

Using a Mobile Phone While Driving

Consultation on Changing the Law



22 May 2025

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Foreword

Improving road safety is a priority for me, so I am delighted to launch this consultation on proposals to widen the scope of the existing mobile phone offence. As road users we all have a personal responsibility to behave in a way that keeps ourselves and others safe. I am deeply concerned at the number of deaths and serious injuries on our roads, and sadly the evidence shows that more than 95% of road deaths are due to human error. One of the best ways to ensure safety on our roads and fulfil our long-term goal of eliminating death and serious injury by 2050, is by changing road user behaviour.

I am determined to take forward the road safety interventions committed to by my predecessor Minister O'Dowd, when he launched the Road Safety Strategy to 2030 and the Road Safety Action Plan 2024-25 last September. One of those interventions is a review of mobile phone legislation.

The mobile phone offence was introduced over twenty years ago, and tougher penalties came into force in February 2021 for drivers who illegally use their hand-held mobile phone while driving. While we believe that we have the right penalty in place for this offence, mobile phone technology has advanced, but the offence has remained the same. Too many drivers continue to illegally use their hand-held devices while driving. We cannot be complacent in our efforts.

I am seeking your views on my Department's proposals to look at widening the scope of the existing mobile phone offence to include any use of a hand-held mobile telephone, or other hand-held interactive communication devices while driving. I want to ensure our legislation reflects advances in modern technology while removing any associated problems around detection and enforcement.

A driver should not pick up and use a mobile phone or similar device for any purpose whilst driving.

I look forward to hearing your views on this important issue.

Liz Kimmins MLA
Minister for Infrastructure

Executive Summary

This consultation seeks views on a change to the law surrounding the use of hand-held mobile phones while driving. It proposes to update existing legislation to ensure it reflects the many advances in technology since the mobile phone offence was first introduced in 2004.

This consultation does not consider any change on the use of hands-free mobile phones.

Chapter One - Introduction

This section outlines why a review of mobile phone legislation is now required and provides background to the existing mobile phone offence.

Chapter Two – Widening the Mobile Phone Offence - the Issues

This chapter outlines the main issues with the current mobile phone offence i.e. it captures only functions involving interactive communication such as making phone calls, sending text messages or accessing the internet. It does not include the range of standalone functions that drivers can also perform using a hand-held mobile phone e.g. checking notifications, taking photos or searching for music etc.

Chapter Three – The Proposal

This chapter outlines a proposed change to the law which would result in the offence of using a hand-held mobile phone or similar device being triggered when a driver holds a mobile phone or similar device and uses it, regardless of whether that use involves interactive communication.

Chapter Four – Exemption

This chapter explains that the Department does not wish to thwart technological advances and wants to make provision for them where it is safe and sensible to do so. Against this background the document proposes an exemption for drivers who make a contactless payment for goods or services that they receive at the same time as, or after, payment is made.

Chapter Five – Highway Code

This chapter considers updates to the Highway Code on mobile phone use should the legislative change proceed.

Chapter Six – Answers to some possible questions you might have

This chapter provides some useful questions and answers aimed at addressing potential queries about the proposals.

Chapter Seven – Consultation Questions

This chapter lists the consultation questions and invites the public to have their say by using the separate response form provided.

Chapter Eight – What will happen next

This chapter outlines the next steps for the Department following the consultation.

How to respond

The consultation period began on **22 May 2025** and will run until **14 August 2025**. Please ensure that your response reaches us by the closing date.

You are invited to access the document and respond [online](#) or scan the QR code.



Alternatively, you can complete the **separate response form** and return to either of the addresses below.

Email: roaduserpolicybranch@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Post: Mobile Phone Consultation Responses
Driving, Vehicle & Road Safety Policy Division
Department for Infrastructure
James House (3rd Floor)
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Telephone: 028 9054 0822 ([text relay prefix 18001](#))

When responding, please indicate at **Question 1** whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. If responding on behalf of an organisation, please make it clear who the organisation represents and, where applicable, how the views of members were assembled. No personal data is required.

If you have any questions on this document or attached papers, please contact us using the details provided above. This document can be made available in a range of formats please contact us with your requirements.

Information Access Legislation

The Department will publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. All information provided will be treated in relation to Information Access Legislation.

