Department for Business & Trade

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Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

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Sir William Cash MP
Chair, European Scrutiny Committee
House of Commons
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Dear Sir William,

RETAINED EU LAW (REVOCATION AND REFORM) ACT 2023 – REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF REFORMING AND REVOKING RETAINED EU LAW

I am writing to inform you that today I have laid before Parliament a report outlining the progress made in reforming and revoking retained EU law (now known as assimilated law). I know that you and your committee have an interest in retained EU law (REUL) and the usage of the Act's delegated powers, so I wanted to write to you directly to set out the contents of the report.

First, let me thank you for the valuable work undertaken by the European Scrutiny Committee which has helped to inform the Government's policy on the future of retained EU law and the REUL reform programme.

The report sets out the progress made in revoking and reforming retained EU Law ('REUL') in the previous reporting period. This first reporting period ran from when the REUL Act 2023 received royal assent on the 29 June 2023, to 23 December 2023. In total, more than 2000 pieces of REUL have already been removed or reformed. The Financial Services and Markets Act 2023 and the Procurement Act 2023 will together revoke hundreds more pieces of REUL. The Government has laid 26 SIs under the REUL Act since June, delivering major reforms relating to employment and wine, which have cut red tape for businesses, reduced administrative requirements and will save businesses up to £1bn. These reforms will support businesses in the UK and demonstrate our commitment to seizing the opportunities from Brexit. We have also updated the Retained EU Law dashboard, available on gov.uk, which now details 6757 pieces of retained EU law concentrated over 400 unique policy areas.

But this is only the start of our reform work. The Government's roadmap includes a further 500 revocations and reforms of REUL in 2024, with revocation or reform of 3434 pieces of REUL - over half of the total stock inherited from the EU - when the powers under the REUL Act expire.

As a first step towards this, the report sets out the ambitious REUL reforms departments are planning in the first six months of 2024 and beyond. These include policy areas such as product safety, clinical trials, carbon capture and metrology. These reforms look to bring about huge improvements to the regulatory environment for of UK businesses, whilst maintaining our world-leading standards and protections for consumers.

These reforms are part of our wider Smarter Regulation programme, which seeks to reform both REUL and domestic regulation to create the best possible regulatory environment for the UK, in which businesses can grow and innovate. Alongside our plans for reforming REUL, we have also launched our revised Better Regulation Framework to put downward pressure on the flow of new regulations, and we will extend the growth duty to Ofgem, Ofcom and Ofwat so that they are required to consider economic growth while performing their duties. Our call for evidence on the regulatory landscape invited views from businesses, consumers and regulators to establish areas that are working well and where regulators could improve, and we look forward to updating parliamentary with a statement on its findings. These measures, along with our REUL reforms, are important steps towards delivering on our Smarter Regulation objectives.

Thank you for your continued engagement and interest in our work as we continue to minimise regulatory burden and future-proof regulations for the UK.

Yours ever,

Kevin Hollinrake MP
Minister for Enterprise, Markets, and Small Business
Department for Business and Trade