



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

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Dear Air Vice Marshal Ian Morrison,

1. You sought the Committee's advice about taking up a commission with Blue Abyss under your independent consultancy. The Committee has now considered this commission.
2. You seek to work with the company as a Non-Executive advisor to carry out work in line with your consultancy, to provide: advisory support, focusing on corporate governance, structure, leadership, management development, along with providing advice on the design/development of strategic plans and delivery roadmaps, and business development.
3. You informed the Committee that the company is a start-up. Although it was incorporated in 2014, you stated it continues in the Business Development phase. The website stated it is a pioneering centre and will be the most comprehensive deep sea and space research, training and test facility. It states Blue Abyss' primary function is to enable extreme environment development, both human and robotic, ranging from the offshore energy industry through to the growing human spaceflight sector and adventure tourism.
4. You told the Committee you had no dealings with relevant policy nor did you have dealings (contractual or non-contractual) with Blue Abyss while in service. You further stated you did not meet with competitors of Blue Abyss nor did you have access to sensitive information regarding these competitors.
5. You further stated Blue Abyss did have contact with the MOD generally on a number of matters including the likelihood of possible use at a future date of potential products/services that do not yet exist; and the possibility of them purchasing equipment that is no longer in use by the MOD. However, you did confirm the Company has no contracts with the MOD or UK Government, now or previously.
6. The MOD confirmed the above and further said had spent no money with Blue Abyss Diving nor is it a registered MOD Supplier.

Committee's consideration

7. The Committee¹ considered this commission to be broadly consistent with the description of your consultancy which you described as advising on corporate governance, structure, leadership, management development, along with providing advice on the design/ development of strategic plans and delivery roadmaps, and business development.
8. When considering this application the Committee took into account that this appointment has no connection with your role in Crown service. It particularly noted you had no dealings with the company whilst in office; and it is aware of no reason it might be perceived this appointment is a reward for decisions or actions taken in office.
9. The Committee has considered the risk that it may be perceived you may offer the company an unfair advantage by virtue of your role as Director General Saudi Armed Forces Projects. However, the Committee noted the amount of time that has passed since you were in office (17 months) and that this appointment is not related to your time in office. Therefore, the privileged information ban attached to your independent consultancy will help mitigate this risk.
10. Given your seniority there is a risk it could be perceived your contacts might assist the company unfairly. The Committee noted Blue Abyss did have contact with the MOD regarding future products. If Blue Abyss were to apply for any contracts or grants with the MOD in future you could be seen to unfairly benefit the company. The Committee would therefore draw your attention to the conditions attached to your consultancy which prevent you from making use of contacts gained during your crown service to the unfair advantage of your clients; and the ban on you advising your clients in relation to a bid or contract with the UK Government, including the MOD and its trading funds.
11. In accordance with the Government's Business Appointment Rules, the Committee advises this commission with **Blue Abyss (Diving) Ltd** be subject to the same conditions as your independent consultancy:
 - that you should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of yourself or the organisations to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to you from your time in office;
 - for two years from your last day in Crown service, you should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK MOD on behalf of those you advise under your independent consultancy (including parent companies, subsidiaries and partners); nor should you make use, directly or indirectly, of your MOD or government contacts to influence policy, secure funding/business or otherwise unfairly benefit those you advise under your independent consultancy (including parent companies, subsidiaries and partners);
 - for two years from your last day in Crown service, you should not become personally involved in lobbying contacts you have developed during Crown service, such as at BAE Systems, and in other Governments, such as that of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for the purpose of securing business for those

¹ This application for advice was considered by Sir Alex Allan; Jonathan Baume; Baroness Angela Browning; Terence Jagger; Richard Thomas; Lord Larry Whitty; Mike Weir and John Wood. Dr Susan Liautaud was unavailable.

you advise under your independent consultancy (including parent companies, subsidiaries and partners);

- for two years from your last day in Crown service, you should not provide advice to any company or organisation on the terms of, or with regard to the subject matter of, a bid with, or contract relating directly to the work of the UK Government, UK MOD, MODSAP or their trading funds;
- for two years from your last day in Crown service, before accepting any commissions for your independent consultancy and or/before extending or otherwise changing the nature of your commissions, you should seek advice from the Committee. The Committee will decide whether each commission is consistent with the terms of the consultancy and consider any relevant factors under the Business Appointment Rules.

12. 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.

13. 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."*

14. I should be grateful if you could let me know when you take up this commission, or if it is announced that you are to do so. This will enable the Committee to publish this letter on the Committee's website, and where appropriate, refer to it in the relevant annual report.

Yours sincerely

Isabella Wynn
Committee Secretariat