Impact Assessments

The overall purpose of the proposals is to update the current mobile phone offence to ensure the current use and capabilities of modern hand-held mobile phones are reflected clearly in law. This will ensure the law remains relevant.

The aim is to deter the use of mobile phones or similar devices while driving. This will improve road safety and make it more straightforward for police to enforce and prosecute inappropriate use of these devices whilst driving.

The consultation requests comments and evidence on any possible (positive or negative) impacts these options might have on equality for specific groups or individuals as set out in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, on groups/individuals living or working in rural areas and on costs for businesses or charities.

The Department has carried out the following impact assessment screens on the proposals to expand the mobile phone offence:

- Equality Impact Assessment Screen
- Data Protection Impact Assessment Screen
- Regulatory Impact Assessment Screen
- Rural Impact Assessment Screen
- Human Rights Impact Assessment Screen

The impact assessment screens have found no undue impacts arising from the proposals in this consultation. However, screening is a live process that will be considered alongside the public consultation process as it evolves and as such the Department would welcome input. The impact assessment screens will continue to be reviewed particularly in light of any consultation feedback. The Department has published¹ the initial equality impact assessment screen to the [Departmental website](#).

¹ [Section 75 Consultation Information | Department for Infrastructure](#)

1.0 Introduction

The Road Safety Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2030 was approved by the Northern Ireland Executive and launched by the previous Minister for Infrastructure in September 2024. The Strategy provides a framework for government and other road safety stakeholders to establish their own road safety plans, objectives and interventions to eliminate road collisions which result in serious injuries or fatalities. The Strategy outlines the regrettable statistics of those killed or seriously injured on our roads, with PSNI data showing that approximately 95% of road casualties are due to a number of dangerous road user behaviours with the majority of collisions being caused by one of the “Fatal Five” – (i) carelessness/inattention; (ii) speeding; (iii) being impaired through alcohol/drugs; (iv) not wearing a seatbelt; (v) using mobile devices.

Too many people are continuing to illegally use their mobile phones while driving. In 2023 there were 1298 mobile phone motoring offences². The Road Safety Strategy Action Plan 2024/25 sets out a number of planned interventions to address these behaviours including a review of mobile phone legislation which this consultation paper will now address.

Background

The mobile phone offence was first introduced in Northern Ireland in 2004. Back then the main reason why people used a mobile phone was to communicate, either with another person or with the internet. Accordingly, the legislation and offence were couched in terms of “using” a hand-held mobile phone to perform actions that involved “interactive communication”.

Technology has moved on, and today mobile phones perform many functions, not all of which require interactive communication. Similarly, there are many more devices available such as tablets and gaming equipment, which have an interactive communication capability and are equally as distracting to hold and use while driving as a mobile phone.

We want to make sure that the legislation continues to be relevant and effective. Feedback to a consultation in 2018 on increasing the Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) associated with the offence of using a hand-held mobile phone while driving, showed that 86% of responses were supportive of the Department’s long-term objective of considering legislative changes to the wording of the offence, in order to create a more effective deterrent. We are now seeking your views on the Department’s proposals to expand existing mobile phone legislation so that the full range of functions (which phones are capable of performing) are clearly captured. We want to ensure that the legislation reflects advances in modern technology as well as removing associated problems around detection and enforcement.

A number of questions have been posed for which we are seeking your views and a separate questionnaire has been provided for your responses. As part of your considerations of the mobile phone related proposals you may wish to consider a series of questions and answers (at page 20) which will help to address some potential queries that could arise when considering this consultation.

² [Motoring Offence Statistics for Northern Ireland](#) (page 7)

2.0 Widening the mobile phone offence - the Issues

Distracted driving remains the biggest cause of deaths and serious injuries on our roads and mobile phone use while driving certainly contributes to driver distraction.

Under Article 56A of the Road Traffic (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 it is an offence to contravene a construction and use requirement in respect of mobile telephones. Regulation 125A of the Motor Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations (NI) 1999 ([Regulation 125A was inserted into the 1999 Regulations by the Motor Vehicles \(Construction and Use\) \(Amendment No.5\) Regulations \(NI\) 2003](#)) sets out the requirements that a person shall not drive a motor vehicle on a road if he is using a hand-held mobile telephone; or a hand-held device which (with the exception of a two-way radio) performs an “interactive communication function”³. The legislation provides examples of this function.

