



## Department for International Trade

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Angus Brendan MacNeil MP  
International Trade Committee  
House of Commons  
London  
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25 August 2020

Dear Angus,

I am writing to make you aware of updates to the Department for International Trade's stakeholder engagement framework.

Tomorrow – 26th August – the Department will announce the creation of a cohort of Trade Advisory Groups (TAGs). The TAGs will cover key sectors of interest in terms of negotiations such as Agri-food, British Manufactured and Consumer Goods, and Automotive, Aerospace and Marine. The TAGs will provide strategic advice and insight to inform the progress of our negotiations.

You may be aware that the Department published an 'Expression of Interest' on 31st July asking for new members of the Strategic Trade Advisory Group (STAG). We expect to be in a position to announce refreshed membership for the STAG in the coming weeks.

This is in the context of my Department's commitment to review the membership and functionality of the STAG after twelve months to ensure the group can properly support our trade policy development and to review our stakeholder governance mechanisms in general.

With trade negotiations now underway and progressing at pace, this moment offers the opportunity to revitalise our external engagement structures, ensuring a balance of interests from across the United Kingdom are represented on trade policy matters over the next two years on the STAG. The TAGs will enable the Department to facilitate senior-level policy exchanges with stakeholders on specific sector policy issues.

I am aware of the Committee's 2018 report 'UK Trade Policy Transparency and Scrutiny', and its recommendations and responses. Whilst the tenor of the Government has changed since the report was published in respect of unleashing the UK's potential, I remain mindful of the report's recommendations.

I would very much welcome your input into this process and my door is always open. I will be in touch in due course with further details on the Department's engagement framework and the outcome of the STAG Expression of Interest.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Truss', is centered on the page. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'E' and a long, sweeping tail.

**THE RT HON ELIZABETH TRUSS MP**  
Secretary of State for International Trade  
& President of the Board of Trade