

Registration Service Act 1953

1953 CHAPTER 37 1 and 2 Eliz 2

Registrar General, etc.

1 Registrar General.

- F1(1) Her Majesty may from time to time under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom appoint a Registrar General for England and Wales, and any person so appointed shall exercise the powers and perform the duties conferred or imposed by or under any enactment on the Registrar General, whether described by that title alone or with any additional description, and shall hold office during Her Majesty's pleasure.
- [F2(2) The Registrar General is a corporation sole by the name of the Registrar General for England and Wales.
 - (3) The Registrar General may do anything (including acquire or dispose of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of his functions.
 - (4) The Registrar General discharges his functions on behalf of the Crown.
 - (5) Service as Registrar General is not service in the civil service of the Crown; but the Registrar General is a Crown servant for the purposes of the Official Secrets Act 1989.]

Textual Amendments

- F1 S. 1 renumbered as s. 1(1) (1.4.2008) by Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 c. 18, ss. 68(1) (a), 74(1), 2008 S.I. 839, art. 2
- **F2** S. 1(2)-(5) inserted (1.4.2008) by Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 (c. 18), **ss. 68(1)(b)**, 74(1); S.I. 2008/839, art. 2

2 General Register Office.

The offices of the Registrar General shall be known as the General Register Office and any place in which any registers or records in the custody of the Registrar General by virtue of this or any other Act are deposited by direction of the Registrar General

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with the approval of the Treasury shall, so long as those registers or records are there deposited, be deemed to be part of the General Register Office.

3 Registrar General's staff, etc.

- (1) Subject to the consent of [F3 the Minister for the Civil Service] as to number, the Registrar General may appoint such officers and servants for the purposes of his functions as he may determine.
- (2) Any act or thing required by or under any enactment to be done by, to or before the Registrar General may be done by, to or before any officer or servant of the Registrar General authorised generally or specially in that behalf in writing by the Registrar General.

Textual Amendments

F3 Words substituted by virtue of S.I. 1968/1656, arts. 2(1)(a), 3(2)

4 Salaries, receipts and expenses.

- (1) There shall be paid to the Registrar General and to the officers and servants appointed by the Registrar General such salaries or remuneration as [F4the Minister for the Civil Service] may from time to time determine.
- (2) Every sum received under the Registration Acts by or on behalf of the Registrar General otherwise than under the foregoing subsection shall be accounted for by the Registrar General and paid by him, at such times as the Treasury may from time to time direct, into the Exchequer.
- (3) The salary of the Registrar General and his expenses under the Registration Acts and in respect of the General Register Office shall be paid out of moneys provided by Parliament.

Textual Amendments

F4 Words substituted by virtue of S.I. 1968/1656, arts. 2(1)(a), 3(2)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C1 S. 4(2) extended by S.I. 1982/1526, art. 3

General organisation of registration service

5 Districts and sub-districts.

- (1) For the purposes of the Registration Acts, in every [F5non-metropolitan county and metropolitan district] there shall be one or more districts and in every district there shall be one or more sub-districts.
- (2) Without prejudice to any provision of the local scheme as to additional officers, for each district there shall be a superintendent registrar of births, deaths and marriages, and for each sub-district there shall be a registrar of births and deaths, and any registrar

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Registration Service Act 1953. (See end of Document for details)

of births and deaths upon whom the functions of a registrar of marriages are conferred by the local scheme shall also be deemed to be a registrar of marriages within the district for the purposes of the MI Marriage Act 1949.

Textual Amendments

F5 Words substituted by Local Government Act 1972 (c. 70), Sch. 29 para. 41(1)

Marginal Citations

M1 1949 c. 76.

6 Superintendent registrars and registrars of births and deaths.

- (1) Every superintendent registrar and every registrar of births and deaths shall be appointed by the council of the non-metropolitan county or metropolitan district in which his district or sub-district is situated.
- (2) No person shall be appointed as superintendent registrar or as registrar of births and deaths unless he is qualified in accordance with the prescribed conditions.
- (3) Every superintendent registrar and every registrar of births and deaths shall be [F7an officer of] the council of the [F8non-metropolitan county or metropolitan district] in which his district or sub-district is situated F9....