[Note: Throughout this consultation any reference to hand-held device will include a hand-held mobile telephone and a hand-held device which (with the exception of a two-way radio) performs an “interactive communication function”].

The term “interactive communication” essentially means that the driver is communicating with another person through voice calls, texting or email; or communication with the internet (searching for, or looking at, a website). Using any of these “interactive” functions on a hand-held mobile phone whilst driving is explicitly against existing law, and a driver will be liable for a penalty of £200 and six penalty points. Should the matter proceed to court the maximum penalty on conviction in court includes a £1,000 fine (£2,500 for a passenger carrying vehicle or goods vehicle) and six penalty points. The driver may also be disqualified from driving.

Mobile phones today perform many functions which are not interactive. Examples include using a hand-held mobile phone to search for stored music, taking photos or recording video footage while driving. These functions are ‘standalone’ in that they do not require the internet or do not involve communication with another person or device. As the law currently stands only interactive functions are recognised by the existing mobile phone offence. However, all of these functions, whether interactive or standalone, are equally dangerous for a driver to use when driving.

For example, if a driver is using a hand-held mobile phone to search for music already downloaded onto the phone, the physical manipulation, the cognitive demands and the averted eyes are no different, in terms of risk, from a driver who is typing out and sending a text message.

This position is unintentional and undermines the road safety objective of this offence.

Detection and Enforcement

Enforcing the current mobile phone offence relies on a roadside presence. In many ways it is an offence that should be easy to spot; in a line of slow-moving traffic, for example, the driver’s head is down, and the vehicle is slow to move along the traffic flow. Under our current legislation, the role of the police in detecting the offence is much more difficult than simply seeing a driver holding and tapping a phone.

³ The mobile phone offence applies to drivers and motorcyclists.

It is also an offence to use a hand-held mobile phone while supervising a learner driver.

An officer has to establish whether the driver was involved in an ‘interactive’ communication at the time of detection and, if that is not possible, they will be unable to take action using the dedicated mobile phone offence. [It is only in the case of a fatality or a collision resulting in life changing injury that police powers to examine a phone are held to be reasonable and proportionate to the potential intrusion that a mobile phone examination would entail].

It is important to note that there could be circumstances of driving involving the use of standalone functions which may lead to other enforcement action by the police. In serious cases they might lead to charges with penalties greater than for the mobile phone offence. However, in less serious circumstances when there are difficulties in proving whether a phone was being used when driving for interactive communication, the driver could be dealt with under the offence of “not in proper control” of the vehicle, rather than the dedicated offence of using a hand-held mobile phone when driving. The “not in proper control” offence carries a lesser fixed penalty of 3 penalty points and a £60 fine. This situation potentially undermines the impact of the increased mobile phone FPN introduced in 2021 [6 penalty points and £200 fine].

The mobile phone offence currently can be difficult to prove. The court must be persuaded that the driver was actually using the phone in an interactive communication function. This can be a challenge to obtain a successful conviction.

Other Jurisdictions

In the Republic of Ireland, it is an offence under the Road Traffic Act 2006 to ‘hold’ a mobile phone while driving or to support it with another part of your body, for example between your head and shoulder. The wording of the offence means that it is not necessary to prove that the phone was actually in use; it is sufficient that it was being held while driving.

The penalties for the mobile phone offence in Great Britain (GB) are the same as currently in place here. Until March 2022 when the law in GB was updated, the wording and scope of mobile phone legislation there was similar to the legislation here. The decision to change the legislation in GB in 2022 followed a public consultation which took account of recent case law there which clarified that the (then) existing law did not prohibit all use of a mobile phone while driving. It was the use of the phone or device (while held) for the purpose of a call or other interactive communication that was prohibited.

The subsequent legislative changes introduced in GB⁴ took effect in 2022 and mean that the offence is now triggered whenever a driver holds and uses a device, regardless of the purpose they are using it for. The change also covers any device which is capable of interactive communication even if that functionality is not enabled at the time.

An exemption was created to allow drivers to use their phones to make contactless payments in certain circumstances, for example, at drive through food outlets for goods and services to be received at the same time as, or after the contactless payment is made. A further exemption came into force in GB on 25 November 2024⁵ for persons driving in the course of performing duties for an emergency service while communicating on a secure electronic communications network using a device in press-to-talk mode.

⁴ New legislation [The Road Vehicles \(Construction and Use\) \(Amendment\) \(No. 2\) Regulations 2022](#), on holding and using a mobile phone while driving came into effect in GB on 25 March 2022.

