

**Identity Cards
Home Office PLP Briefing**

**Rt. Hon David Blunkett MP
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26 April 2004

National Identity Card Scheme – Draft Bill

Background

Legislation to establish a secure national UK identity cards scheme to ensure the UK and its citizens are equipped for the challenges of the 21st century, was published today by the Home Secretary, David Blunkett.

The Government intends to introduce, a national compulsory ID cards scheme using an individual biometric identifier linked to a new national database. The Draft ID Cards Bill published today sets out the proposed legal framework for the scheme which will be introduced incrementally.

Key Messages

- ID cards are key to this country's future.
- We are taking action now to prepare the UK for the challenges of the 21st century – on crime, security, the speed and nature of communication and international travel, and the number of sophisticated and complex transactions that we as individuals need to do effectively and securely. It is vital that a progressive, centre-left government like ours continues to demonstrate its commitment to dealing with public concerns about security and law & order.
- Correct identification has become critically important. Right across the world there is a drive to increase document security with biometrics – eg US passports and visas.
- We need to continue to play a leading role in shaping the way the world responds to the challenge of secure identification in a changing world. Post 9/11, the USA has already decided that it will cease to operate a visa waiver system for countries which are not developing biometric passports. That is why we have to develop them anyway so UK citizens can continue to travel the world freely with minimum restrictions. We want to ensure UK citizens can play a full part in this emerging world – with the freedom to do easily things like travel to Florida on holiday, and to be protected - to ensure the security of our country, tackle crime, terrorism and illegal immigration, and ensure that our services are only used by those who are entitled to them.
- Our identities are incredibly valuable to us and too easily stolen –ID fraud is a growing crime, costing the country more than £1.3 billion per year. Multiple or false identities are used in more than a third of terrorist related activity and in organised crime and money laundering. It is crucial we are able to robustly ascertain and verify our own and others' identities. MI5 and the police are very clear that having ID cards will help them tackle terrorism and organised crime more effectively.
- ID cards will enable people to access services - ensuring that those who are entitled to services get easy access to them and those who are not, do not. Decisions on how this should be implemented in different areas will be decided by the departments concerned. However, the Department of Health has already highlighted the benefit of ID cards in validating access to the National Electronic Patients Records which will become available in 2008/9 and the Department for Education and Skills believe cards will help in at least four areas of their work including the children's service passport and access to post-16 education and training.

- ID cards will ensure that foreign visitors and residents are properly identified, so they can be welcomed and integrated into society but we will not allow our openness to be abused. Foreign nationals who are currently here on residence permits will be required to register for a biometric permit in the early stages of the scheme from 2007/8.
- ID cards will ensure those correctly identifying themselves and demonstrating their entitlement are able to work and obtain work related benefits in the UK;
- ID cards will offer advantages such as a convenient proof of identity - a watertight secure document for use in everyday life;
- The UK is at the forefront of work on secure biometric identities. We are taking steps now to put in place a secure national ID cards scheme. This is a big project, and we are absolutely clear that it will take some years to get it right.
- We are ensuring now, while we are putting in place the new biometric passport infrastructure, that we can build on it to provide the added benefits of an ID card scheme;
- An ID card scheme is a logical extension of current existing ID documents such as passport cards which are set to include biometrics in the near future. The associated infrastructure costs will have to be met anyway eg the United States will require countries who wish to continue in the visa waiver scheme to incorporate biometric information in passports.
- The MORI poll published on 22 April 2004 showed that 80% of adults are in favour of the proposed National ID cards scheme. Also a resounding 83% would be happy to carry the card at all times.
- The Guardian Labour Members' Poll of February 2004 showed that 81% of Labour Members were in favour of introducing identity cards

The Home Secretary said:

“We are taking action now to prepare the UK for the challenges of the 21st century – the challenges of crime, security, the speed and nature of communication and international travel, and the number of sophisticated and complex transactions that we as individuals need to do effectively and securely.