F10((4)																

Textual Amendments

- **F6** S. 6(1) proviso repealed (1.12.2007) by Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 (c. 18), ss. 70(2) (a), 74(1), **Sch. 4 Pt. 2**; S.I. 2007/3388, art. 2(i)
- F7 Words in s. 6(3) substituted (1.12.2007) by Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 (c. 18), ss. 70(2)(b)(i), 74(1); S.I. 2007/3388, art. 2(i)
- F8 Words substituted by Local Government Act 1972 (c. 70), Sch. 29 para. 41(2)
- **F9** Words in s. 6(3) repealed (1.12.2007) by Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 (c. 18), ss. 70(2) (b)(ii), 74(1), **Sch. 4 Pt. 2**; S.I. 2007/3388, art. 2(i)
- F10 S. 6(4) repealed (1.12.2007) by Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 (c. 18), ss. 70(2)(c), 74(1), Sch. 4 Pt. 2; S.I. 2007/3388, art. 2(i)

¹¹¹ 7	Additional	registrars	of	'marriages.
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Textual Amendments

F11 S. 7 repealed (1.12.2007) by Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 (c. 18), ss. 72, 74(1), Sch. 4 Pt. 2; S.I. 2007/3388, art. 2(i)

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[F128 Deputy superintendent registrars and registrars.

- (1) Subject to the provisions of the local scheme, a council which employs a superintendent registrar or a registrar of births and deaths may appoint one or more fit persons to act as his deputy.
- (2) Any person appointed as a deputy under subsection (1) shall have all the powers and duties of a superintendent registrar or a registrar of births and deaths, as the case may be.]

Textual Amendments

F12 S. 8 substituted (1.12.2007) by Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 (c. 18), **ss. 71**, 74(1); S.I. 2007/3388, art. 2(i)

9 Interim superintendent registrars and registrars.

- (1) If any superintendent registrar or any registrar of births and deaths ceases to hold his office, his deputy or, if he has more than one deputy, such one of his deputies as shall from time to time be determined by the [F13] proper officer of the non-metropolitan county or metropolitan district] in which his district or sub-district is situated shall become interim superintendent registrar or, as the case may be, interim registrar of births and deaths.
- (2) If a superintendent registrar or registrar of births and deaths ceases to hold his office and he has no deputy, the [F14 proper officer of the non-metropolitan county or metropolitan district] aforesaid shall appoint an interim superintendent registrar or, as the case may be, an interim registrar of births and deaths.
- (3) An interim superintendent registrar and an interim registrar of births and deaths shall, until a new superintendent registrar or, as the case may be, registrar of births and deaths enters into office, have all the powers and duties of that office.

Textual Amendments

F13 Words substituted by Local Government Act 1972 (c. 70), Sch. 29 para. 41(3)

F14 Words substituted by Local Government Act 1972 (c. 70), Sch. 29 para. 41(4)

10 District register offices.

- (1) The countil of every [F15non-metropolitan county and metropolitan district] shall provide and maintain for the superintendent registrar of each district within the [F16non-metropolitan county or metropolitan district] a register office according to a plan approved by the Registrar General, and shall provide therein to the satisfaction of the Registrar General a suitable fireproof repository or strong fire-resisting boxes for the safe custody of the records in the charge of the superintendent registrar.
- (2) For any period during which a register office is not so provided, the superintendent registrar shall appropriate some fit room to be approved by the Registrar General as a temporary register office and the council shall pay to the superintendent registrar a reasonable rent for that room.

Status: Point in time view as at 03/04/2008.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects

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- (3) Without prejudice to the last foregoing subsection, if in the case of any district, by reason of the refusal or neglect of the council of the [F16 non-metropolitan county or metropolitan district], a register office for that district is not provided or is not maintained and kept in repair, the Registrar General may, if so authorised by the Treasury, expend a sum not exceeding three hundred pounds in providing an office, or any sum from time to time necessary for repairing or maintaining any office provided by him, and any sum so expended shall be repaid to the Registrar General by the council.
- (4) The register office for any district shall be deemed for the purposes of the Registration Acts to be situated within that district even though it is not locally situated therein.

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Textual Amendments

F15 Words substituted by Local Government Act 1972 (c. 70), Sch. 29 para. 41(1)

F16 Words substituted by Local Government Act 1972 (c. 70), Sch. 29 para. 41(2)
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11 Sub-district offices, etc.

- (1) Subject to the provisions of the local scheme, every registrar of births and deaths and every deputy registrar of births and deaths shall either dwell in or have a known office within the sub-district of which he is registrar or deputy registrar.
- (2) Subject as aforesaid, every registrar of births and deaths shall appoint within or contiguous to his sub-district such stations, if any, as may be directed by the Registrar General, and for the purposes of the provisions of the Registration Acts with respect to the attendance of persons and the registration of births and deaths any station for a registrar's sub-district, as well as the office therefor, shall be deemed to be his office.
- (3) Subject as aforesaid, every registrar and every deputy registrar shall attend at his dwelling-house or office and at any such station as aforesaid on such days and at such hours as may be approved by the Registrar General for the purpose of registering births and deaths.

12 Provision of register boxes.

The Registrar General shall provide such number of strong fire-resisting boxes as may be required to hold the registers kept by each registrar of births and deaths and registrar of marriages.

Local organisation of registration service

13 Local schemes of organisation.

- (1) There shall be in force for each [F17non-metropolitan county and metropolitan district] a scheme or schemes (in this Act referred to as "the local scheme") prepared and made in accordance with the next following section.
- (2) Provision shall be made by the local scheme for—
 - (a) determining the number and boundaries of the registration districts and subdistricts in the [F18] non-metropolitan county or metropolitan district];

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Registration Service Act 1953. (See end of Document for details)

- (b) determining the location of offices and stations for those districts and subdistricts;
- (c) determining the number of superintendent registrars, registrars of births and deaths and other officers required for the purposes of the Registration Acts within the [F18] non-metropolitan county or metropolitan district];
- (d) subject to such exceptions, if any, as may be specified in the scheme, conferring and imposing on registrars of births and deaths the functions of registrars of marriages;
- (e) fixing, subject to such power of revision as may be provided by the scheme, the salary and other remuneration, if any, to be attached to each office, and the allowances, if any, to be paid for travelling, for the provision of office accommodation and for other expenses;
- (f) fixing, subject to such power of revision as may be provided by the scheme, the conditions on which an office is to be held, ^{F19}...;
- (g) applying with any necessary modifications, adaptations and exceptions the provisions of the Local Government Act M2 1929 relating to the transfer, superannuation and compensation of officers;
- (h) conferring on the [F20 proper officer of the non-metropolitan county or metropolitan district] powers with respect to—
 - (i) the fixing of the hours of attendance of officers;
 - (ii) the distribution of business between officers;
 - (iii) the transfer of superintendent registrars and registrars of births and deaths within or between districts.
- (3) The local scheme may in addition—
 - (a) make provision, where two or more officers are appointed to act for a single district or sub-district, for the distribution between them of the registration functions to be discharged within that district or sub-district, so, however, that any such distribution shall not render any such officer disqualified from acting at any time or at any place in that district or, as the case may be, sub-district; and
 - (b) confer on the [F20 proper officer of the non-metropolitan county or metropolitan district] such general powers of supervising the administration within the [F18 non-metropolitan county or metropolitan district] of the provisions of the Registration Acts as may be specified in the scheme.