⁵ [The Road Vehicles \(Construction and Use\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#)

As part of this consultation the Department for Infrastructure will consult with the emergency services in Northern Ireland seeking views on the proposed amendments to mobile phone legislation contained in this consultation, including considering if there are any unintended impacts on them and whether any additional exemptions would be required.

3.0 The Proposal

The proposal is to change legislation so all use of a hand-held device while driving will constitute a road traffic offence.

The box below sets out the activities that currently fall within the offence.

Activities captured within the offence now – “interactive communication” functions:

Driver holds the mobile phone or similar device in the hand to:

- Make a phone call
- Receive a phone call
- Send a text message
- Send an e-mail
- Access social media sites
- Access streaming services

This consultation proposes that in addition to the "interactive communication" functions that are clearly within the offence now; any use of a hand-held mobile phone while driving - even picking it up to see who is calling and then rejecting that call or picking the phone up to check the time or the weather - will be prohibited. Such actions will take the drivers' eyes and concentration away from the road and that is why the Department is proposing a comprehensive ban on the use of a hand-held mobile phone while driving.

How we will achieve this

At present, the offence covers hand-held mobile phones and other hand-held devices and is triggered when a driver uses them to perform an interactive communication function. The Department is proposing to amend the legislation so that the offence will be triggered by **any use of a hand-held device**, regardless of how it is being used.

Our new approach will be to define a hand-held device (other than a two-way radio) as a device that is capable of sending and receiving data. We are also proposing that the offence should be triggered by the use of that device, even if the device is not, at the time of the offence, in a mode or state of connectivity to enable the sending and receiving of data. This is in line with our objective to prohibit the use of hand-held devices while driving in a full and comprehensive way.

In practical terms, this means that use of hand-held tablets, electronic notepads, gaming equipment etc. which are capable of transmitting and receiving data will be covered by the

revised offence, regardless of whether the device is connected to the internet or in-flight mode or other offline mode. The box below illustrates the effects of the proposed change to the law.

What additional activities will be covered by the revised offence?

The box below sets out the additional activities that will, under the proposed changes, be brought within the offence.

Additional activities that will be captured under the revised offence:

Driver holds the mobile phone or similar device in the hand to:

- Illuminate the screen
- Unlock the device
- Check the time
- Check notifications
- Reject a call
- Compose text messages or e-mails to save in drafts
- Take photos or videos
- Use the phone's camera as a mirror
- Search for music stored on the phone
- Search for photos or other images stored on the phone
- Dictate voice messages into the phone
- Read a book downloaded on the phone
- Play a game downloaded on the phone

The list of additional activities above is not exhaustive and so other activities, not listed, could also fall within the offence. Taking this approach will help everyone to understand the wide parameters of the offence.

These changes are designed to ensure that there is no legislative gap and to enhance road safety. This will make enforcement more straightforward. A police officer will be able to see a driver holding, tapping, and scrolling a phone, and based on that evidence, will be able to take enforcement action rather than having to establish the type of use.

Any change we make to the law on the use of hand-held mobile phones arising from this consultation **will not affect** the use of mobile phones which are positioned in a cradle and used while remaining in the cradle (for example as a sat nav).

Scenarios in the boxes below illustrate the effects of the proposed change to the law.

Driver A uses a hand-held tablet, with a data card, to type out and send an e-mail.

- This is captured now under the existing offence because it is a hand-held device similar to a mobile phone and is being used to perform an interactive communication function.
- Under the proposed change, this activity will continue to be unlawful and subject to a FPN of £200 and six penalty points.

Driver B uses a hand-held tablet, with a data card, to look at some photos stored on the tablet.

- This is one of the problems with the existing law. Driver B is clearly doing something distracting and is using a device similar to a mobile phone. As looking at a photo stored on the tablet does not involve interactive communication, this activity does not trigger the current hand-held mobile phone offence.
- Driver B may, currently, incur enforcement action for not being in proper control of the vehicle, but that means the tougher penalty for mobile phone use would not be imposed.
- Under the proposed change, this activity would be within the scope of the revised offence and subject to an FPN of £200 and six penalty points because the device is capable of interactive communication, even though Driver B was performing a standalone function rather than an interactive communication function.

Driver C uses a hand-held, wi-fi only, tablet to search for music stored on the tablet.