“In an increasingly technologically complex and global world, correct identification has become critically important, and we want to ensure that UK citizens can play a full part in this emerging world. We need to have the freedom to live our lives - to quickly and decisively prove who we are and to travel easily. And we need to be protected - to ensure the security of our country, tackle crime, terrorism and illegal immigration, and ensure that our services are only used by those who are entitled to them.

“We have a tradition of living in a free and open society and we are used to taking people at face value – trusting them to be who they say they are. However, recent events have brought home how the need for trust and confidence actually require us to move beyond this and take the opportunity of new biometric technology which allows for a completely new level of verifying identity.

“Our identities are incredibly valuable to us and too easily stolen –ID fraud is a growing crime, costing the country more than £1.3 billion per year. Multiple or false identities are used in more than a third of terrorist related activity and in organised crime and money

laundering. It is crucial we are able to robustly ascertain and verify our own and others' identities.

"The public understand this and there is widespread support for an ID cards scheme. There has been a growing recognition that, rather than threatening our vital freedoms, ID cards would actually help preserve them.

"Right across the world there is a drive to increase document security with biometrics. We need to continue to play a leading role in shaping the way the world responds to the challenge of secure identification in a changing world, so that our citizens can reap the benefits.

"This is an ambitious, long-term project, and we are absolutely clear that it will take some years to get it right, using outside expertise and stringent reviews."

How will they work?

- Biometric passports will start to be issued from 2005 onwards. A pilot has started today to get the public to see 10,000 volunteers enrolled over the next year, having their face, iris and fingerprint biometrics recorded.
- The Bill today would give legal authority to set up a National Register so that biometric passports can be used as identity cards from 2007/8 onwards.
- Biometrics using specific identifiers now offer the opportunity, coupled with a new database incorporating rigorous background checks, to protect individual identity, to avoid duplication of identity, to ensure verification of identity, and to establish entitlement to benefits and services;
- there will be no question of a card scheme being an infringement of human rights - protection of privacy and of misuse of information and limits on the scope of the scheme are built into this legislation;
- use for policing purposes will not change existing law, but will simply ensure that true identity is more easily and accurately ascertained;
- the cards will not be compulsory to carry and there will be no power for the police to demand to see a card when they stop someone on the street;
- key stakeholder groups, such as the financial services industry are supportive of an ID card scheme;
- our current best estimate on costs is that they will cost around £4 for those who already have a passport and would be renewing and £35 for those who don't have either a passport or a driving licence. These costs arise largely from the development of secure biometric identifiers to which we are already committed to including on passports; This is a more transparent way of doing the same thing and provides a way of helping the least well off to have the same means of providing their identity as those who can afford to travel abroad and drive;
- we are publishing a draft Bill because we want to consult on the legislative framework before asking Parliament to make a final decision. More detailed development work will go ahead in parallel, though contracts for the scheme will not be negotiated until after the Bill received Royal assent.

What the Bill does

The Draft Bill sets out the legislative framework needed to build the scheme, including:

- set up a National Identity Register that would include identity information on individuals who have been registered and issued with an identity card;
- establish a family of ID cards based on new and existing documents;
- create powers to ensure that the details provided by an applicant can be checked against information already held on other databases to guard against fraud. Each use of these powers will require Parliamentary approval;
- provide tough guarantees that disclosure of information from the National Identity Register without the individual's consent will not be allowed, apart from for prescribed purposes such as on grounds of national security or for the prevention or investigation of crime, and to ensure there is independent oversight of these arrangements;
- establish new criminal offences for the possession of false identity documents. These will cover offences relating to the new identity card as well as existing identity documents that are false or have been improperly obtained;
- allow a date to be set when it would become compulsory to register and be issued with a card (but not compulsory to carry a card which is specifically prohibited in the draft Bill). This provision could be brought in only following a vote in both Houses of Parliament on a detailed report which sets out all the reasons for the proposed move to compulsion and how the Government proposes to implement compulsion. Both Houses would be able to amend the proposition before being asked to take a final decision;
- enable regulations to be made, once it was compulsory to register and be issued with an identity card, to make it a requirement to provide proof of identity by the production of an identity card to access public services.