Textual Amendments

- F17 Words substituted by Local Government Act 1972 (c. 70), Sch. 29 para. 41(1)
- F18 Words substituted by Local Government Act 1972 (c. 70), Sch. 29 para. 41(2)
- **F19** Words in s. 13(2)(f) repealed (1.12.2007) by Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 (c. 18), ss. 70(3), 74(1), **Sch. 4 Pt. 2**; S.I. 2007/3388, art. 2(i)
- F20 Words substituted by Local Government Act 1972 (c. 70), Sch. 29 para. 41(4)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C2 S. 13(2)(3) applied (8.1.1997) by S.I. 1996/3118, art. 2(1)

Marginal Citations

M2 1929 c. 17

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Registration Service Act 1953. (See end of Document for details)

14 Preparation, submission and approval of local schemes.

- (1) The council of a [F21non-metropolitan county or metropolitan district] may from time to time prepare and submit to the Minister schemes for all or any of the purposes mentioned in the last foregoing section.
- (2) In the case of any [F21 non-metropolitan county or metropolitan district] created after the commencement of this Act, the council of that [F21 non-metropolitan county or metropolitan district] shall prepare and submit to the Minister a local scheme within such period as the Minister may allow.
- (3) Any scheme under this section shall fix the date or dates on which the scheme is to come into operation and may fix different dates for different provisions of the scheme or for different areas and the dates so fixed may be made dependent on the happening of specified events.
- (4) No such scheme shall be of any effect unless and until it is approved by the Minister, and the Minister, after considering any representations with respect to the scheme which may be submitted to him by any officer affected, may approve the scheme with or without modifications.

(5) If—

- (a) it appears to the Registrar General at any time that by reason of special circumstances an immediate adjustment is necessary in the division of any [F21non-metropolitan county or metropolitan district] into districts and subdistricts; or
- (b) a council required by subsection (2) of this section to submit a local scheme to the Minister fails to do so within the period allowed by the Minister,

the Registrar General may, after consultation with the council of the [F21] non-metropolitan county or metropolitan district] concerned, prepare a scheme for the purpose, and any scheme so prepared by him, if approved by the Minister, shall have effect as it it were a scheme submitted by the council and approved by the Minister in accordance with this section.

(6) Any scheme under this section may contain such incidental, consequential or supplemental provisions as may appear necessary or proper for the purposes of the scheme and may be varied or revoked by a subsequent scheme made in like manner as the original scheme:

Provided that a scheme prepared by the Registrar General and approved by the Minister under the last foregoing subsection may be varied or revoked either by a subsequent scheme so prepared and approved or by a subsequent scheme submitted by the council concerned and approved by the Minister in accordance with this section.

Textual Amendments

F21 Words substituted by Local Government Act 1972 (c. 70), Sch. 29 para. 41(2)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C3 S. 14: functions of the Secretary of State transferred (1.4.1996) by S.I. 1996/273, art. 3(1), Sch. 1 para. 9(a)
- C4 S. 14 transfer of functions (3.4.2008) by Transfer of Functions (Registration) Order 2008 (S.I. 2008/678), art. 1(2), Sch. 1 para. 7(a) (with art. 4)
- C5 S. 14(4) applied (8.1.1997) by S.I. 1996/3118, art. 2(1)

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legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Registration Service Act 1953. (See end of Document for details)

General provisions as to officers

15 Delivery up of books, etc. on ceasing to hold office.

- (1) When any person ceases to hold the office of superintendent registrar, registrar of births and deaths or registrar of marriages for any district or sub-district, all register boxes, keys, books and documents in his possession as holder of that office for that district or sub-district shall be delivered up to his successor in office F22....
- (2) If any person who has in his custody or power any such article as aforementioned wilfully fails to deliver it up to, or account for it to the satisfaction of, the person in whose custody it should be, he shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine of [F23]level 2 on the standard scale]; and if the failure continues after he is convicted thereof he shall be guilty of a further offence and be liable on summary conviction to a fine of five pounds for every day on which the failure has so continued.
- (3) If a justice of the peace is satisfied by information on oath that there is reasonable cause to believe that any article withheld in contravention of this section is in any specified house or place, he may grant a search warrant authorising any constable named therein to enter and search that house or place at any time and seize any such article so found, and any article so seized shall be delivered to the person in whose custody it should be.