- This is a tablet which is capable of sending and receiving data while the driver is using the home or other wi-fi network. Without a data card, and assuming there is no wi-fi in the car, the device may not be enabled, at that time, to send or receive data. However, that does not alter the fact it is an interactive communication device.
- Driver C is doing something distracting, but because the device is not performing an interactive communication function while the driver is driving, this activity would not trigger the existing offence.
- As with Driver B, this could trigger other road traffic offences, but this review will broaden the scope of the hand-held mobile phone offence and capture all the hand-held devices and activities that warrant the £200 FPN and six penalty points.
- Under the proposed change, this activity will be within the scope of the revised offence and subject to an FPN of £200 and six penalty points because the device is capable of sending or receiving data (i.e. when connected to wi-fi), even though that capability is not necessarily enabled while in the car, and because the driver is putting that device to a use which will be prohibited

4.0 Exemption

The Department recognises that there may be circumstances and practical reasons where it is necessary to have exemptions in the legislation. There are already some exemptions contained within existing legislation, for example in January 2024 the Department introduced an exemption which allows drivers to use a device for vehicles with remote control parking capability. This exemption was previously consulted on by the Department in 2018 and became **operational** on 8 January 2024⁶. The proposals in this consultation will not alter that existing exemption.

The Department is seeking your views on a further potential exemption which it considers to be a legitimate use of a hand-held mobile phone with minimal risk.

To make a payment using a hand-held mobile phone

The ability to use mobile phones to pay for goods and services has been a popular development in recent years. People quite commonly now use apps on their mobile phones to pay for coffees and groceries in restaurant and shops. The Department is keen to encourage technological developments and to avoid laws which obstruct such developments unnecessarily.

The Department acknowledges there are also now some goods and services that drivers would want to be able to pay for using a hand-held mobile phone to make a contactless payment whilst stationary but with their vehicle engine running. One obvious example is at a fast-food drive-through restaurant. At present, drivers who pay for a coffee or take-away meal at such an establishment by using their hand-held mobile phone are technically breaking the law as this transaction requires interactive communication.

The proposed exemption would permit a driver to hold and use a device under specific circumstances, to make a contactless payment at a payment terminal for goods or services. The vehicle must be stationary, and the item being paid for must be provided at the same time as, or after, the contactless payment is made. Such a transaction might include paying for a car park or a drive-through coffee using a phone. The exemption will apply solely in the circumstances where a contactless payment is made by tapping on a card reader; the exemption will not apply where drivers simply make an internet payment whilst sitting at the wheel with the engine running. Further exemptions may be considered following responses to this consultation.

Emergency Services

As part of this consultation the Department will consult directly with the emergency services in Northern Ireland seeking views on the proposed amendments to mobile phone legislation including whether there would be any unintended impacts for them should the legislative change be made. As part of that consultation the Department will consider any further necessary exemptions that may be identified.

The questions and answers on page 20 may address any queries you have about the proposals.

⁶ [The Motor Vehicles \(Construction and Use\) \(Amendment No. 2\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2023](#)

5.0 Highway Code

The Highway Code for Northern Ireland is an essential guide for all road users, summarising key road traffic law and providing further guidance about desirable and appropriate behaviour for drivers and other road users.

Many of the rules in the Code are legal requirements and these are identified by the use of the words 'must' and 'must not'. If you disobey these rules, you are committing a criminal offence, and you may be subject to a range of enforcement action. Although failure to comply with the other rules of the Code (that use advisory wording such as 'should' and 'should not' or 'do' and 'do not') will not, in itself, cause a person to be prosecuted, the Highway Code may be used in evidence in any court proceedings to establish liability.

Knowing and applying the rules contained in the Highway Code could significantly reduce road casualties and, therefore, it is important that any legislative changes are reflected carefully and clearly. This part of the consultation seeks views on proposed textual amendments to the Highway Code should the legislative change proposed by this consultation proceed. The additional text is shown below (shaded in grey).

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You **MUST** exercise proper control of your vehicle at all times. You **MUST NOT** use a hand-held mobile phone or similar device, capable of interactive communication (such as a tablet) for any purpose when driving or when supervising a learner driver. This ban covers all use of a hand-held interactive communication device and it applies even when the interactive communication capability is turned off or unavailable. You **MUST NOT** pick up the phone or similar device while driving to dial a number and then put it in the cradle for the duration of the conversation. You **MUST NOT** pick up and use your hand-held phone or similar device while stationary in traffic.