Opposition

The Tories are divided on ID cards; David Davis and Michael Howard have completely different views. Michael Howard has always been in favour of ID cards but failed to deliver on them as Home Secretary, despite publishing proposals. David Davis has always opposed them and described our plans last November as 'costly and unconvincing' saying 'the Government has failed to advance any convincing arguments as to why these cards should be introduced.' Today, he has attempted to paper over the cracks, saying 'If it can pass the tests, we will support it.'

Spot the difference:

Michael Howard:

"Britain is the easiest country in Western Europe in which criminals and terrorists can lose themselves. If we are serious about tackling this problem, there is one obvious remedy: identity cards." (News of the World 23 Sept 2001)

"In time, carrying your ID card would seem as natural as carrying a credit card is at the moment". (Tory Party Conference, 1994)

David Davis – disagreeing with his leader's views:

"The Government have failed to advance any convincing arguments as to why these cards should be introduced. ...I fear the same encroachment of state interference (as with RIPA) in private lives will happen if ID cards are introduced in this country." (House of Commons statement, 11 November 2003)

“David Davis has launched a blistering attack on David Blunkett’s £3 billion plan to introduce compulsory ID cards to Britain over the next decade...describing the proposals as ‘costly and unconvincing.’ (Official Conservative Party press release, November 11, 2003

David Davis – agreeing with his leader – and Labour

"If it can pass all those tests - and you have got to remember you are trying to stop events that may cost thousands of lives - you have to take it seriously, and that is our position." (BBC Today programme, April 26, 2004)

Liberal Democrats: Mark Oaten

Once again, the Lib Dems show they cannot be trusted as their positions keep changing. On the Westminster Hour on 9 November, Lib Dem Home Affairs spokesperson, Mark Oaten said: “[On ID cards] It would be irresponsible to reject something which could make our citizens safer but, frankly, I cannot see where it is coming from.” Yet, Mark Oaten voted in favour of ID cards in a 10-Minute Rule Bill as recently as 23 January last year.

The Lib Dems obviously can’t add up either, as Mark Oaten called for the ID card money to be spent on more police instead. Yet, the money will not come from general taxation, but from individuals who will benefit from having the new ID cards.

Q & A

Are you speeding up the introduction of ID cards?

We are keen to introduce ID cards successfully as soon as possible. The timetable for this was outlined in “Identity Cards: the next steps (CM 6020)” back in November in which the Home Secretary confirmed that the introduction of the first ID cards will, on current plans, start from 2007/08. What the Home Secretary has published today is the draft legislation required to enable the scheme to be introduced.

These cards will not stop terrorist attacks; the Spanish have ID cards but that didn’t stop the Madrid attacks

There is not single measure which can guarantee our security against a major terrorist plot but the police and MI5 are in no doubt that ID cards would help them undermine and deter terrorists in their activities. David Blunkett has never claimed that ID cards would protect us single-handedly from terrorist attacks; they are a part of a package of measures to make us more secure, not a magic wand.

Use of multiple identities in terrorism and organised crime is growing. At the moment, MI5 believe 35% of those involved in terrorist activity in the UK are using multiple identities. Developing these plans now means we will be a tougher environment for terrorists to operate in.

The comparison with September 11 and the Madrid attacks is false. The USA does not have ID cards at all and the Spanish cards are not the sophisticated biometric cards we are proposing. Nonetheless, even the old-style ID cards did help the Spanish police detect the network involved in the aftermath of the Madrid attacks in a way which may have helped prevent further attacks.

