



**Public Administration  
and Constitutional Affairs  
Committee**

From the Chair  
**Simon Hoare MP**

Sir Laurie Magnus CBE  
Independent Adviser on Ministerial Standards  
By email

12 June 2025

Dear Sir Laurie

**Ministerial Statements and the Ministerial Code**

The Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee has today launched an inquiry into Ministerial Statements and the Ministerial Code. This follows a letter sent to the committee from Mr Speaker raising concerns that Ministers are failing to make major policy announcements to the House of Commons before making them to the media. As the matter relates to a question of Ministers' adherence to, and potential breaches of, the Ministerial Code, we are seeking your views on this matter as the Independent Adviser on Ministerial Standards.

Chapter 9 of the Code sets out the rules for the relationship between Ministers and Parliament. The very first paragraph sets out the general principle that:

When Parliament is in session, the most important announcements of government policy should be made in the first instance in Parliament.

Paragraph 9.2 then adds that, even when statements are not of 'major importance', their timing should be carefully planned and the offices of the Leader of the House of Commons, the Chief Whip and the Prime Minister consulted. The decision to make a major policy announcement would therefore appear to fall under the category of "most important" policy announcements. We have published the letter sent to us by the Speaker, which identifies recent examples of major policy announcements being made directly to the media rather than to Parliament first.

While we understand your role is to advise the Prime Minister, we hope that you will be able to assist us in this inquiry. We hope that a substantial response to the following questions will be sufficient, and you will not be required to give oral evidence.





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From the Chair  
**Simon Hoare MP**

1. Do you think the principle set out in the Ministerial Code at Paragraph 9.1 is sufficiently clear in explaining what the House of Commons should properly be able to expect of Ministers when they are making major policy announcements?
2. Is the Ministerial Code the appropriate place for such a principle to exist?
3. Are you aware of any guidance available to Ministers in judging whether they are abiding by this principle?
4. Is the Independent Adviser suitably placed to provide such guidance?
5. In principle, would you consider a request to initiate an investigation into a potential breach of this section of the Ministerial Code?
6. What sanctions might be available and appropriate for a breach of the Ministerial Code in such circumstances?

We would welcome any additional thoughts you have on the issues raised by our terms of reference for this inquiry. We are hoping to consider this matter swiftly and therefore ask that you respond by Wednesday 2 July.

**Simon Hoare MP**  
**Chair, Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee**