



Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

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The Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP
Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street,
London

1 July 2020

Dear Alok,

Over the weekend there have been multiple reports that the UK Government intend to invest in the satellite broadband company, OneWeb. These reports raise important questions about how and when the Government intend to act as a shareholder; how British jobs and production can be protected through this form of investment; and in this case, how the investment will meet UK defence and critical national infrastructure needs?

I would be grateful if you could provide answers to the following questions by Monday 6 July:

- What role have BEIS and UK Space played in the alleged decision by No10 to make this investment?
- How will this decision be aligned with the Comprehensive Spending Review, Integrated Review and the UK Space Strategy?
- What role will BEIS have in future management of this shareholder relationship?
- By which criteria does the Government assess the suitability of a company for which it intends to act as shareholder?
- What assessment has BEIS made of the value for money achieved through an investment of this kind?
- What assessment have you made of OneWeb's capacity to meet the UK's defence and critical national infrastructure needs?
- How will investment in OneWeb deliver on the Government's ambition to build a sovereign satellite capability, in order to reduce reliance on both the United States GPS system and the European Union's Galileo system?
- Noting that while OneWeb has its headquarters in the UK most of its assets, investment and manufacturing is based in the United States. What action is BEIS taking to protect British jobs and ensure British production capacity through this investment?

I look forward to discussing these questions, amongst others, with you at the BEIS Committee Meeting on Thursday 9 July.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Darren Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'D' and 'J'.

Darren Jones MP
Chair of the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee

CC The Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Chair of Science and Technology Committee
The Rt Hon Tobias Ellwood MP, Chair of Defence Committee