The government is incapable of implementing large complex technological schemes

It is vital we implement the scheme incrementally to ensure we carry public confidence and deal with teething problems sensibly as they come along. David Blunkett is determined to ensure the public have confidence in the system. That is why there is a clear process in place to ensure technical issues are addressed at every stage:

- A Gateway review of the Identity Cards Programme was carried out by an independent review team for the Office of Government Commerce from 26th to 29th January 2004.
- The report concluded that the identity cards programme is ready to proceed to the next review point, Gateway 1, which is likely to be later this year. There will be five reviews in total, throughout the lifetime of the scheme.

It is worth remembering the Government already manages large, complex databases. 44 million people are on the Passport database and 38 million people have driving licences.

Isn't a draft Bill a waste of time?

No. The Government is committed to publishing more of its Bills in draft before they are formally introduced in Parliament and to submit them to a parliamentary committee for pre-legislative scrutiny. Publishing the Bill in draft gives the public and Parliament more time to comment on Government proposals for legislation before a Bill is introduced into Parliament.

Why do you need to legislate now?

We need to provide the legal framework to enable the scheme to be introduced. This includes:

- the creation of a National Identity Register of basic personal information;
- powers to issue a family of ID cards based on new and existing documents;
- powers for card issuing organisations to verify data supplied by people applying for ID cards as part of making the process more secure;
- disclosure of National Identity Register information to law enforcement and security agencies in specified circumstances and ensure there is independent oversight of these arrangements;
- criminal offences and civil sanctions required to make the scheme effective;
- enabling organisations to require identity checks for the provision of public services;
- and the power to set a date in the future when registration for an identity card could be required.

What are the next steps?

The Home Affairs Select Committee is carrying out an inquiry on all aspects of identity cards. In addition, we welcome the Committee's announcement of its intention to examine the draft Identity Cards Bill. Comments are also being sought from individuals and organisations. The Government will take full account of all comments on the draft Bill before it introduces substantive legislation as soon as possible.

When will the scheme be compulsory?

The first cards will be issued from 2007/8 and we would expect 80% of the economically active population to have the cards and use them regularly within five years. All people renewing their passports from 2007/8 will be upgraded to a biometric passport and for an extra £4 on top of the cost of the biometric upgrade test, the passport will double up as an ID card. There are a number of issues which the Government will need to consider before recommending a move to compulsion to Parliament. These are explained below.

How would the scheme become compulsory for the 20% not covered by passport renewal?

The draft Bill sets out a “super -affirmative’ process whereby,

- (1) the Government must publish a report setting out its case for the move to compulsion;
- (2) the report must include a proposition on how compulsion would work;
- (3) the report must be laid before Parliament for debate and vote in both Houses. Both Houses may amend the proposition;
- (4) the Government then lays for 60 days an order for compulsion via affirmative resolution. The order must be consistent with the proposition agreed by Parliament;
- (5) there would be a debate and vote in both Houses.

If either House did not approve the proposal or the Government was not content with the proposal as modified by either House, the Government must go back to (1) if it decides to make the case again for a move to compulsion.

These are common sense steps which would ensure a final move to compulsion would not be carried out without the technology working and public acceptance of the scheme. The Office of Government Commerce (OGC) will continue to scrutinise the programme at five review points throughout the lifetime of the scheme.

How do you prevent function creep of the Register?

This is a key priority for the Government. The Bill contains tough powers to ensure this does not happen. The statutory purposes of the Register as defined in the draft Bill set clear boundaries for its use to prevent function creep. The “registrable facts” listed in the draft Bill set limits on the types of information which may be held on the Register and does not include sensitive personal information such as medical records or religious opinions. Only Parliament would be able to change the statutory purposes of the scheme or the information which could be held by the scheme. It would need to do this via new primary legislation that would receive full Parliamentary scrutiny.

Will information be disclosed without an individual's consent?

We expect most identity checks using the register to be done with consent. Information may be only disclosed without consent to Security and Intelligence Agencies to ensure that the scheme helps in the fight against terrorism and serious crime. The Police, Customs, Inland Revenue and DWP may also be disclosed the “registrable facts” held, minus the audit trail of card use for law enforcement and related purposes. The more sophisticated types of disclosure to these organisations, for example, to look at card use, would only apply in cases of serious crimes. The draft Bill ensures that disclosures will be properly regulated and subject to independent oversight, just as currently happens with the information government already holds.

