



Department for International Trade

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Dame Meg Hillier MP
Chair of the Public Accounts Committee
House of Commons
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Angus Brendan MacNeil MP
Chair of the International Trade Committee
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4th February 2022

Dear Chairs,

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE: PROGRESS OF TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

Following the Public Accounts Committee hearing on the Progress of Trade Negotiations, I am writing in response to the request for additional information regarding developments in the provision for the Tradeshaw Access Programme (TAP) and the British Chamber of Commerce Overseas.

Tradeshaw Access Programme

The UK Tradeshaw Programme was launched as part of the Export Strategy in November 2021. This replaced the TAP that had been in existence and remained largely unchanged for many years. The new programme is the product of a review that investigated the effectiveness of the TAP and whether it was making the most effective use of Departmental spend to assist the business community.

The core purpose of the UK Tradeshow Programme is to support businesses to learn about the benefits of international tradeshows and how to maximise their success at them. Whilst the new programme continues to support businesses to exhibit at key tradeshows, it has introduced an additional element – supporting smaller companies to visit tradeshows prior to exhibiting to help them make a choice about whether exhibitions should be part of their export strategy.

British Chamber of Commerce Overseas

The Government set out in its Export Strategy that the Department is reforming its overseas export support for high-potential SMEs as well as providing global in-market insight and business connections. The new service replaces the Overseas Business Network initiative, under which Chambers of Commerce were awarded grants to provide support across several select markets.

Building on our experience from these arrangements and to provide a more global, well defined, and consistent offer for high potential SMEs, we are replacing this with a new international export support offer. DIT teams, based in all nine of our HM Trade Commissioner (HMTC) regions, can provide practical advice and guidance to those businesses seeking to internationalise. The new service is already live in five of our nine HMTC regions and will achieve full coverage in the coming months.

I hope the above information answers these outstanding matters from 19th January. Please let me know by reply if there is any further information the Department can provide.

I am copying this letter to the Second Permanent Secretary, the Treasury Officer of Accounts and the Comptroller and Auditor General.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Bowler', is centered on the page.

JAMES BOWLER