



ENTRUST Consultation on the accreditation scheme

January 2018

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report details the outcome of our consultation exercise on the future of the accreditation scheme.
- 1.2 The consultation sought stakeholders' opinions upon:
- What aspects of the accreditation scheme have been most beneficial;
 - What parts of the scheme would EBs most like to keep;
 - What aspects of the scheme could be removed with little, if any, impact on their EB;
 - How could the accreditation scheme be best updated with minimal disruption and additional costs to EBs; and
 - What difficulties might arise for them were the accreditation scheme to close.
- 1.3 We consulted on the future of the accreditation scheme between December 2017 and January 2018.
- 1.4 The main contacts of all accredited EBs (five in total) were sent emails inviting them to complete an online questionnaire hosted by SurveyMonkey. Cover notes were attached to each email providing an introduction to the consultation and the reasons for it being carried out. Four Environmental Bodies completed the online questionnaire.
- 1.5 As part of the consultation exercise EBs were asked if they would like to attend an event, to be held at the end of January, to further discuss the accreditation scheme. All four EBs who completed the questionnaire expressed an interest in attending the event.

2. Background

- 2.1 The accreditation scheme was introduced in 2007 with the aim of reducing the administrative burden on those EBs which deliver large numbers of projects on a regular basis.
- 2.2 In order to attain accredited status, Environmental Bodies (EBs) have to demonstrate high standards of corporate governance and internal control. This was assessed at an Accreditation Review followed by recommendation for approval made to the ENTRUST Board.
- 2.3 The scheme was closed to new applicants earlier in 2017 following discussions with HMRC. This decision was taken due to low take up of the scheme by EBs and the need to streamline ENTRUST's activities in line with the reduction in size of the UK LCF.
- 2.4 In order to further simplify processes and activities ENTRUST are looking to either reduce the scope of the accreditation scheme or close it in full. To minimise disruption and additional costs ENTRUST consulted with accredited EBs to establish

which parts of the scheme have been most beneficial and gather suggestions for its future operation.

3. Summary of responses

- 3.1 Respondents to the survey were asked to rate aspects of the accreditation scheme in terms on how beneficial they had found them. The abbreviated project approval form and ability to approve projects were found to be the most highly beneficial. Feedback with regards to other aspects such as annual Control Framework Inspections (CFI) was mixed with none standing out as being of particularly high or low benefit.
- 3.2 When asked which aspects of the scheme they would most like to keep there was again a marked preference for the abbreviated project approval form and ability to approve projects with all EBs responding that they would like to keep these two functions. There was limited interest in retaining the other aspects with half of the respondents identifying that they would like to keep them.
- 3.3 Respondents were also asked which aspects of the scheme could be removed with little, if any, impact on their EB. In line with responses to previous questions all EBs identified that the abbreviated project approval form and ability to approve projects could not be removed without impact. Two respondents identified that the annual CFI and increased confidence from Landfill Operators (LOs) could be lost without impact on their EB and three that the six monthly desktop reviews of EB activity and monthly reviews of project approvals could be lost.
- 3.4 There were mixed views as to whether the scheme could be ended with minimal disruption and difficulties. Two respondents were of the opinion that ending the scheme would not result in any long term difficulties and little if any additional costs. Conversely one respondent expressed the view that ending the accreditation scheme at a time when EBs were expected to reduce costs seemed unreasonable as the need to change processes, complete a lengthier project approval form and wait for ENTRUST approval would increase administration. This opinion was to an extent agreed with by another EB who highlighted the benefits of the accreditation scheme for administration purposes however identified that they would need to know more about the standard project registration process in order to get a better understanding of additional delays and costs. This latter point expressing a need to learn more about the changes to standard ENTRUST inspection and project registration processes was repeated by several EBs.
- 3.5 All respondents expressed an interest in attending a meeting to discuss changes to the accreditation scheme.

4. Next steps

- 4.1 Respondents to the accreditation consultation will be invited to attend a focus meeting to discuss potential changes to the accreditation scheme.
- 4.2 Several respondents identified that they would like to learn more about ENTRUST's standard project approval and inspection processes to help them better understand

the potential impacts of changes to, or the ending of, the accreditation scheme. Information on this will be provided at the focus meeting to aid informed discussion.

- 4.3 Utilising feedback and suggestions from the focus group and survey ENTRUST will assess the appropriate course of action and develop a proposal for the future of the accreditation scheme. This will then be reviewed by the ENTRUST board and where appropriate a recommendation made to HMRC.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 Information provided by respondents to the survey revealed that changing the accreditation scheme or closing it entirely would impact accredited EBs differently. Further to this several respondents identified that they would like to learn more of ENTRUSTs standard project registration and inspection processes so as to gain a more informed understanding of how changes to the accreditation scheme will impact them.
- 5.2 Carrying out a focus meeting will improve accredited EBs' understanding of the potential impacts of changes to, or ending of, the accreditation scheme as well as providing further opportunities for discussion. ENTRUST will use feedback from the focus meeting and survey to help determine the appropriate course of action regarding the accreditation scheme. The resulting proposal will be reviewed by the ENTRUST board and where appropriate a recommendation made to HMRC.

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