EU EXIT READINESS: MINISTERIAL DIRECTION

This letter provides a Ministerial Direction to formally direct you as Accounting Officer to authorise spending on those activities outlined in your letter of 18 January as part of Defra’s work to support Day 1 readiness exiting the European Union.

You have indicated that a direction is necessary because there is a small proportion of Defra’s readiness work which cannot wait until the EU (Withdrawal) Bill receives Royal Assent next year. There is however, an over-riding need to press on with essential work on the areas listed in order that critical time is not lost in advance of EU exit in March 2019.

I note the residual uncertainties that will govern our plans to prepare for EU exit as negotiations with the European Commission proceed. I therefore expect these and all other preparedness projects to remain under continued scrutiny to ensure that they deliver value for money for the taxpayer whilst balancing the risk of taking no action.

I therefore direct you to proceed with the planned work for those listed projects on this basis.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs