



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

Room G/8, 1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Telephone: 020 7271 0839

Email: acoba@acoba.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.gov.uk/acoba>

13 April 2018

BUSINESS APPOINTMENT APPLICATION: CONRAD PRINCE CB

The Committee has been asked to consider an application from Conrad Prince.

Mr Prince was Cyber Security Ambassador at the Department for International Trade (DIT) from April 2015 to January 2018. Between November 2011 and March 2015 he was Director General for Intelligence and Strategy at GCHQ.

His last day in the Civil Service was 31 January 2018.

Appointment details

Mr Prince has sought advice on taking up an appointment as a Senior Research Fellow at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI). He confirmed this would be a paid appointment, involving approximately 20 days per year.

Mr Prince informed the Committee that the role would be to help RUSI develop and implement an expanded programme of research on different aspects of cyber security. This would potentially include making recommendations as to particular areas of cyber security for RUSI to focus on, supporting relevant research projects, participating in RUSI events with a cyber focus, and communicating the nature of RUSI's programme to external stakeholders. In carrying out this work he declared he would not draw on any privileged or sensitive knowledge available to him from his time in Government.

Mr Prince told the Committee that, as a leading UK think tank, it is in the normal course of RUSI's activities to engage in discussions involving UK Government on issues relating to defence and security. He would expect to participate in such discussions as they relate to the nature of national policy and strategy in the context of cyber security. This could include shaping and informing RUSI's research activities, and feeding back to Government the results of relevant research.

Mr Prince told the Committee that he had been involved with RUSI events since 2015 in his capacity as a senior advocate for the Government's national cyber strategy, and his previous role at GCHQ. In Summer 2017, at RUSI's invitation, he acted as an independent panel member on

RUSI's selection panel to appoint a research analyst in cyber security. He also met with RUSI staff on occasion to discuss matters relating to cyber security.

He informed the Committee that he had no involvement in any policy decisions or regulatory work that may affect RUSI, and no involvement in the award of contracts or grants to them. This was confirmed by DIT and GCHQ.

The Permanent Secretary at DIT countersigned this application. DTI and GCHQ informed the Committee they have no reservations about Mr Prince taking up this appointment, subject to imposing the usual restriction on lobbying government and the use of official information.

Committee's consideration

The Committee noted that it was not surprising that Mr Prince, a senior advocate for the Government's national cyber strategy and a DG at GCHQ, had dealings with RUSI while in Government. It further noted that he had no involvement in any policy decisions or regulatory work that may affect RUSI, and no involvement in the award of contracts or grants to them. The risk of this appointment being perceived as a reward is therefore low.

The Committee considered this appointment was unlikely to generate public concern, given the nature of RUSI's work and its aims. RUSI will of course benefit from appointing Mr Prince to this role but there does not appear to be cause for concern that it will gain an unfair advantage by employing him.

In considering this application the Committee took into account that Mr Prince would expect to participate in discussions involving the UK Government on issues relating to defence and security, such as for the purposes of shaping and informing RUSI's research activities, and feeding back to Government the results of relevant research. The Committee's assessment is that this would not be inappropriate and it has clarified the lobbying ban imposed, to make clear that this is not intended to preclude such contact.

The Prime Minister accepted the Committee's advice that the appointment with RUSI be subject to the following conditions:

- that he should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of himself or the organisations to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to him from his time in Crown service; and
- for two years from his last day of service he should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government on behalf of the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI). Nor should he make use, directly or indirectly, of his Government and/or Crown Service contacts to influence policy or secure business or funding on their behalf. This would not prevent him from having routine contact with the UK Government on other matters that are an integral part of the normal course of business for RUSI.

By 'privileged information' we mean official information to which a Minister or Crown servant has had access as a consequence of his or her office or employment and which has not been made publicly available. Applicants are also reminded that they may be subject to other duties of confidentiality, whether under the Official Secrets Act, the Civil Service Code or otherwise.

The Business Appointment Rules explain that the restriction on lobbying means that the former Crown servant/Minister "*should not engage in communication with Government (Ministers, civil servants, including special advisers, and other relevant officials/public office holders) – wherever*

it takes place - with a view to influencing a Government decision, policy or contract award/grant in relation to their own interests or the interests of the organisation by which they are employed, or to whom they are contracted or with which they hold office."

I should be grateful if you would ensure that we are informed as soon as this appointment has been taken up or announced (I enclose a form for this purpose). We shall otherwise not be able to deal with any enquiries, since we do not release information about appointments which have not been taken up or announced, and this could lead to a false assumption being made about whether he had complied with the rules.

I should also be grateful if you would ask that Mr Prince informs us if he proposes to expand or otherwise change the nature of his role as, depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary for him to make a fresh application.

Once the position has been publicly announced or taken up, we will publish this letter on the Committee's website and include the main details of the application, together with the Advisory Committee's advice, in the regularly updated consolidated list on our website and in the next annual report.

Yours sincerely

Nicola Richardson
Committee Secretariat

