

**EU DIRECTIVE 2002/91/EC ON THE ENERGY
PERFORMANCE OF BUILDINGS**

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLES

7, 9 & 10 IN NORTHERN IRELAND

REGULATORY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

March 2008

SCOPE

This Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) relates to bringing into force regulations necessary to comply with the requirements of Articles 7, 9 and 10 of Directive 2002/91/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the energy performance of buildings made on the 16th December 2002.

OBJECTIVE

1. The objective of this Directive is to promote the improvement of the energy performance of buildings within the Community, taking into account outdoor climatic and local conditions, as well as indoor climate requirements and cost effectiveness.

This Directive lays down requirements as regards :

- (a) the general framework for the energy performance of buildings;
- (b) the application of minimum requirements on the energy performance of new buildings;
- (c) the application of minimum requirements on the energy performance of large existing buildings that are subject to major renovation;
- (d) energy certification of buildings; and
- (e) regular inspection of boilers and of air-conditioning systems in buildings and in addition an assessment of the heating installations in which boilers are more than 15 years old.

BACKGROUND

2. Member States were required to have brought into force, by 4 January 2006, laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with the Energy Performance of Buildings (EPBD).

Article 15(2) permits Member States to have an additional period of 3 years (until 4 January 2009) to apply fully the provisions of Articles 7 and 9 where there are insufficient numbers of qualified and/or accredited experts. Northern Ireland, in common with the rest of the UK, opted to take up this derogation.

The UK Government has recognized the threat posed by climate change and has developed the Climate Change Programme. The implementation of the EPBD is a significant element of this programme.

IMPLEMENTATION OF EPBD IN NORTHERN IRELAND

3. Articles 3 – 6 were implemented on 30th November 2006 by an amendment to Part F “Conservation of fuel and power” of the Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000. This amendment set higher energy standards for new and existing buildings where

the building regulations apply. It also facilitates and encourages the inclusion of low or zero carbon technologies (microgeneration) where these are considered by the designer to be appropriate.

Article 8 requires Member States to lay down an inspection regime for boilers dependant on output and/or age, or alternatively, to provide advice and guidance to users on the replacement of boilers or other energy efficient modifications to the heating system.

The UK Government opted for the advice route which is being provided mainly through the Carbon Trust, Energy Saving Trust and the fuel industries.

Articles 7, 9 and 10 will be implemented by the Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008 which are scheduled to come into operation on a phased basis during 2008.

As there are insufficient powers extant in the Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) Order 1979, the Department will implement Articles 7, 9 and 10 using the additional powers conferred by Article 2(2) of the European Communities Act 1972 in addition to the powers of the 1979 Order.

RISK ASSESSMENT

4. Failure to make the necessary legislation to implement all of the requirements of the EPBD in a timely manner will result in infraction proceedings against the United Kingdom in the European Court of Justice. The resultant judgment could leave the UK (Northern Ireland) open to unlimited fines.

In addition, there would be a lost opportunity to further promote improvements of the energy performance of buildings, particularly in the existing building stock, and a loss of opportunity for the Government to demonstrate its leadership on climate change policy.

OPTIONS

5. **Option 1** – do nothing.

This is not an option as failure to fully implement the requirements of the EPBD will result in infraction proceedings.

Option 2 – non-statutory voluntary approach.

A voluntary approach would not meet the EPBD's requirements, and again will result in infraction proceedings.

Option 3 – strict interpretation of EPBD.

This is the only viable option.

Option 4 – wider interpretation of EPBD.

This is not practicable due to the need to use Article 2(2) powers of the European Communities Act 1972 to implement the requirements which dissuades "gold-plating"

(i.e. introducing requirements that go beyond those set out in the Directive).

REQUIREMENTS OF ARTICLES 7, 9 & 10

6. Article 7

Article 7(1) requires an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) to be made available whenever a building is constructed, sold, or rented out. The validity of the certificate must not exceed 10 years.

Article 7(2) requires that the EPC includes reference values (such as current legal standards) and benchmarks to allow consumers to compare and assess the energy performance of buildings. This article also requires that the EPC should be accompanied by a list of cost-effective recommendations to improve a buildings energy performance,

Article 7(3) requires the prominent display of EPCs in buildings with a total useful floor area over 1000 m² occupied by public authorities and by institutions providing public services to a large number of persons and therefore frequently visited by these persons.

