrar in the sub-district in which the event occurred. The registrar completes the registration on receipt of the documents and issues any certificates the informant wishes to purchase.

There are approximately 45,000 birth registrations undertaken each year using this process and 5,800 death registrations.

Coronavirus Act 2020¹

The Coronavirus Act 2020 amended the 1953 and 1926 Acts to enable documentation relating to the registration of a death to be transmitted to and from the registrar electronically. The MCCD was able to be transmitted electronically direct to the registrar removing the requirement for a paper MCCD to be taken, in an envelope, to the registrar at the time of registration by the informant. It has also enabled the 'disposal document' to be transmitted by the registrar directly to the relevant body responsible for the cremation/burial and for notification to be sent back electronically to the registrar to confirm that it has taken place.

The life of the Act is time-limited due to a sunset clause which takes effect in March 2022. To enable the electronic transmission of documents to continue for death registration, and to extend the electronic transmission of documents to birth registration, we need to introduce other legislation. This legislation will make the necessary changes to the 1953 and 1926 Acts.

A.3 Groups Affected

Those affected by the policy include:

- The Home Office, the Civil Registration Directorate and General Registrar Office.
- The Local Registration Service (LRS) who will be able to transmit and receive documentation electronically when registering births, still births and deaths removing the requirement to send documentation by post saving time and resource.
- Businesses who interact and deal with registration services, for example, funeral directors who will benefit from digital documentation and save on processes associated with paper documentation.
- Other services associated with civil registration, for example, medical practitioners and cremation/burial authorities who will receive the required documentation more quickly leading to a more efficient service for the public.
- Members of the public will also benefit from digital documentation, less travel time, less physical interaction with registration and associated services and less waiting time.

B. Rationale for intervention

The relaxation of the existing requirements for the death registration process, including the electronic transmission of the relevant documentation, contained in the Coronavirus Act 2020 has proven successful for the local registration service, the public and other stakeholders, for example, the funeral industry. However, the easements contained in the Coronavirus Act 2020 will cease to operate by March 2022 at the latest, owing to the provisions being time limited (due to the sunset clause in place or if the Act is made to expire following a review process). There are therefore strong arguments to maintain the ability to transmit death documentation electronically going forward and to also extend to documentation required for registering a birth. Changes to legislation are required to enable the electronic transmission of documents to continue otherwise the registration service would revert back to a paper based system.

Being able to transmit information electronically will provide cost savings to the registration service, the General Register Office, medical practitioners and authorities charged with cremations and burials by removing paper-based processes.

The Government must intervene to legislate to maintain the ability to transmit death documentation electronically going forward and to also extend to documentation required for registering a birth.

C. Policy objective

The policy objective is to enable any notice, declaration, certificate, requisition or other document required by the Act to be transmitted electronically instead of in paper form. These include: having the medical practitioner sending the Medical Certificate Cause of Death (MCCD) to the registrar electronically, in the sub-district where the death took place (instead of in paper form), transmitting the registrar-issued disposal certificate electronically to the person effecting the disposal (burial or cremation) of the body, and the responsible person electronically transmitting the notification that the disposal has taken place to the register office.

D. Options considered and implementation

Option 1: Do nothing: To maintain a paper-based system for the transfer of documentation relating to the registration of births and deaths. This is the baseline against which **Option 2** is assessed against.

Option 2: To allow for the electronic transfer of documentation required in relation to the registration of births and deaths. This is **the Government's preferred option**.

Births

Registration by declaration

Once the officer taking the details from the informant has completed the declaration which is then signed by both themselves and the informant, the officer would be able to send the declaration electronically to the registrar in the district in which the event occurred. This would make it a quicker and more secure process. It removes the postal and administrative costs associated with sending the declaration. It would also reduce the amount of reminder calls to the Register Office responsible for registering the birth, on receipt of the declaration, by informants chasing the issue of the birth certificate in order to obtain access to services and benefits.

Deaths

The medical practitioner would be able to complete the MCCD and send it electronically direct to the registrar in the district the event occurred. This would make it a quicker and more secure process.

