

Equality Impact Assessment Initial Screening - Relevance to Equality Duties

The EIA should be used to identify likely impacts on:

- disability
- race
- sex
- gender reassignment
- age
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy and maternity
- caring responsibilities (usually only for HR polices and change management processes such as back offices)

1. Name of the proposed new or changed legislation, policy, strategy, project or service being assessed.

Abolition of the Crown Court Rule Committee as provided for in the Public Bodies Bill

2. Individual Officer(s) & unit responsible for completing the Equality Impact Assessment.

Caroline Grabazs - Criminal Operations Branch, Crime Directorate

3. What is the main aim or purpose of the proposed new or changed legislation, policy, strategy, project or service and what are the intended outcomes?

Aims/objectives	Outcomes
<p>The abolition of the Crown Court Rule Committee, whose continued existence is not justified, removes a committee with a much reduced role following the creation of the Criminal Procedure Rule Committee. The Government's reforms of public bodies will increase accountability, remove duplication and streamline the public bodies landscape. The Public Bodies Bill provides the legislative basis for reform but does not itself enact any changes. These will be made through secondary legislation.</p>	<p>Increased ministerial accountability relating to functions carried out on behalf of the state; elimination of duplication and reduced waste; fewer public bodies and reduced costs. The function of making civil rules for the Crown Court can be undertaken by the Lord Chief Justice in consultation with the main rule committees. This can be effected by legislative change.</p>

4. What existing sources of information will you use to help you identify the likely equality impacts on different groups of people?

The Crown Court Rule Committee currently has six members (including the Lord Chief Justice), which allows it to remain quorate. There is one barrister, who is a public appointee and the other members of the committee are judicial. The committee does not hold a budget. Appointments to the committee do

not attract remuneration and are undertaken on a voluntary basis. The committee does not meet in person and is consulted by post. We consider that there will be minimal impact on the members of the Crown Court Rule Committee. The Lord Chief Justice chairs the Criminal Procedure Rule Committee and two of the others are members of it. They are aware of the Crown Court Rule Committee's impending abolition.

No impact on staff is envisaged. Secretariat support is provided by staff within the Ministry of Justice who would be deployed on other duties following the proposed abolition of the committee.

There is not expected to be any direct impact on service users.

5. Are there gaps in information that make it difficult or impossible to form an opinion on how your proposals might affect different groups of people. If so what are the gaps in the information and how and when do you plan to collect additional information?

The abolition is not controversial. The department will consider any comments raised in the consultation about the transfer of functions. All future policy initiatives with regard to administrative justice will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment to ensure that any impact on people with protected characteristics will be fully considered.