7. Article 9

Article 9 requires Member States to set down an inspection regime for air-conditioning systems with an effective rated output of more than 12kW. The inspection should include an assessment on the appropriateness of the air-conditioning efficiency and sizing compared to the cooling requirements of the building. Appropriate advice on improving or replacing the system and on alternative solutions should also be provided.

8. Article 10

Article 10 requires Member States to ensure that the inspections and assessments required by Articles 7 and 9 are carried out in an independent manner by suitably qualified and/or accredited experts.

BUSINESS SECTORS AFFECTED

Developers will be affected by the requirement for EPC's when buildings are constructed or substantially refurbished. In addition, most private citizens, building owners and landlords will also be affected when buildings are sold or rented out.

Overall the following will be affected -

- Designers
- Constructors, maintenance contractors
- District Councils' Building Control
- Building owners, landlords, tenants, operators and facilities/energy managers,

- Occupiers of large public buildings within which public services are provided (Government buildings, District Council buildings, schools, hospitals, health care buildings etc.)
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Housing Associations
- Energy Advice Centers
- Solicitors (Conveyancing)
- Estate agents.

PRINCIPAL COSTS

9. EPC Compliance Costs

Option 1 – Do nothing

Failure to implement the requirement of the EPBD will result in infraction proceedings in the European Court of Justice and as a consequence leave the United Kingdom (Northern Ireland) open to the potential for unlimited fines.

Option 2 – Non statutory voluntary approach

A voluntary approach will not meet the EPBD's requirements and again will result in infraction proceedings and the potential for unlimited fines.

Option 3- Strict interpretation of the EPBD.

This is the preferred option (see paragraph 11 below)

Option 4 – Wider interpretation of the EPBD

This is not practicable due to the use of Article 2 (2) powers of the European Communities Act 1972 to implement the requirements.

10. Strict interpretation of the EPBD - overview

Article 7(1) &7(2) EPCs and recommendation reports on construction sale or rent

Most private citizens and members of the business community will be affected by the requirement for EPCs when buildings are newly constructed, sold or rented out. Additionally, the construction industry will need to produce a certificate for each new building and the public sector will be required to produce and display EPCs in large buildings accessible to the public. Costs will be borne by those constructing, selling or letting property and may be passed on to potential purchasers or leasees.

The cost of producing an EPC for an existing dwelling includes the time to undertake a site survey (including travel), the cost (to the assessor) of the relevant calculation software, data entry into the software and preparation of a report containing recommendations for the cost effective improvement of the energy performance of buildings. For an existing building, other than a dwelling, a site survey, entry of data into calculation software and preparation of the accompanying report will take a longer period of time than for a dwelling, and will consequently have a higher cost.

The Building Regulations already set a maximum carbon dioxide emissions rate from each proposed building to which the regulations apply and require in each application that calculations are submitted to Building Control to demonstrate that the maximum rate is not exceeded. On completion of construction/substantial refurbishment, developers must again demonstrate to Building Control that carbon emissions from the finished building do not exceed the maximum rate of emissions for that building. Production of an EPC for these buildings, on completion of construction, is a minimal additional exercise to be completed by an accredited expert.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in England has estimated the cost of producing an EPC for existing buildings to be approx £95 for a dwelling and to range from £250 for a small retail unit to, in the region of £2,000, for a large commercial building with a small commercial building likely to cost in the region of £500. Lower costs will apply to blocks of flats and buildings on construction. It is not anticipated that the cost of producing an EPC in Northern Ireland will be substantially different to that estimated for England and Wales.

Table 1 below gives a breakdown of the estimated cost of producing an energy performance certificate by building type (source: Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Regulatory Impact Assessment –(RIA).