Once the death has been registered by the informant, the registrar will be able to send the disposal document, authorising the cremation/burial to take place, directly to the person effecting the disposal of the body electronically. Once the cremation/burial has taken place, the person effecting the disposal of the deceased person will be able to notify the registrar electronically making it a speedier and more secure process and removes the postal and administrative costs of sending by post.

Registration by declaration

Similar to the registration of births, this would make the process quicker and more secure and removes the postal and administrative costs of sending the declaration by post. There is likely to be a reduction in telephone calls by informants contacting the register office to obtain the necessary disposal document and death certificates.

Summary and preferred option with description of implementation plan

The changes to primary legislation, the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953, will be made by an Order under the Electronic Communications Act 2000. The Order will amend the Act to allow for paper-based processes to be completed electronically. As a consequence of amending the Act, changes will also be made to the Registration of Births and Deaths Regulations 1987. These changes will enable the policy objective to be achieved.

The new provisions are expected to come into effect by December 2021 and will be administered by the local registration service. The electronic transmission of documents has been trialled during the pandemic when the easements were put in place by the provisions in the Coronavirus Act 2020. These easements have worked successfully, therefore it is not anticipated a pilot exercise will be necessary.

E. Appraisal

General assumptions and data

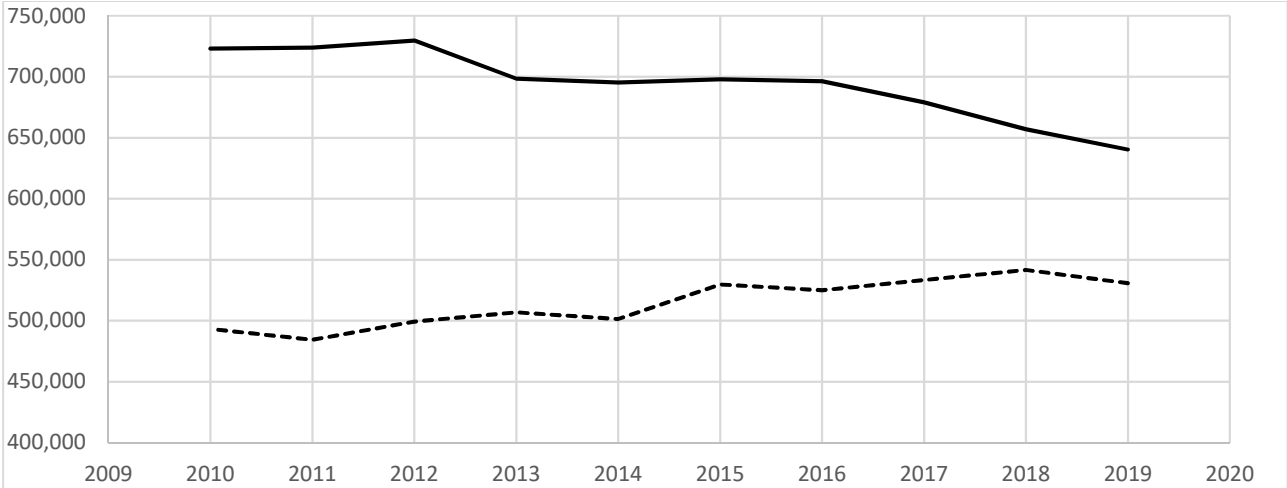
This impact assessment (IA) covers a 10-year period from 2021-2031 in line with guidance from the HM Treasury Green Book (2020), Regulatory Policy Committee (RPC) and the Better Regulation Executive (BRE). The IA aims to set out the best estimates of the policy impacts at the final stage of policy development, using the available evidence. A social discount rate of 3.5 per cent is used to discount values over the 10 years.

Any significant uncertainties are highlighted and the main assumptions are tested in the sensitivity analysis to show the range of potential impacts. All ranges given are based on volumes, time taken for tasks and salary evidence for the respective professions (Local Registration data and Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (average over 2019-2021) are used. The ASHE data central estimate is based on the midpoint with the 25th and 75th percentile used as a low and high range.

Baseline volumes

The Home Office makes no official forecast of future volume of births and deaths registration. The data used is the published volume of births and deaths over a 10-year period from 2010 to 2019 (obtained from the Office for National Statistics). There are an average of 700,089 births and 514,554 deaths registered each year over 2010 to 2019. Table 1 and Figure 1 demonstrate the clear trend in these data over time. It is from this baseline that the impacts of policy proposals are estimated. The analysis does not included any increase as a result of coronavirus.

