



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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House of Lords European Union Committee
House of Lords
London
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Dear Lord Teverson,

Following my evidence session of 13 January 2021, I agreed to write back to the Committee with further detail on the implications for the fishing industry of the closure of the HMRC offices in Hull, and whether there are any other HMRC office closures affecting the industry. I also agreed that I would write back on developments about when the Specialised Committee on Fisheries will be established, who its UK members will be, and what information about its discussions will be made public. I have answered your questions in detail below.

HMRC office closures

The HMRC offices in Hull were not public enquiry offices or directly linked to the work of the port. Any customs activity undertaken in the HMRC Hull offices at the time of closure will continue to be done, albeit from the Leeds or other Regional Centres, or by the National Clearance Hub, Salford, that operates 24/7.

Border Force will continue to perform customs controls and responsibilities at Hull ports regardless of the closure of the HMRC office, and as such there should be no impact on seafood businesses importing goods through this route. We are confident that HMRC's wider office closure programme will have no impact on Border Force presence at key ports for the seafood sector.

Specialised Committee

The UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) establishes a set of committees to oversee its operation including a Specialised Committee (SC) on Fisheries. It will provide a forum for the UK and the EU to discuss a range of fisheries matters, including but not limited to: cooperation ahead of annual fisheries consultations, multi-year strategies, data-sharing and monitoring and compliance. The Committee will also have the power to take decisions and make recommendations, by consensus of both the Parties.

Details on how the committee will function will be communicated once they are finalised.

Yours sincerely,

Victoria Prentis

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