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European Union Committee
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Wednesday 7th October 2020

Dear Lord Teverson,

Office for Nuclear Regulation: Brexit preparedness

Thank you for your letter seeking an update on the ONR's preparedness, at the end of the transition period, to take on its new role as regulator for nuclear safeguards.

You will be pleased to hear that ONR were ready to deliver its new regulatory function – and to meet international obligations - by March 2019. Since then, ONR has continued to build its capability and remains on track to deliver the State System of Accountancy for and Control of nuclear material (UK SSAC), providing equivalent effectiveness and coverage to that of Euratom, from 1 January 2021.

You asked for the answers to three specific questions, which I will answer in turn.

- 1. In July 2018 ONR advised it had a goal to recruit and train 14 new safeguarding inspectors in order for the organisation to fulfil its new role, and that it takes 12-18 months “to train a specialist to become an inspector”. Have all of the necessary new staff been recruited, and is their training now complete?**

ONR's target to have 14 safeguards inspectors in post by March 2019 was achieved. ONR currently has 22 safeguards specialists (including inspectors and nuclear material accountants) in post. Training for new staff is complete, providing the required level of capability and resilience for ONR to commence its role as the domestic regulator for nuclear safeguards and to operate the UK SSAC from 1 January 2021.

- 2. As of mid-2018 ONR was developing a new IT system (the Safeguards Information Management and Reporting System, or SIMRS) to allow it to submit the necessary information to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and expected it to be operational by March 2019. Is that IT system now fully-functional, and have the necessary users been trained in how it operates?**

SIMRS was developed and implemented on schedule was. available and operational by March 2019. In readiness to commence operations from January 2021, ONR has developed capability, capacity and resilience. For over a year (and up until the end of the transition period), ONR's fully trained nuclear material accountants have been using the system to

analyse nuclear material reports from UK operators. Successful end-to-end operations, through parallel running and reporting alongside Euratom, has demonstrated its readiness for live operations commencing from January 2021. ONR has also incorporated further improvements to the system, following feedback from the users and the IAEA.

3. How will the ONR's new safeguarding function initially be funded as of 1 January 2021, and what plans do you have to alter that approach in the medium term?

In June 2020, Government confirmed continued funding for the new nuclear safeguards regime through to the end of March 2022. The Government recognises the importance of providing clarity on future funding arrangements, beyond this date, as soon as possible, and work continues to deliver this.

I hope that you will find these responses to your questions reassuring.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debbie Steadman Scott". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**BARONESS STEDMAN-SCOTT
MINISTER FOR WORK AND PENSIONS (LORDS)**