Figure 1, Births and deaths over 2010-19.



Note: Solid black line is births and the dashed line is deaths.
Source: ONS, Population, birth and registration data.

Figure 1 demonstrates that births are falling on average at 1.1 per cent per year, while deaths are increasing on average by 0.8 per cent per year, over the 10 years. The central scenario is based on births continuing to fall by -1 per cent and deaths rising by 1 per cent. In the low scenario for births, the decline is set at 1.5 per cent while the high scenario is assumed to remain constant at the average number of births. For deaths the low scenario assumes that the average remains constant and in the high scenario that deaths increase by 1.5 per cent. Therefore the low, central and high scenarios are volume based. Low is not low cost-high benefit (and the opposite for High) – both are dependant on the volumes in Table 1 for 2022 to 2031.

Table 1, Volume of births and deaths, 2010-2019.

| ONS | | | Births | | | Deaths | | | |
|------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Births | Deaths | L | C | H | L | C | H | |
| 2019 | 640,370 | 530,841 | 2022 | 630,764 | 633,966 | 700,089 | 514,554 | 536,149 | 538,804 |
| 2018 | 657,076 | 541,589 | 2023 | 621,303 | 627,627 | 700,089 | 514,554 | 541,511 | 546,886 |
| 2017 | 679,106 | 533,253 | 2024 | 611,983 | 621,350 | 700,089 | 514,554 | 546,926 | 555,089 |
| 2016 | 696,271 | 525,048 | 2025 | 602,804 | 615,137 | 700,089 | 514,554 | 552,395 | 563,415 |
| 2015 | 697,852 | 529,655 | 2026 | 593,762 | 608,985 | 700,089 | 514,554 | 557,919 | 571,867 |
| 2014 | 695,233 | 501,424 | 2027 | 584,855 | 602,896 | 700,089 | 514,554 | 563,498 | 580,445 |
| 2013 | 698,512 | 506,790 | 2028 | 576,082 | 596,867 | 700,089 | 514,554 | 569,133 | 589,151 |
| 2012 | 729,674 | 499,331 | 2029 | 567,441 | 590,898 | 700,089 | 514,554 | 574,825 | 597,988 |
| 2011 | 723,913 | 484,367 | 2030 | 558,930 | 584,989 | 700,089 | 514,554 | 580,573 | 606,958 |
| 2010 | 723,165 | 493,242 | 2031 | 550,546 | 579,139 | 700,089 | 514,554 | 586,379 | 616,063 |

Source: Office for National Statistics and Home Office, own estimates based on a historic trend, 2021.

Other relevant assumptions include:

- The volume of birth and death declarations are assumed to be constant at 45,000 and 5,895 per year.
- For about 88 per cent of all deaths the disposal of the body is by cremation and for 12 per cent is mostly burial (with a very small number of exceptions). Costs to the Crematorium Registrar are multiplied by 88 per cent and to the Burial Authority by 12 per cent.
- About 40 per cent of the informants of birth and of death declarations, telephone the administration staff in the LRS.
- About 10 per cent of the responsible persons disposing of the body are followed up by a telephone call from the registrar.

COSTS

Set-up costs

Business familiarisation

Funeral directors are estimated to have familiarisation costs in a range of **zero** to **£5,600**, with a central estimate of **£1,100 in year 1 only**.

Public sector familiarisation

Medical practitioners are estimated to have familiarisation costs in a range of **£18,500** to **£593,700**, with a central estimate of **£109,800 in year 1 only**.

Home Office set up cost

Changes to processes are minimal, therefore face-to-face training for the registration service will not be required. The Home Office will issue new guidance for registration officers. The cost of providing written guidance is minimal so has not been included for the purpose of this IA.

Total set-up costs are estimated to be in a range of **£18,700 to £599,300**, with a central estimate of **£110,900 in year 1 only**. It is highly unlikely that the medical practitioner salary range at the 75th percentile will be achieved as nearly half of all deaths occur in hospital and many are certified by junior and middle-ranking medical practitioners.

