



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

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BUSINESS APPOINTMENT APPLICATION: Ruth Owen

The Committee has been asked to consider an application from Ruth Owen, Director General, Customer Services, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. Her last day of Crown service will be in June 2017.

The Committee took into consideration that this is a full time paid role as Partner, Advisory Services at EY Australia. The role will involve providing advisory services to public, not for profit and private sector organisations within Australia with a specific focus on Human Services (welfare/social services) and customer centric service transformation in Australia.

The Committee took into account that Ms Owen, and her former department, confirmed she is not tax qualified and her focus at HMRC was on customer services; she had no official dealings with EY UK or their competitors in the advisory or tax sector; and she was not involved in tax policy development.

The Committee noted that she was a stakeholder for a contract that was awarded by HMRC to EY UK in 2014. However, the Committee took into consideration that she has no involvement in the procurement, selection or management of this contract and that EY UK is a separate entity to the company she wishes to join in Australia. Ms Owen also assured the Committee she had no contact or official dealings with EY Australia while in service.

The Committee also took into account that her new role will involve no contact either with the UK Government or with HMRC. HMRC raised no concerns with the Committee about the role Ms Owen is seeking to take up subject to the usual restriction on using privileged information and ban on lobbying the UK government.

The Prime Minister accepted the Committee's advice that, in accordance with the Government's Business Appointment Rules, this appointment be subject to the following conditions:

- that she should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of herself or the organisation to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to her from her time in Crown service; and
- for two years from her last day in service, she should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government on behalf of EY Australia its partners, or those it advises.

- for two years from her last day in service she should not have any involvement with the UK tax affairs of any part of the worldwide partnership of EY itself, or the UK tax affairs of clients of any part of the worldwide partnership of EY.

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 Ms Owen takes up this position, or if it is announced that she will do so (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 she had complied with the Rules.

I should also be grateful if you would ask that Ms Owen informs us if she proposes to extend or otherwise change the nature of her role as, depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary for her to make a fresh application.

Once these appointments have 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

Alex Morrow
Committee Secretariat