Will it be compulsory to carry a card?

No. The draft Bill explicitly excludes the possibility of making it a requirement for individuals to carry a card.

Will it be compulsory to use the card?

Many people will choose to use a card as a convenient way to verify their identity when accessing public or private sector services. However, a requirement to make use of the card a condition of the provision of services could only be made once the scheme becomes compulsory. This is not an automatic requirement and there would need to be a separate decision for each service. The draft Bill allows for exceptions. For example, the Government has said that emergency medical treatment or benefits would not be denied to people who are unable to produce a card.

For further information please contact Ben Coffman in the Labour Party Policy Unit on 020 7802 1403 or the Home Office Special Advisers on 020 7273 2713.

THIRD PARTY ENDORSEMENTS

London Chamber of Commerce

Colin Stanbridge, Chief Executive of London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said:

"We surveyed our membership on this subject and they were strongly supportive of compulsory identity cards - 72.6 per cent were in favour and just 27.4 per cent opposed. If the Government moves ahead with this policy it will have the backing of much of the business community."

For further information please contact: Dan Bridgett, Head of Press, London Chamber of Commerce. 0207 203 1897 or 07721 395501

British Bankers Association

David Lennox, Director, Fraud Prevention and Intelligence Unit and Physical Security, said:

"The BBA can see benefit in the introduction of an ID Card from the perspective of bank customers in that a card could provide a valuable means of meeting the identity verification requirements."

For further information please contact: BBA press office 020 7216 8989

CIFAS (UK's Fraud Prevention Service):

"Identity Fraud is the most rapidly rising type of fraud identified by our Members" states CIFAS, the UK's Fraud Prevention Service. "For the victims of identity theft, it is very serious indeed, often affecting their ability to obtain finance, insurance and other services. Any development that assists an individual to prove their identity is to be welcomed."

CIFAS is the UK's Fraud Prevention Service with over 200 Member organisations spread across banking, credit cards, asset finance, retail credit, mail order, insurance, investment management, telecommunications, factoring, and share dealing. Members share information about identified frauds in the fight to prevent further fraud. CIFAS is unique and was the first data sharing scheme of its type in the world. For more information see www.cifas.org.uk

Contact: CIFAS - The UK's Fraud Prevention Service, 4th Floor Tennyson House, 159-165 Great Portland Street, London W1W 5PA e-mail: cifas@cifas.org.uk/ website: www.cifas.org.uk

British Airline Pilot's Association

Jim McAuslan, General Secretary, British Airline Pilots' Association (BALPA), said:

"The British Airline Pilots' Association believes that ground security is all important and has been calling for a common identity card for all those who work in and around Britain's airports. We have to know if people are who they say they are. With such a card pilots would also be able to move more easily between airports.

"The Government's proposal takes us one step further. All pilots carry ID cards in the course of their work and see no reason why there should not be an ID card for everyone. No one has anything to lose and we all have a good deal to gain, not least in strengthening the security of our country."

For more information contact: Keith Bill on 020 7924 7555 mobile 07788 528 527

Association of Chief Police Officers

Roger Baker, ACPO spokesman on Identity Cards and Deputy Chief Constable of North Yorkshire Police, said:

"ACPO welcomes the publication of the draft Identity Cards Bill and the close collaboration between the police and the Home Office stretching back to before the initial consultation exercise in 2002.

"ACPO has made clear its support for a properly resourced and administered scheme to help counter identity fraud and to make more difficult the activities of terrorists and organised criminals. We look forward to early introduction of the legislation."

For more information contact: ACPO press office on 020 72273405

Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland (ACPOS)

Comment issued by Mr David Strang, Chief Constable of Dumfries and Galloway constabulary and Chair of the Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland General Policing Committee, on behalf of ACPOS.