Ongoing costs

E.1 Business

Funeral directors liaising with the relevant crematorium or burial authority to ensure the disposal document has been received are expected to spend approximately five minutes on this task. The wage is estimated in a range of £14.62 to £27.41, with a central estimate of £19.48². These wages include an uplift of 22 per cent using EuroStat non-wage share data³. Volumes are estimate at the 25th, 50th and 75th percentile, at 1,315, 2,630 and 3,945 respectively. The cost to funeral directors is estimated to lie in a range of **£5.4 to £11.3 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£7.8 million (PV)** over 10 years. This is an average cost of £0.6 to £1.3 million per year, with a central estimate of £0.9 million per year. **This is the only ongoing costs to business.**

Other services

E.2 Medical practitioners

There is a cost to medical practitioners preparing the MCCD and electronically sending it to the registrar which takes approximately two minutes. The wage is estimated in a range of £27.71 to £55.92, with a central estimate of £38.48 (using ASHE data, SOC 221). These wages include an uplift of 22 per cent from EuroStat non-wage share data. Volumes are estimate at the 25th, 50th and 75th percentile, at 68,500, 137,000 and 205,500 respectively. is approximately two minutes at a cost of **£4.1 to £9.2 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£5.5 million (PV)** over 10 years. This is an average cost of £0.5 to £1.1 million per year, with a central estimate of £0.7 million per year.

E.3 Burial authorities

There is a cost to the burial authority registrar/responsible person returning the Notice of Disposal electronically to the registrar which takes approximately three minutes. The wage (RBD) is estimated in a range of £46.44 to £72.44, with a central estimate of £57.76 (using GRO internal data where non-wage costs and overheads have been applied). The volume of deaths is multiplied by 12 per cent as the shares of deaths for burial. The estimated cost lies in a range of **£1.2 to £2.1 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£6.2 million (PV)** over 10 years. This is an average cost of £0.1 to £0.3 million per year, with a central estimate of £0.2 million per year.

The **total cost to other services** is estimated to be in a range of **£5.3 to £11.3 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£7.8 million (PV)** over 10 years.

E.4 Local registration service

There are 10 sub-categories to costs to LRS and these are:

² Taken from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings data from 2019-2021 and averaged over that three year period. Mangers in Other Services (SOC 125) was used. See:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/datasets/occupation4digitsoc2010ashetable14>

³ The UK non-wage share is given for 2019 as 18 per cent, therefore the non-wage share is 82 percent. Taking $(18 / 82) \times 100$, give an uplift of 22 per cent. See Eurstat Labour Cost data. See:

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/lc_lci_lev/default/table?lang=en

1. Registrar (RBD) receives the MCCD electronically, 2 mins x volume of deaths (Table 1) x RBD salary (see E.3). Estimated to be **£6.9 to £11.9 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£9.1 million (PV)** over 10 years.
2. RBD sends the disposal document electronically, 2 mins x volume of deaths (Table 1) x RBD salary. Estimated to be **£6.9 to £11.9 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£9.1 million (PV)** over 10 years.
3. Crematorium registrar returns the Notice of Disposal (NoD) electronically, 3 mins x (volume of deaths (Table 1) x 88 per cent) x RBD salary. Estimated to be **£9.1 to £15.8 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£12.0 million (PV)** over 10 years.
4. RBD receives the NoD electronically, 2 mins, volume of deaths (Table 1) x RBD salary. Estimated to be **£6.9 to £11.9 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£9.1 million (PV)** over 10 years.
5. RBD sends birth declaration electronically to the registering registrar, 2 mins, x 45,000 x RBD salary. Estimated to be **£7.9 to £14.6 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£9.9 million (PV)** over 10 years.
6. RBD sends death declaration electronically to the registering registrar, 2 mins, x 8,895 x RBD salary. Estimated to be **£6.9 to £11.9 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£9.1 million (PV)** over 10 years.
7. RBD receives birth declaration electronically from another district, 3 mins, 45,000 x RBD salary. Estimated to be **£0.9 to £1.4 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£1.1 million (PV)** over 10 years.
8. RBD receives death declaration electronically from another district, 3 mins x 5,895 x RBD salary. Estimated to be **£0.1 to £0.2 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£0.1 million (PV)** over 10 years.
9. RBD prints the birth declaration registering the birth, 2 mins, x RBD salary. Estimated to be **£0.6 to £0.9 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£0.7 million (PV)** over 10 years.
10. RBD prints the birth declaration registering the birth, 2mins x RBD salary. Estimated to be **£0.1 to £0.1 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£0.1 million (PV)** over 10 years.

