



Chartered Trading
Standards Institute
northern ireland

Joint statement on the state of trading standards in 2015

The significant attention focused on trading standards services across the UK by local and central government has created a debate among professionals about the future of the service. Often this debate has focused on areas of disagreement rather than the significant amount of consensus that exists within the profession.

In order to inform the current local and central government reviews of trading standards, heads of service across the UK have worked together with the Chartered Trading Standards Institute to establish an agreed position on the current state of trading standards and identified areas of concern.

1. In the current system, different levels of resources lead to different levels of protection for consumers and businesses across the country – it is not a level playing field.
2. Failure of enforcement in one geographical area has an impact in other geographical areas and can lead to problems.
3. There are a number of major central government policy areas (for example pricing) that get very little attention from local authority trading standards services.
4. A significant further cut to trading standards services will result in some unsustainable services and the system cannot bear this cut. Radical reform is required to ensure a sustainable system of consumer protection.
5. Although managerial skills and support services across local authority regulatory services are in the main similar, as individuals increasingly prioritise work and greater focus is given to higher risk work, operational officers require an increasing level of specialist professional skills in addition to generic skills.
6. The system in the UK must have the collective capacity and capability (including geographic spread) to deal with major issues and priorities.
7. Trading standards delivers at local, regional and national levels and each of these requires an appropriate governance mechanism.
8. There should be a transparent and effective method for funding local delivery of national priorities.
9. We would support the development of an appropriate performance framework for local, regional and national priorities.
10. We would support a fundamental review of trading standards in the UK.

Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)
Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO)
Society of Chief Officers of Trading Standards in Scotland (SCOTSS)
Welsh Heads of Trading Standards (WHOTS)
Northern Ireland Trading Standards

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