"All areas of policing would benefit from the introduction of identity cards which would enhance the ability of police to protect and service the public.

"The events of September 11th have made the public more aware of personal security and the need to improve our knowledge of individuals who infiltrate society using methods to conceal their true identity."

"The public can be reassured that the introduction of such cards is a positive step."

Intellect

John Higgins, Director General, Intellect said:

"Intellect, the trade association for the UK hi-tech industry, welcomes the publication of the draft Identity Card Bill and continues to welcome and encourage early supplier involvement in the development of a national ID Card scheme.

Intellect members and the wider UK technology industry have the ability to meet the technological challenges created by the Government's ID Card proposals and are committed to maintaining an open dialogue with all interested stakeholders to ensure that the right technical solutions are developed and subsequently implemented."

For more information please contact: Intellect press office on 020 7395 6735.

Association for Payment and Clearing Services (APCAS)

"APACS welcomes any new initiative that will help towards improving identity verification and therefore we are pleased to see the publication of the draft Bill, whose progress we will follow closely. We are committed to promoting the provision of secure and robust payment services, and we encourage high standards of integrity, security and risk control. In particular, we are committed to measures to minimise the impact of criminal activity on or through any payment service, and so we welcome the any steps taken to make identity more certain"

Police Federation

30 October 2003 letter to Caroline Flint from Chairman Jan Berry

Next Wednesday's adjournment debate on ID cards is an opportunity to replace current debates – dogged by inaccuracy, misconception and scare mongering – with a rational and informed discussion. I should therefore like to make clear the position of the Police Federation of England and Wales.

Whilst our preference is for the eventual implementation of a mandatory system of identity cards, in the interim we would fully support their initial introduction to be on a voluntary basis. We believe that as awareness of the benefits of ID cards increases, so too will the level of public support.

We have backed an ID card scheme for over a decade, not as a knee-jerk reaction to any one specific or emotive event, but following objective appraisal. Unfortunately, all too often the case 'for' ID cards is not pushed hard enough.

Some politicians may fear the 'big brother state' label, but in reality ID cards are far from illiberal: they should be viewed in terms of what they would provide the individual. Anyone stopped by the police would, for instance, be able to confirm their identity almost instantaneously. As a result they would not have to report to a police station, a process that can be as irksome as it is onerous, and amounts to a far greater "infringement" upon their liberty. Police officers would therefore also benefit from considerable timesavings.

Although ID cards would undoubtedly create another hurdle for terrorists, we have never claimed them to be a panacea for all forms of criminality. Nevertheless we live in an age in which security will be paramount for the foreseeable future and all available measures should therefore be taken.

There will be a constant need to review procedures to ensure that identity cards cannot be forged and that legitimate possession is as secure as possible.

In reality misconceptions about identity cards simply do not stand up to scrutiny. They are a tried and tested law enforcement tool abroad and the possession of identification would ameliorate many existing working practices, consequently making Britain a safer place.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you should require additional information on our views.

Yours sincerely,

Jan Berry (Mrs)
Chairman

ANNEX B

Legislation to establish a secure national UK ID cards scheme to ensure the UK and its citizens are equipped for the challenges of the 21st century, was published today by the Home Secretary, David Blunkett.

The Government intends to introduce a national compulsory ID cards scheme using unique biometric identifiers linked to a new national database. The Draft ID Cards Bill published today sets out the proposed legal framework for the scheme which will be introduced incrementally.

The scheme will help UK citizens play a full role in our increasingly global and technologically complex world, and place the UK at the forefront of a world-wide drive by industrialised nations to introduce biometric identity and travel documents.

ID cards will help tackle the type of serious and organised crime which depends on being able to use false identities - terrorism, drug trafficking, money laundering, fraud through ID theft, and illegal working and immigration. They will also enable people to access services more easily, and prevent access to those with no entitlement. And crucially, the cards will help people live their everyday lives more easily, giving them a watertight proof of identity for use in daily transactions and travel.

