

Chip and Bin Goodbye to Paper Licence

Scrapping the paper element of the photocard driving licence is good news, says The AA Motoring Trust, which believes the Government is set to ditch it following a consultation earlier this year.

However, additional proposals from the Department for Transport to introduce a smart chip on the licence are potentially problematic, says The Trust, which wants to see only key driver information to replace the information currently on the paper counterpart.

Paul Watters, head of roads and transport policy for The AA Motoring Trust, says: Most drivers will be glad to see the back of the paper counterpart of the photo-card.

Motorists are annoyed to find they have to carry the credit card-sized photocard and the bulky paper counterpart, which is the same size as the old licence it replaced, for it to be valid.

If a smart chip is introduced then the Government should only allow driver information that is already on the paper licence to be on the chip.

We need to be clear from the start how much information goes on it, what the information is and who it can be read by. Drivers must also have ready access to the information on the chip just like they can with the current paper counterpart.

The proposals to move towards a smart chip come as a result of a consultation by the Department for Transport, and it is expected that the DVLA will now develop firmer plans for the scheme.

The AA Trust says it will inevitably take some time to develop and implement licences with chips. In the interim, The AA Motoring Trust believes the status of the counterpart should be changed so that it need not legally be a part of the licence. This would solve the carrying problem.

Paul Watters adds: We would want to see a secure online service or a 24-hour telephone inquiry line so that motorists can check their own driver details in an instant.

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