Textual Amendments

F22 Words in s. 15(1) repealed (1.12.2007) by Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 (c. 18), ss. 70(4), 74(1), **Sch. 4 Pt. 2**; S.I. 2007/3388, art. 2(i)

F23 Words substituted by virtue of Criminal Justice Act 1982 (c. 48, SIF 39:1), s. 46

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C6 S. 15(1) modified (12.4.1994) by S.I. 1994/867, reg. 22(2)(b)

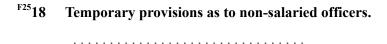
16 General provision as to fees.

Subject as may be prescribed, a superintendent registrar, registrar of births and deaths or registrar of marriages may refuse to comply with any application voluntarily made to him under the Registration Acts until the appropriate fee, if any, provided for by those Acts is paid to him; and any such fee shall be recoverable by the officer to whom it is payable as a debt due to him.



Textual Amendments

F24 S. 17 repealed by Statute Law (Repeals) Act 1986 (c. 12), s. 1(1), Sch. 1 Pt. VII



Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Registration Service Act 1953. (See end of Document for details)

Textual Amendments

F25 S. 18 repealed (22.7.2004) by Statute Law (Repeals) Act 2004 (c. 14), Sch. 1 Pt. 17 Group 10

Miscellaneous and general

19 Annual abstract.

The [F26Statistics Board] shall send to [F27the Minister for the Cabinet Office] annually, in such form as [F27the Minister for the Cabinet Office] may from time to time require, a general abstract of the number of live-births, still-births, deaths [F28, marriages and civil partnerships] registered in the year last preceding and [F27the Minister for the Cabinet Office] shall within one month after receipt thereof or of the meeting of Parliament lay that abstract before each House of Parliament.

Textual Amendments

- **F26** Words in s. 19 substituted (1.4.2008) by Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 (c. 18), s. 74(1), **Sch. 1 para. 9(a)**; S.I. 2008/839, art. 2
- F27 Words in s. 19 substituted (1.4.2008) by Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 (c. 18), s. 74(1), Sch. 1 para. 9(b); S.I. 2008/839, art. 2
- **F28** Words in s. 19 substituted (5.12.2005) by Civil Partnership Act 2004 (Overseas Relationships and Consequential, etc. Amendments) Order 2005 (S.I. 2005/3129), art. 1, **Sch. 1 para. 2**

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C7 S. 19 amended by Population (Statistics) Act 1960 (c. 32), s. 4
- C8 S. 19: functions of the Secretary of State transferred (1.4.1996) by S.I. 1996/273, art. 3(1), Sch. 1 para. 9(b)
- C9 S. 19 transfer of functions (1.4.2008) by Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 (c. 18), ss. 25(2) (b), 74(1); S.I. 2008/839, art. 2

20 Regulations.

The Registrar General with the approval of the Minister may by statutory instrument make regulations—

- (a) prescribing the duties of superintendent registrars, registrars of births and deaths and registrars of marriages in the execution of any enactment relating to their functions;
- (b) prescribing the duties under the Registration Acts of [F29] proper officers of non-metropolitan counties and metropolitan districts], and such other officers as may be appointed in pursuance of any local scheme;
- (c) making provision as to the place and manner in which, the days on which and the hours during which any documents kept in the General Register Office and required to be available for search by the public are to be so available;
- (d) prescribing anything which by this Act is required to be prescribed.

Textual Amendments

F29 Words substituted by Local Government Act 1972 (c. 70), Sch. 29 para. 41(5)

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Registration Service Act 1953. (See end of Document for details)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C10 S. 20 extended (1.7.1992) by Social Security Administration Act 1992 (c. 5), ss. 124(1), 192(4), Sch. 10 para. 3.
- C11 S. 20 extended by Social Security Act 1975 (c. 14), s. 160(1)
- C12 S. 20: functions of the Secretary of State transferred (1.4.1996) by S.I. 1996/273, art. 3(1), Sch. 1 para. 9(c)
- C13 S. 20 transfer of functions (3.4.2008) by Transfer of Functions (Registration) Order 2008 (S.I. 2008/678), art. 1(2), Sch. 1 para. 7(b) (with art. 4)

21 Interpretation.

(1) In this Act, the following expressions have the following meanings respectively—

"local scheme" means the scheme or schemes made under section fourteen of this Act for the time being in force for the [F30] non-metropolitan county or metropolitan district] in question;

"the Minister" means [F31the Secretary of State];

"prescribed" means prescribed by regulations made under the last foregoing section;

"the Registration Acts" means this Act, the M3Marriage Act 1949 and the M4Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953.