Mr Blunkett said:

“We are taking action now to prepare the UK for the challenges of the 21st century – the challenges of crime, security, the speed and nature of communication and international travel, and the number of sophisticated and complex transactions that we as individuals need to do effectively and securely.

“In an increasingly technologically complex and global world, correct identification has become critically important, and we want to ensure that UK citizens are properly protected and equipped to deal with this emerging world. We need to have the freedom to live without being exploited, to prove quickly and decisively who we are and to travel freely. And we need to be protected, to ensure the security of our country, tackle crime, terrorism and illegal immigration, and make sure that our services are only used by those who are entitled to them.

“We have a right to live in a free and open society and we are used to taking people at face value – trusting them to be who they say they are. However, recent events have brought home how the need for trust and confidence actually require us to move beyond this. We must take the opportunity offered by new biometric technology which allows for a completely new level of verifying identity.

“ID fraud is a growing crime, costing the country more than £1.3 billion per year. Multiple or false identities are used in more than a third of terrorist related activity and in organised crime and money laundering. It is crucial we are able robustly to ascertain and verify our own and others’ identities.

“The public understand this and there is widespread support for an ID cards scheme. There has been a growing recognition that, rather than threatening our vital freedoms, ID cards would actually help preserve them.

“Right across the world there is a drive to increase document security with biometrics, including the development of biometrics in passports and visas. We need to continue to

play a leading role in shaping the way the world responds to the challenge of secure identification, so that our citizens can reap the benefits.

“Costs are inevitable if biometrics are included in passports and visas. Recognising that the main cost will have to be met in achieving secure documents, the identity cards scheme will also provide a way of helping the least well off to have the same means of proving their identity as those who can afford to travel abroad.

“This is an ambitious, long-term project, and we are absolutely clear that it will take some years to get it right, using outside expertise and stringent reviews.”

The Draft Bill sets out the legislative framework needed to build the scheme, including:

- Setting up the ‘national identity register’ – the key database of personal information which the biometric cards would link to.
- Creating a ‘family’ of ID cards, based on designated existing and new documents.
- Establishing important privacy safeguards - limiting the disclosure and use of information, including in what limited circumstances, on the grounds of national security or for the prevention or investigation of crime, and ensuring there is independent oversight of these arrangements.
- Establishing new criminal offences for the possession of false identity documents – covering the new identity card as well as existing identity documents.
- Enabling a date to be set when it would become compulsory to register and be issued with a card (but not compulsory to carry a card which is specifically prohibited in the Draft Bill). This provision could be brought in only following a vote in both Houses of Parliament on a detailed report which sets out all the reasons for the proposed move to compulsion and how the Government proposes to implement it.
- Setting out the civil and criminal penalties required to make the scheme effective and to guard against abuse of the scheme, for example a maximum penalty of 10 years for tampering with the contents of the National Identity Register.
- Enabling regulations to be made, once the scheme is compulsory, to make it a requirement to use an identity card to provide proof of identity to access public services.
- What information can be held on the database and measures to prevent ‘function creep’.

Appraisal of the progress of the ID cards programme will involve five review points in addition to the Office of Government Commerce Gateway 0 review which the ID cards programme completed successfully in January. A development partner bringing in detailed expertise from outside Government will be put in place within a matter of weeks.

The ID cards scheme will build on work already being done to introduce biometrics to passports and other documents such as residence permits and visas, and the Home Secretary also announced that the first enrolment pilot for biometric passports opened to the public in London today. The pilot will see ten thousand volunteers across the country signed up to have their face, iris and fingerprint biometrics recorded. Further locations in

Leicester, Newcastle and Glasgow will go live shortly, and a mobile unit will visit other locations across the country.

The Home Office also announced today that it is developing, in consultation with private sector partners, a new website to tell the public how to protect themselves against identity theft and what to do if they think they have been a victim. The site will go live this summer.