Table 1

Building Type	Cost of Producing EPC	Comment
Dwelling (New)	> £28.00	The (NCM) ¹ SAP ² software will be used to produce an EPC with little or no extra input into the design calculation
Dwelling (Existing)		The (NCM) RdSAP ³ software will be used to produce an EPC
Private marketed sales	£95.00	
Social housing - Houses	£95.00	
Social housing - Flats	£40.00	
Building other than Dwelling (New)	>£50.00	The (NCM) SBEM ⁴ software will be used to produce an EPC with little or no extra input into the design calculation
Building other than Dwelling (Existing)		The (NCM) SBEM ⁴ or DSM ⁵ software will be used to produce an EPC
Small Retail Unit	£250.00	
Small Commercial Building	£500.00	
Large Commercial Building	£2,000.00 ⁶	
Source: DCLG Regulatory Impact Assessment Energy Performance of Buildings Directive Articles 7 – 10		
Notes:		
1 NCM Approved National Calculation Methodology		
2 SAP Government's Standard Assessment procedure for energy rating on new dwellings		
3 Rd SAP Reduced version of SAP for assessing existing dwellings		
4 SBEM Simplified Building Energy Model for new non-domestic buildings		
5 DSM Sophisticated calculation method for complex non-domestic buildings		
6 dependant on the size and complexity of the building		

The lifespan of an EPC will not greater than 10 years. The certificate rating will be measured on an “asset rating” which is a numerical indicator of the amount of energy estimated to meet the needs associated with a standardised use of a building.

Sales and rentals that take place within 10 years from the date of production of the EPC do not trigger a requirement for a new energy assessment to be undertaken nor for a new EPC to be produced.

It is estimated that houses are resold every seven years. On this basis, the first resale will not require a new EPC. Rentals, particularly in the private rented sector of housing, may have a more frequent turn over, again it is not necessary to commission a new EPC while the existing EPC is less than 10 years old.

Where an owner or landlord carries out any of the cost effective improvements identified in the report that accompanies the EPC the owner or landlord may consider it worthwhile to commission a new EPC to highlight the improved energy performance of their building.

Article 7(3) Display Energy Certificates

Certificates that are to be displayed (Display Energy Certificate (DEC)) in larger buildings where public services are being provided will have energy performance measured on an “operational rating”. This rating is a numeric indicator of the energy consumed in a building over the previous 12 month period. For this rating to be meaningful the DEC will be renewed on an annual basis. The “operational rating” approach is designed to involve minimal cost. To contribute to minimizing the cost of this requirement, an advisory report providing recommendations for the cost effective improvement of the energy performance of these larger buildings, will be valid for a period of 7 years. In Northern Ireland it is current good practice that energy returns for public sector buildings are metered and monitored and submitted to the Department of Finance and Personnel for collation and feedback to the relevant sector. Given this existing good practice, energy consumption data is readily available to facilitate the preparation of DEC.

The cost for producing a DEC based on “operational ratings” and categorized by floor area can be seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Display Energy Certificate	Floor Area (m ²)				
	1000 - 2500	2500 - 5000	5000 - 10000	10,000 - 50,000	>50,000
DEC operational rating only	£325	£475	£475	£475	£475
DEC operational rating & measures	£1,125	£1,475	£1,675	£1,875	£2,075
Notes: Source - DCLG Regulatory Impact Assessment Energy Performance of Buildings Directive Articles 7 - 10					

The recommendations of measures that may be taken by the occupier to improve energy performance will be taken from a generic list prepared nationally, with the assessor highlighting those that are applicable to the building, that have not been implemented and are practicable.

Article 9 Air-conditioning Systems

Article 9 is addressed by requiring the mandatory inspection of all air-conditioning systems over a threshold limit of 12 kW by an energy assessor at regular intervals not exceeding 5 years.

The estimated cost for inspection and reporting at 5 yearly intervals are shown in Table 3 below

Table 3

Centralised systems	£600.00
Packaged Units	£100.00
Note <i>DCLG Regulatory Impact Assessment Energy Performance of Buildings Directive Articles 7 - 10</i>	

PRINCIPAL BENEFITS

11. Article 7(1) and 7(2) EPCs on construction, sale or rent

Private Marketed Sales

This sector comprises the largest group of dwellings and therefore the costs and benefits associated with the introduction of EPCs are the most significant for this RIA.

Motivation for energy efficiency improvements has generally been limited to the recovery of capital expenditure by lower running costs. With the introduction of EPCs, energy efficiency is expected to acquire a marketable value as visible energy efficient dwellings are likely to achieve higher selling prices (marketed with the prospect of a reduction in energy costs during the period of ownership).