There is an exception to call 999 or 112 in a genuine emergency when it is unsafe or impractical to stop. There is also an exception if you are using a hand-held mobile phone or similar device to make a contactless payment at a contactless payment terminal. Your vehicle **MUST** be stationary, and the goods or services **MUST** be received at the same time as, or after, the contactless payment.

Never use a hand-held microphone when driving. Using hands-free equipment is also likely to distract your attention from the road. It is far safer not to use any telephone or similar device while you are driving or riding – find a safe place to stop first or use the voicemail facility and listen to messages later.

Laws RTO 1995 Arts 10, 12 & 56A, & CUR regs 120 & 125A

The amendments are intended to make it clear that:

- the hand-held mobile phone offence also covers hand-held devices capable of interactive communication;
- “driving” includes sitting at traffic lights or in a traffic jam;
- “use” includes dialling a number even if the phone is then put in a cradle for the main conversation; and
- there will be a new exemption for paying for goods and services by means of contactless payment while stationary.

6.0 Answers to some possible questions you might have

Q1. Does the proposed change impact the use of a hands-free mobile device?

No, it does not apply to hands-free mobile devices. However, if you are deemed not to be in proper control of your vehicle as a result of using your phone, even if it's totally hands-free, you could still be stopped and prosecuted as a result.

Q2. Would it still be legal to use a phone as a sat nav?

Yes, under certain circumstances. Under these proposals, drivers could continue to use a device 'hands-free' while driving, such as a sat nav if, for example, it's secured in a cradle. Drivers must, however, always take responsibility for their driving and can be charged with an offence if the police find them not to be in proper control of their vehicle.

Q3. Will the proposed changes impact on mobile phones kept in a cradle while driving?

The proposal does not apply to hands-free usage. However, a driver should at all times be in proper control of their vehicle and failure to do so could result in prosecution. You **MUST NOT** pick up the phone or similar device while driving to dial a number and then put it in the cradle for the duration of the conversation.

Q4. Does the stop phase of 'stop start' engines allow a driver to lawfully use a hand-held mobile phone?

No. The proposed changes to the law would still apply when driving a car that turns the engine off when you stop moving.

Q5. Does the proposed change affect the infotainment system display?

No. The proposal does not prohibit the use of your car's infotainment system display while driving, however, if the system has voice control you should use it in preference to the touchscreen.

Q6. When would the new exemption to make a payment apply?

The proposed exemption would apply solely in the circumstances where a contactless payment is made by tapping on a card reader; the exemption will not apply where drivers simply make an internet payment whilst sitting at the wheel with the engine running. The vehicle must be stationary, and the item being paid for must be provided at the same time as, or after, the contactless payment is made e.g. when paying for a car park.

Q7. Does the law relating to the use of mobile phones when driving apply when queuing in traffic?

Yes, mobile phone legislation applies when you are queuing in traffic, when stopped at traffic lights, supervising a learner driver or driving a car that turns the engine off when you stop moving.

7.0 Consultation Questions

Please provide answers to these questions on the **separate response form** provided.

1. Are you responding as:
 - an individual
 - a business
 - on behalf of an organisation
2. Do you agree with the proposal to extend the hand-held mobile phone offence to cover 'stand-alone' functions?
3. Are there any other mobile phone functions that you think should be listed in the revised offence?
4. Do you agree with the proposal to bring within the offence any device which is capable of interactive communication, even if that capability is not enabled in the vehicle?
5. Do you agree with the proposed exemption from the hand-held mobile phone offence i.e. when making a contactless payment?
6. Do the proposed textual amendments to the Highway Code make clear the changes to Rule 149?
7. Have you any comments on the proposals contained in this consultation including the initial equality impact assessment screen (published on the Departmental website), the proposed textual amendments to the Northern Ireland Highway Code and the Department's proposals to make further exemptions if considered necessary following consultation, to avoid undue impact on the Emergency Services?

8.0 What will happen next?

Next steps will include the following: -

- The Department will consult separately with emergency services providers on the proposed amendment to mobile phone legislation and the need for any further exemptions.
- The consultation will close on **14 August 2025**.
- A summary of responses will be published once the results have been analysed and the Minister has considered the way forward.