

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO
THE EMPLOYMENT ZONES (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2006
2006 No. 1000

1. This explanatory memorandum has been prepared by the Department for Work and Pensions and is laid before Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

2. Description

2.1 The Regulations amend the Employment Zones Regulations 2003 (S.I. 2003/2438) ('the 2003 Regulations') which support the scheme for jobseekers allowance claimants whereby claimants who meet certain qualifying conditions are required to participate in an employment zone programme.

2.2 Employment Zone programmes are designed to assist jobseekers obtain sustainable employment. The scheme operates in seven areas designated by the Secretary of State in accordance with section 60 of the Welfare Reform and Pensions Act 1999 (c.30).

3. Matters of special interest to the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments

3.1 None.

4. Legislative Background

4.1 The current employment zones programme has operated since October 2003 under the 2003 Regulations. These Regulations make minor amendments to the 2003 Regulations to make reference to the Employment Zones (Allocation to Contractors) Pilot Regulations 2006 (S.I. 2006/962) which come into effect on 24 April 2006 and to introduce minor changes to improve the operation of the employment zone programme resulting from our experience of operating the programme over the past year.

5. Extent

5.1 This instrument applies to Great Britain.

6 European Convention on Human Rights

As the instrument is subject to negative resolution procedure and does not amend primary legislation, no statement is required.

7 Policy Background

- 7.1 Employment Zones were established in 15 areas of Great Britain in April 2000. Employment Zones were located in areas with persistently high levels of long-term unemployment and were established as an alternative method of delivering personalised support to the unemployed. Within Employment Zones private and public/private sector advisers work with participants, providing innovative and flexible solutions to assist them to find sustainable employment.
- 7.2 In 2002, the Chancellor announced in his Pre-Budget Report that the Government would test the effect of introducing several contractors in the six largest Employment Zones from April 2004. In these Zones jobseekers would be allocated to one of several contractors providing an employment zone programme so that the effectiveness of the provision could be evaluated. The Employment Zones (Allocation to Contractors) Pilot Regulations 2006 (S.I. 2006/962) set out the provisions applying in these Zones. In the remaining seven zones the programme continues to be operated by a single contractor under provisions set out in the 2003 Regulations. These seven zones are located in Brighton and Hove, Doncaster, Heads of the Valleys Caerphilly and Torfaen, North West Wales, Nottingham, Plymouth, Middlesbrough Redcar and Cleveland.
- 7.3 These Regulations amend the 2003 Regulations. The amendments are necessary to include reference to the Employment Zone (Allocation to Contractors) Pilot Regulation 2006 in the 2003 Regulations, to amend the definition of the “New Deal for Young People programme”, to provide for a jobseeker who does not have a fixed address to participate in the employment zone programme, to make provision for time spent on a previous employment zone programme to be taken into account and to require a jobseeker aged under 25 to have taken part in a New Deal for Young People programme before applying for early entry to an employment zone programme.

8 Impact

- 8.1 A Regulatory Impact Assessment has not been prepared for this instrument as it has no impact on business, charities or voluntary bodies.
- 8.2 These regulations have no impact on the public sector.

9 Contact

- 9.1 Richard Jackson at the Department for Work and Pensions Tel: 0114 2677 379 or e-mail: richard.jackson@dwp.gsi.gov.uk can answer any queries regarding the instrument.