The report containing cost effective recommendations to improve the energy performance of a building that must accompany an EPC will highlight to prospective owners how they can, in many instances with minimal outlay, improve the property to reduce running costs and also reduce carbon emissions. Without having to commission an additional and separate energy check on the building, this should prove a real incentive, particularly for householders, to invest in cost effective energy efficiency measures such as cavity wall and loft insulation. Table 2 outlines the possible measures and cost savings that the Energy Saving Trust estimate may be attained by undertaking specific measures.

Considering the potential increase to market prices for energy efficient houses as well as the provision of information about cost-effective energy efficiency improvements, £95 for an EPC is considered reasonable and value for money.

Social Housing

This sector includes housing owned by the NIHE, Housing Associations and Registered Social Landlords. The cost of each EPC is estimated to range from £40 (derived from the 'common values' approach that may be used for flats to £90 per individual dwelling).

New social housing and that constructed over of the last 30 years will have been built to standards that exceed the minimum standards set by the Building Regulations at

the time of construction. This will be reflected in the energy rating calculated for each property. Where a period of time has elapsed since construction, Building Regulations standards will have risen, therefore the report containing cost effective measures to improve the energy performance of housing that must accompany an EPC will highlight to social landlords how they can further improve energy efficiency in their property stock in addition to the periodic refits and upgrades that social landlords undertake to their building stock.

Private Rented

With the provision of EPCs, properties with poor energy efficiency and high running costs will become less attractive and their potential rental value is likely to fall. Consequently, prospective tenants should be more willing to pay higher rents for more energy efficient lets. Landlords will be encouraged to invest in energy efficient improvements to maximize their rental income.

New Construction

Compliance with the standards set by Part F (Conservation of fuel and power) of the Building Regulations will allow developers to demonstrate, on an equitable basis in EPCs, that new buildings have high levels of energy efficiency compared with older, less efficient ones. As concerns about climate change are heightened and prospective purchasers consider the high cost of energy needed to heat and light buildings, developers may more commonly market properties by highlighting buildings' energy efficiency, in a similar manner to how manufacturers market white goods or how they demonstrate fuel economy in motor vehicles.

Table 4 below outlines some of the potential energy saving measures that are available to improve the energy performance of dwellings. Many of these measures show very short payback periods and would therefore be a worthwhile undertaking. Similar measures in larger buildings could provide similar payback periods but due to the variety and complexity of these larger buildings, it is not possible to tabulate typical potential savings.

Example

If, as a result of receiving an EPC and report containing cost effective recommendations, a householder replaces all incandescent light bulbs in his home with energy saving light bulbs, it would cost approximately £36 (12 bulbs @£3) with a potential saving in the first year of £84 (12 @ £7). Over the lifetime of an energy saving light bulb a householder will save approximately £60 in energy costs.

The above measure will also save 312Kg CO₂ annually per dwelling. If in 50% of the 40,000 domestic sales and rentals that take place each year, householders implemented this improvement alone there would be a saving of 12,480 tonnes of CO₂.

Table 4 Potential cost-effective energy saving measures in dwellings

	Potential annual savings £	Installed cost £	Installed payback years	DIY cost	DIY payback years	CO ₂ savings Kg
Eliminate draughts	20	200	~10	90	5	155
Energy saving light bulbs per bulb	7	N/A	N/A	3	5 months	26
80mm thick hot water jacket	20	N/A	N/A	12	6 months	160
Primary pipe insulation	10	N/A	N/A	10	1	70
Loft insulation 270 mm	110	~500	~4	~250	~2	~1000
Loft insulation top-up 50mm – 270mm	30	~500	~16	~180	~6	~250
Insulate cavity walls	90	~500	~5	N/A	N/A	500
Upgrade heating controls	65	from 200	from 3	N/A	N/A	530
Install condensing boiler	110	variable	variable	N/A	N/A	875
Source: Energy Saving Trust						

The National Calculation Methodology used to provide the EPC will make available to the energy assessor a more comprehensive list of cost effective improvements of energy performance.

12. Article 7(3) Display Energy Certificates

The major concern of energy use reform is to address the issue of global climate change. The requirement for the display of energy certificates in public buildings should make a significant contribution in raising public awareness of the importance of energy efficiency measures and its environmental impact.

With an increased awareness of energy use in the public sector and the visibility of EPCs it is anticipated that occupiers of public sector buildings will monitor more regularly energy consumption and that this should lead to a reduction in energy use. The adoption of the cost effective energy efficiency measures should also result in reduced demands on the public purse.