The total cost to the LRS is estimated to be in a range of **£46.1 to £80.7 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£60.4 million (PV)** over 10 years. This equates to a per year cost to the LRS of £5.3 to £9.4 million, with a central estimate of £7.0 million.

There are no costs to the Civil Registration Directorate (GRO) or to members of the public.

Total cost

Total cost is estimated in a range of **£56.8 to £103.9 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£76.2 million (PV)**, over 10 years. This equates to an estimated cost of £6.6, £8.9, and £12.1 million per year respectively for the low, central and high scenarios.

BENEFITS

E.5 Business

Funeral directors will not receive a paper disposal document from the crematorium or burial authority to ensure the disposal document and this is expected to save approximately seven minutes for this task. The wage is estimated in as in **E.1**. year and volume of deaths are used (see Table 1). The cost to funeral directors is estimated to lie in a range of **£7.6 to £15.8 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£10.9 million (PV)** over 10 years. This is an average cost of £0.9 to £1.8 million per year, with a central estimate of £1.3 million per year. **This is the only ongoing benefit to business.**

E.6 Other services

There will be savings in resource time for medical practitioners as they no longer have to complete a paper MCCD and place that in an envelope. Three minutes has been assumed to demonstrate the minimum amount of saving achieved and the volumes of deaths are used (see Table 1). This is estimated to be in a range of **£6.3 to £13.8 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£9.3 million (PV)** over 10 years.

Similarly, there are savings to the burial authority for not using postage stamps (£0.85) and A6 envelopes (£0.02) and not using a paper NoD. This is estimated to lie in a range of **£2.6 to £4.1 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£3.2 million (PV)** over 10 years. This is an average cost of £0.9 to £1.8 million per year, with a central estimate of £1.3 million per year.

E.7 Civil Registration Directorate (Home Office, GRO)

There will be a reduction in cost of providing envelopes to medical practitioners for the MCCDs, providing envelopes for the disposal document (to the customer and the registrar) and envelope costs to registrars declarations. A total of 514,554 envelopes, assumed to be steady going forward, are used and this represents an estimated in a range of **£0.5 to £0.6 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£0.5 million (PV)** over 10 years.

E.8 Local Registration service

There are savings in registrar time from the following:

- Registrars (RBD) will no longer have to receive the paper MCCD in paper form in a sealed envelope. This is expected to be three minutes as the minimum amount of saving achieved. This is estimated to be **£10.3 to £17.9 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£13.7 million (PV)** over 10 years.
- Savings in registrar time for placing the Disposal document in an envelope for the informant to take to the funeral director. This is expected to be three minutes savings for each death registered. This is estimated to be **£10.3 to £17.9 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£13.7 million (PV)** over 10 years.
- A crematorium registrar no longer placing the NoD in an envelope and making arrangements for it to be sent by post to the relevant registrar. This is estimated as five minutes for each death. This is estimated to be **£15.1 to £26.3 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£20.0 million (PV)** over 10 years..
- Savings in postal costs for crematorium registrar to return the Notification of Disposal to the registrar 1st class is estimated at **£1.8 million (PV)** over 10 years.
- There will be reduced follow up of paper NoD from the person effecting the burial is expected to be three minutes of time for approximately 10 per cent of all deaths at an estimated cost saving of **£1.4 million (PV)** over 10 years.
- For registrar time of not receiving a paper NoD by post and retrieving them from the envelope, an expected saving of three minutes. This is estimated to be **£10.3 to £17.9 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£13.7 million (PV)** over 10 years.
- A reduction in registrar time for placing completed birth and death declarations in an envelope and making postal arrangements to send on to the relevant registrar is expected to be three minutes at a cost saving for births of **£1.1 million (PV)** over 10 years and for deaths **£0.1 million (PV)** over 10 years.
- The reduction in postal costs for registrars sending the declaration to the relevant registrar is estimated at **£0.3 million (PV)** for births and **<£0.1 million (PV)** for deaths over 10 years.

- Saving of registrar time for receiving and opening envelopes containing both birth and death declarations is expected to be three minutes with an estimated cost saving of **£1.1 million (PV)** for births and for deaths **£0.1 million (PV)** over 10 years.
- Saving of local telephony staff receiving follow-up calls from informants following a declaration of a birth or death, looking to confirm registration and that any certificates have been sent out, impacts on about 40 per cent of all declarations made and is expected to be five minutes with an estimated cost saving for births and deaths respectively of, **£0.6 million and £0.1 million (PV)** over 10 years.

NPSV, BNPV, EANDCB

Total discounted costs are estimated to be in a range of **£56.8 to £103.9 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£76.2 million (PV)** over 10 years. Total discounted benefits are in a range of **£68.5 to £122.4 million (PV)**, with a central estimate of **£91.7 million (PV)** over 10 years.

The Net Present Social Value (NPSV) is defined as: the total discounted benefit minus the total discounted cost. The Net Present Social Value (NPSV) is estimated to be **£15.5 million (PV)**. The Business Net Present Value (BNPV) is estimated to be **£3.1 million (PV)**.

It is likely that small funeral directors will be impacted by the changes but the changes will be small and positive.

The direct cost to business per year is estimated to be **£0.9 million** and the direct benefit to business is estimated to be **£1.3 million**. The estimated **net benefit to business is £0.4 million per year**.

F. Risks

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed.

Some disabled or older customers may have difficulty taking copies or scanning documents to be submitted to the registrar electronically. Provision remains that customers will still be able to submit documents in paper form. Customers will also be able to contact the local register office Contact Centre for support through an assisted digital process.

The electronic transmission of documents has been trialled during the pandemic when the easements were put in place by the provisions in the Coronavirus Act 2020 therefore, there are no additional risks associated with these changes.

The most robust and accurate data has been used in this analysis, from published sources and internal GRO information. The main uncertainties lie in:

- Volumes of births and deaths going forward, which has been assumed to follow the long-term trend from 2010 to 2019.
- There is significant uncertainty in the wage data across the LRS grades of registrars conducting these registrations.
- Wages for medical practitioners and funeral directors are also significantly uncertain, therefore the range uses the 25th to 75th percentile to indicate the low and high scenarios.
- There appears to be little economic risk with this policy as it has been trialled during the coronavirus pandemic and works well.
- No explicit assumptions are made in the modelling about excess deaths due to COVID-19 and long-term trends are used.

G. Direct costs and benefits to business calculations

The direct cost to business is given as £0.9 million and the direct benefit is estimated to be £1.3 million. Therefore, there is a **net benefit to business of £0.4 million per year**.

H. Wider impacts

There are no wider impacts from this except a potential overall welfare/psychological benefit to the public from an easier process to register births and deaths. This may result in a marginal increase in wellbeing for those affected by births and deaths as the UK emerges from a pandemic.

I. Trade Impact

There are no impacts on trade of this proposal.

J. Monitoring and evaluation

The approach to monitoring of this legislation is that officials at the General Register Office will engage regularly with key stakeholders, for example, registration officials, to ensure the electronic transmission of documents is running smoothly.

Impact Assessment Checklist

| Mandatory specific impact test - Statutory Equalities Duties | Complete |
|--|---|
| <p data-bbox="124 286 539 322">Statutory Equalities Duties</p> <p data-bbox="124 338 1270 432">The public sector equality duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations in the course of developing policies and delivering services. [Equality Duty Toolkit]</p> <p data-bbox="124 499 1270 680">Some disabled or older customers may have difficulty taking copies or scanning documents to be submitted to the registrar electronically. Provision remains that customers will still be able to submit documents in paper form. Customers will also be able to contact the local register office Contact Centre for support through an assisted digital process.</p> <p data-bbox="124 748 831 784">The SRO has agreed these summary findings.</p> | <p data-bbox="1331 533 1394 568">Yes</p> |

Any test not applied can be deleted except **the Equality Statement**, where the policy lead must provide a paragraph of summary information on this.

The Home Office requires the **Specific Impact Test on the Equality Statement** to have a summary paragraph, stating the main points. **You cannot delete this and it MUST be completed.**