Notes to editors:

1. The card scheme, to be phased in over a number of years, would include basic personal information, a digital photo and “biometric information” which can include facial recognition, iris images or fingerprints. For most UK citizens, the card will take the form of a biometric passport which will be upgraded when it comes up for renewal. At the same time, all EU and foreign nationals coming into the country for more than three months will have to obtain a biometric residence permit.

2. The Government expects that 80 per cent of the economically active population would have an ID card by 2013 if passports are issued on the proposed biometric basis.

3. The details of the cards are yet to be finalised, but it is likely that:

- basic details will be on the face of the card such as name, age, validity dates, whether a person has a right to work, and an unique number;
- a secure encrypted chip will additionally contain a unique personal biometric identifier;
- cards will be linked to a national secure database which will contain the data from the card and be able to use the biometric data to confirm identity, preventing multiple card applications;
- biometrics will be incorporated into forthcoming passport cards - a plain card will be available for those people who have no passport.

4. If the Government did not implement a scheme which covered everyone but concentrated purely on implementing more secure passports and driving licences including biometrics, initial estimates suggest that the 10 year cost of passports would rise to around £73 and driving licences to around £69. Under the national identity cards scheme, our best initial estimates are that:

- a 10 year plain identity card would cost most people in the order of £35;
- a combined passport/identity card would cost £77; and
- a combined driving licence/identity card would cost £73.
- we will be looking at a range of schemes to allow people to pay in instalments; and
- we will provide substantial concessions to those in low income groups and the elderly, and offer a free first card to 16-year-olds. We are looking at how those who have been in retirement for some time could obtain a lifelong card, requiring no further payment.

5. The UK Government published a consultation paper on Entitlement Cards and Identity Fraud on 3 July 2002. The consultation period ended on 31 January 2003. The Home Secretary set out government plans for a secure ID card scheme and published the public consultation and polling results on 11th November 2003. These can be found at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/comrace/identitycards/index.html>

6. The UK Passport Service (UKPS) (www.passport.gov.uk) is running a biometrics trial in partnership with the Home Office Identity Cards Programme (www.identitycards.gov.uk)

and the DVLA (www.dvla.gov.uk). The technical delivery will be undertaken under contract by Atos Origin.

7. The biometric passport trial will take place at four fixed sites in London, Leicester, Newcastle and Glasgow, while a mobile unit will visit other locations across the country. Any UK resident aged 18 or over can volunteer to take part in the trial. Each volunteer will receive a personalised 'demonstrator smart card' carrying printed details and electronic information on a chip. The trial will ensure a proper cross selection of the population, including people with disabilities.

8. The recruitment of volunteers will be managed by MORI (Market & Opinion Research International) to ensure a representative sample of the UK population. Any requests to take part in the trial should be directed to Melanie Briere, MORI, on telephone number 020 7347 3023 / email trial@mori.com, or via www.mori.com.

9. The objectives of the UKPS biometric pilot are:

- to test the use of biometrics through a simulation of the passport process;
- to include exceptional cases, e.g. people who may have difficulties in enrolment;
- to measure the process time and hence estimate costs;
- to assess customer perceptions and reactions;
- to assess practical aspects of incorporation of biometrics into a biometric database;
- to trial the use of biometrics to prevent duplicate identities;
- to test fingerprint and iris biometrics for one-to-many identification and facial recognition for one-to-one verification; and
- to identify issues and risks and produce an outline implementation plan.

10. The pilot will test the enrolment of three biometrics - facial recognition, iris pattern and fingerprint images were nominated as the most suitable biometrics for use at border controls and passport issuance by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) in May 2003.

11. The UK Passport Service in its joint project with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, which issues passports to British citizens abroad, is planning to implement a first facial biometric (which can be taken from passport photographs) in the British Passport book in accordance with international standards from mid-2005. The trial beginning today will look at possible secondary biometrics for a further upgraded passport, and inform work on the identity card scheme.

12. Further information on the OGC Gateway Review process is available at <http://www.ogc.gov.uk/index.asp?id=377>