13. Article 9 Air-conditioning Systems

The principal benefit of air-conditioning inspections will arise from the improved efficiency and reduced electricity consumption of existing and new systems. Reduced consumption will arise from improvements to the operation of existing systems and the replacement of older, inefficient or oversized systems with newer more efficient systems.

It is difficult to quantify accurately savings arising from each of these effects individually. However, as air-conditioning is four times more energy intensive than heating systems it is likely that there will be very large savings as older systems are replaced and a number of existing systems will deliver smaller energy savings from the improved performance.

The aggregate reduction in electricity consumption due to the adoption of higher energy efficiency systems should be significant. There should also be additional benefits which are likely to accrue in the form of, for example, improved workplace conditions.

Summary of principal benefits of Articles 7 and 9

The main beneficiaries of the Directive will be those who implement the cost-effective recommendations and thus enjoy energy cost savings and contribute to reduced carbon emissions. Furthermore, should they decide to sell their property sometime in the future, because their property meets the recommended energy efficiency standards they may benefit from a more rapid sale and/or market price.

Tenants in the rented sector will have more information on the expected energy running costs and will have the potential to operate their building energy systems more efficiently.

Landlords will obtain an objective assessment of the energy efficiency standard of their property and, should they choose to implement the recommendations, could potentially obtain higher rents.

Additionally, job opportunities will be created for suitably qualified energy assessors and manufacturers/installers of energy efficient products.

14. Article 10 Independent Experts

The Directive permits two methods to be introduced to control the quality of experts – a level of qualification, or a system of accreditation. Although either of these would be valid the practical approach being adopted is to require the experts to be accredited by an independent body which in turn will call for suitable qualifications to be held or equivalent competence to be demonstrated.

The higher costs of such an arrangement are relatively small compared to the actual performance of the energy assessor's duties and the corresponding enhanced confidence of the public in the independence of these experts.

Some larger employers, including government, local government and large commercial companies, may wish to use energy assessors who are direct employees. Subject to quality safeguards, the frameworks to be put in place can accommodate this and thus reduce costs.

IMPACTS

15. Equity and Fairness

Benefits and costs fall upon society as a whole – on private individuals (through housing), on public bodies and on commercial business. There are therefore no issues of inequality or unfairness to be addressed.

16. Rural considerations

The cost of EPCs in rural areas may be slightly higher due to the need for an energy assessor to travel to the property and therefore incur additional traveling time. However, it is anticipated that the increase will be small as there is already a significant level in interest from across the province from those wishing to provide energy assessments. This local network of energy assessors will be able to undertake assessments with minimal additional traveling costs, so the average price of an EPC will reflect this balance.

17. Small Firms Impact

All small and medium enterprises (SMEs) will be affected by the regulations whenever they construct, buy or rent a building but will benefit when they buy or rent a building. They will also be affected if they own or occupy buildings with a heating system or with air conditioning equipment requiring inspection. It is envisaged that compliance costs for SMEs will be reasonable.

Most SMEs occupy small premises (and small non-residential buildings of less than 50 m² floor area will be exempt) and they frequently occupy buildings which are in multiple occupancy where the compliance costs will be shared between occupants.

The Regulations are also unlikely to adversely affect start-up costs for SMEs except for those operating as developers or landlords. In both cases at least part of the ongoing costs may be expected to be passed onto purchasers or tenant(s).

18. Other Impact Assessments

These Regulations will apply to all new and existing buildings and therefore have an effect on all sectors, businesses, building owners, developers, etc. with no adverse impact on equality of opportunity or the needs of rural customers.

OTHER COSTS

19. Training

All sectors of industry will have to bear training costs associated with becoming familiar with these new regulations. It is thought that Continuous Professional Development (CPD) budgets will cover a portion of these costs for those only requiring a general view of the requirements.

There will be one off training costs (£2000 approx.) for those seeking to become accredited energy assessors for the first time. For construction professionals who are existing SAP / SBEM assessors and who wish to become accredited, "bolt on" training to allow them to become accredited Energy Assessors will be readily available. Costs will vary depending on the provider, but should not exceed £1000.

