



Ein cyf/Our ref IM/EM/00509/20

Greg Hands MP
Minister of State
Department for International Trade
King Charles Street
Whitehall
London
SW1A 0AA

Hands.Correspondence@trade.gov.uk

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Dear Greg,

Thank you for your letter of 25 August about the creation of a cohort of Trade Advisory Groups (TAGs) which will provide advice to your department to inform free trade agreement negotiations. I thought I would use the opportunity to set out some of my thoughts around stakeholder engagement more generally and how we might work better together in this crucial area. I would be keen to discuss this with you in our next bilateral.

TAGs and STAG

With regards to the TAGs, I am pleased that the agri-food group membership includes Welsh representation from farming unions as this is, as you know, a key sector for us. However, I would have liked to have seen the sector in Wales more broadly represented and the supply chain adequately picked up. I am also very disappointed at the lack of Welsh representation on the other TAGs, particularly on the automotive, aerospace and marine group, and the financial services group. For example, Admiral Group plc, Wales' only indigenous FTSE 100 business, and the Welsh Automotive Forum would have brought a great deal of knowledge and expertise to the financial services and automotive, aerospace and marine groups respectively. We would have been pleased to engage with you on the recruitment process for the TAGs and nominate Welsh companies for you to consider and approach.

I would be keen to discuss with you how we might improve the engagement between your department and Devolved Administrations in relation to stakeholder advice and involvement. It would be helpful if your department could engage with my officials more closely on external stakeholder engagement matters, particularly the TAGs. This will ensure that the

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Gohebiaeth.Eluned.Morgan@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Eluned.Morgan@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

advice you are receiving from businesses to inform UK trade policy supports all parts of the UK. For example, it would be appreciated if you could invite my officials to observe TAG meetings or, at the very least, share minutes of those meetings with us. In respect of the STAG, it would be useful to understand whether Wales will be represented on the group, and to be sighted on the details of the new members in advance of publication.

The Trade and Agriculture Commission

On the subject of stakeholder engagement I would also like to raise the new Trade and Agriculture Commission (TAC) with you. I understand that my officials have received an update from your department on the work of the Commission to date and on the working groups that are currently being set up. We are grateful for this engagement. However we still have some questions about the role of the TAC, particularly where recommendations may impact on domestic policy, which is of course devolved for agriculture. I would appreciate reassurance that any recommendations made by the Commission will be aimed purely at the UK Government and in reserved areas. Should input be sought on matters that are devolved, such as domestic standards or agriculture support policy, it should be made clear to stakeholders that the Commission is only seeking views on policy that will apply in England. I would also like to be clear that although we appreciate and fully support the inclusion of Welsh stakeholders on both the TAC itself and its working groups, we do not believe this approach in itself will adequately capture all Welsh views.

I would reiterate that I am keen to discuss how we might ensure genuine and inclusive engagement in the establishment of UK stakeholder groups in future as we have considerable first hand expertise and knowledge that I feel could significantly enhance your selection pool. I look forward to discussing these issues with you soon.

Yours sincerely,



Eluned Morgan AS/MS

Gweinidog y Gymraeg a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol
Minister for International Relations and the Welsh Language