



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

The Rt Hon George Eustice MP
Secretary of State for Environment,
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Tamara Finkelstein CB
Permanent Secretary, Department for
Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
2 Marsham Street
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9 December 2020

Dear Tamara,

MOVEMENT ASSISTANCE SCHEME

Thank you for your letter of 9 December 2020 relating to the proposed Movement Assistance Scheme to support traders moving agri-food commodities and equines from Great Britain to Northern Ireland after the Transition Period ends on 31 December 2020. I am grateful to the Department for their work on this scheme.

As you highlight there is a strong policy rationale for these proposals. The Movement Assistance Scheme will provide advice and guidance to inform traders about the new requirements under the Northern Ireland Protocol and what they need to do to satisfy them. It will waive or cover the direct costs to traders of these new requirements for a limited period whilst traders adjust. This scheme will maintain the flow of goods and, in particular, the flow of food to Northern Ireland. These are temporary measures, being implemented in unique circumstances as the new requirements of the Northern Ireland Protocol come into force.

You have indicated that a direction is necessary because, having considered the proposals against the standards expected by Managing Public Money, it is not possible to construct a business case at this time to clearly demonstrate that this expenditure would be regular, proper or represent value for money. Weighing the potential risks this brings against the need to provide clarity and certainty to traders moving goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland, I have decided that the scheme should be established. I am therefore formally directing you as Accounting Officer proceed to establish the Movement Assistance Scheme.

I note that your letter and this reply will be published in due course after you have assessed the potential impact that making this request public might have on the confidence and take-up of the scheme.

I am copying this letter to the Comptroller and Auditor General and the Treasury Officer of Accounts. Given the interest in this subject, I am copying the Chair of the EFRA Select Committee.

RT HON GEORGE EUSTICE MP