20. Building Control Costs

Other than the need to become familiar with the new regulations, through CPD, the costs for Building Control should be minimal since the Building Regulations already use the approved calculation methodologies for the purpose of demonstrating compliance with Part F (Conservation of fuel and power).

CONSULTATION WITH SMALL BUSINESSES: THE SMALL BUSINESS IMPACT TEST

21. The proposals have been developed to implement the EU Energy Performance of Buildings Directive and will have an equal impact on all small businesses.

As compliance with the Directive is mandatory it is not proposed to carry out a small business impact test.

ENFORCEMENT AND SANCTIONS

22. Enforcement and Sanctions

For EPCs on newly constructed buildings, compliance is expected to be total as Building Control within its own District Council Area will enforce the new regulations as they will be new requirements of the Building Regulations.

For EPCs on sale or rental of existing buildings, DEC's and air-conditioning inspections compliance levels are expected to be highest for private marketed sales of dwellings and commercial transactions where solicitors will be employed in conveyancing and agreement of contract conditions. It is anticipated that any formal enforcement of the requirements will be minimal and only as a last resort.

Compliance is expected to initially be lower in the private rented sector unless there is high awareness of the new requirements. Enforcement will be achieved through civil action by private individuals. The Department of Finance and Personnel will formally enforce the requirements but may appoint in writing "any person" to undertake these duties on its behalf. A range of penalties for non-compliance is listed in the regulations (The Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008)

Over a relatively short period it is anticipated that the requirement to either display an EPC or to make available an EPC to a potential purchaser or lessee will be sufficiently embedded into the transaction process that formal proceeding for failure to comply will be the exception rather than the norm.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

23. It is proposed that a UK wide survey will be undertaken about two years after the implementation dates to establish how the industry and individuals are responding to the new provisions. The results of this survey will facilitate the sharing of all accumulated experience and enable a much more accurate evaluation of the effect of the new regulations.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

24. When amendments to Part F of the Building Regulations were proposed, and again when made, a series of public seminars was held at which attendees were given information on the application of the requirements of Articles 7, 9 and 10.

The Department for Social Development undertook a public consultation in late 2004 in relation to dwellings.

The Executive agreed that as the implementation of these requirements is mandatory further public consultation was not required.

Officials briefed the DFP Assembly Committee on 6 February 2008 of the requirements of the Directive, provided clarification on the requirements of Articles 7, 9 and 10 and outlined proposals to make regulations to implement these requirements. The Committee had no concerns with the policy implications of the proposed Statutory Rule at that stage.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

Option 1 – Do nothing

This is not a viable option. Failure to implement the requirement of the EPBD will result in infraction proceedings in the European Court of Justice and as a consequence leave the UK (Northern Ireland) open to the potential for unlimited fines.

Option 2 – Non statutory voluntary approach

This is not a viable option. A voluntary approach would not meet the EPBD's requirements and again will result in infraction proceedings and the potential for unlimited fines.

Option 4 – Wider interpretation of the EPBD

This is not practicable due to the use of Article 2 (2) powers of the European Communities Act 1972 to implement the requirements, which discourages "gold plating" (ie. introducing requirements beyond those set in the Directive).

Option 3- Strict interpretation of the EPBD.

This is the only viable option bearing in mind that non-implementation of the Directive is not an option. It is considered that Option 3 strict interpretation of the EPBD is the most appropriate to introduce Articles 7, 9 and 10 in a proportional and equitable way.

If owners/occupiers of buildings make energy efficiency upgrades to their buildings as a result of;

- undertaking improvement recommendations which accompanies EPCs,
- acting on boiler advice; or where appropriate
- the advice given in respect of improving the efficiency of/or replacing an air-conditioning system following inspection,

all of which will be identified as cost effective improvements, reductions in carbon emissions will be forthcoming.

By requiring EPCs, the European Commission's intention is to promote the improvement of energy performance of buildings so that energy efficiency will become another factor in influencing the decision to rent / buy a particular property.

Once established EPCs have the possibility of becoming as strong an influence as the traditional factors in the way that energy rating notices on white goods or fuel consumption figures for cars have become influential to consumers intending to purchase these products.

MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

"I have read the Regulatory Impact Assessment and I am satisfied that the benefits justify the costs."

Signed by the responsible Minister

Rt Hon Peter Robinson MP MLA

Date February 2008

CONTACT POINT

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