



Home Office

Tom Pursglove MP  
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Rt Hon. Yvette Cooper MP  
Chair, Home Affairs Select Committee  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

10 November 2021

Dear Chair,

Thank you for your letter of 3<sup>rd</sup> November. I was aware of the exchange the Permanent Secretary had with Tim Loughton on sea tactics, as well as the subsequent work officials in the department were doing to ensure that any further engagement on this sensitive matter caused no operational prejudice, is in the public interest and is within the parameters enabling the Government to maintain legal privilege over any legal advice received. I do apologise for the delay and understand that officials had given an indication on the due diligence being undertaken around preserving legal privilege.

Our overarching view is that it would not be beneficial to hold a private briefing as there is little more that we would be able to say both in private and publicly regarding our operation. As set out by the Permanent Secretary, it is important that we protect our legal and operational approach to small boats tactics. Any further discussions on the subject would be - in our view - operationally risky and not in the public interest. As such, we will not proceed with offering a further private briefing. That being said, I very much appreciate your desire to, and the benefit of, being able to scrutinise the policy, and I look forward to my first attendance before the Committee to discuss further the work being done on this important issue.

Once again, thank you for writing.

With best wishes,

Yours ever,

**Tom Pursglove MP**  
**Minister for Justice and Tackling Illegal Migration**