- (b) any reference to a [F34metropolitan district] or the council of a [F34metropolitan district] shall include a reference to the City of London or the Common Council thereof and to a [F35London borough] or the council thereof [F36and any reference to a non-metropolitan county includes a reference to a county borough].
- (3) Except in so far as the context otherwise requires, any reference in this Act to any other enactment shall be construed as a reference to that enactment as amended by or under any other enactment, including this Act.

Textual Amendments

- F30 Words substituted by Local Government Act 1972 (c. 70), Sch. 29 para. 41(2)
- F31 Words in s. 21 substituted (3.4.2008) by Transfer of Functions (Registration) Order 2008 (S.I. 2008/678), art. 1(2), Sch. 2 para. 7 (with art. 4)
- F32 Words repealed by London Government Act 1963 (c. 33), Sch. 18 Pt. II
- F33 S. 21(2)(a) repealed by London Government Act 1963 (c. 33), Sch. 18 Pt. II
- F34 Words substituted by Local Government Act 1972 (c. 70), Sch. 29 para. 41(6)
- F35 Words substituted by virtue of London Government Act 1963 (c. 33), s. 4(2)(a)
- **F36** Words in s. 21 (2)(b) added (1.10.1995) by 1994 c. 19, s. 66(6), **Sch. 16 para. 12**; S.I. 1995/2490, art. 5(1)(2)(3), **Sch. 3**

Marginal Citations

- **M3** 1949 c. 76.
- M4 1953 c. 20.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Registration Service Act 1953. (See end of Document for details)

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22	Savings.
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- (2) Any instrument made under any enactment repealed by this Act prescribing anything which may be prescribed under this Act shall, if in force at the commencement of this Act, continue in force and have effect as if made under the corresponding provision of this Act.
- (3) Any scheme made under section twenty-four of the Local Government Act 1929 or made in like manner by virtue of subsection (2) of section one hundred and thirty-one of that Act, being in either case a scheme in force immediately before the commencement of this Act, shall be deemed to have been prepared, submitted and approved in accordance with section fourteen of this Act.
- (4) Any document referring to an enactment repealed by this Act shall, unless the contrary intention appears, be construed as referring to the corresponding provision of this Act.
- (5) Nothing in the foregoing provisions of this section shall be taken as prejudicing the operation of sections 16(1) and 17(2)(a) of the Interpretation Act 1978 (which relate to the effect of repeals).

Textual Amendments

F37 S. 22(1) repealed (22.7.2004) by Statute Law (Repeals) Act 2004 (c. 14), Sch. 1 Pt. 17 Group 10

23 Repeals and consequential amendments.

(1) The enactments specified in the First Schedule to this Act shall have effect subject to the amendments respectively specified in that Schedule.

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Textual Amendments

F38 S. 23(2), Sch. 2 repealed by Statute Law (Repeals) Act 1974 (c. 22), Sch. Pt. XI

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C14 The text of s. 23 is in the form in which it was originally enacted: it was not reproduced in Statutes in Force and does not reflect any amendments or repeals which may have been made prior to 1.2.1991.

24 Short title, extent and commencement.

- (1) This Act may be cited as the Registration Service Act 1953.
- (2) This Act shall not extend to Scotland or to Northern Ireland.
- (3) This Act shall come into force on the first day of October, nineteen hundred and fifty-three.

Status:

Point in time view as at 03/04/2008.

Changes to legislation:

There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Registration Service Act 1953.