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Date: 6 September 2012

Dear

**FOI / EIR Reference: 12/0968**

Thank you for your email dated 2 July 2012 in which you refined your request dated 29 May regarding information on meetings with renewable energy companies. I apologise for the delay in responding.

You have requested information on the following:

“Please will you provide all dates, attendee lists and minutes, if prepared, of meetings held since 1 October 2011 between (1) departmental Ministers and (2) officials in the DECC Office for Renewable Energy Deployment respectively and (a) the Renewable Energy Association and RenewableUK and (b) lobbyists for those organisations”.

We wrote to you on 30 July to advise you that the time to respond to your request needed to be extended. My full response to your request is now set out below.

We have considered your request in accordance with both the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“The Act”) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs) as some of the information you have sought disclosure of, does in our view, fall within the definition of ‘environmental information’ as stated in the EIRs.

We have interpreted your request as relating to meetings between (1) DECC Ministers and (2) officials from the Office for Renewable Energy Deployment (ORED) and the Renewable Energy Association (REA) and/or RenewableUK (RUK). My response therefore does not include conferences or stakeholder information events at which the REA and/or RUK may have been present.

All meetings between external organisations and DECC Ministers are published on a quarterly basis on the DECC website and are available for download at this link:

<http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/accesstoinform/registers/registers.aspx>.

This currently covers the period up to January to March 2012. Information on Ministerial meetings from April to June is currently being collated and will be published in due course.

With regard to minutes of Ministerial meetings, these are not published on our website. We are unable to provide the information you have requested because in our view the exception in Regulation 12(4)(b) of the EIRs is engaged. This Regulation provides that a public authority may refuse to disclose information to the extent that the request for information is manifestly unreasonable.

In order to provide you with the information on the scale that you have requested this would require searching through every entry in the above online register, covering the period 1 October 2011 to 31 March 2012 and for each of DECC's Ministers, to identify all meetings at which the REA and/or RUK were present. We would then need to locate any relevant meeting notes and make a decision on whether the information should be released. Given the volume of data concerned, gathering the information would likely involve a significant cost and a diversion of resources from the Team's other work.

In applying this exception, we have considered the public interest in disclosing the information. In this respect we recognise that disclosure could enhance public understanding of the Government's position on UK renewable energy policy. This would facilitate the accountability and transparency of Government decisions. However, we consider the balance of the public interest to lie in favour of withholding the information. This is because this part of your request is voluminous and to deal with it will involve applying significant resources which would otherwise be deployed in undertaking core work of the Department, including the development of policy.

The tables below show details of meetings between officials in ORED (and, where appropriate, other teams in DECC) and the REA and RUK respectively.  
Meetings between officials in ORED<sup>1</sup> and the REA since 1 October 2011

<b>Date</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Meeting note</b>
3 October 2011	Meeting to discuss 'Bridging Arrangements' under EMR (led by FID Team)	None
7 October 2011	Forum meeting with REA and members to discuss EMR and RO Transition (led by EMR Team)	None
21 October 2011	Meeting between Sarah Rhodes, Head of Land-based Renewables and REA	None
31 Oct 2011	Forum meeting with REA and members to discuss RO Fixed ROC proposals	Attached separately with names of staff below Senior Civil Service redacted
17 November 2011	Meeting between Sarah Rhodes, Head of Land-based Renewables and REA	None
17 November 2011	Meeting between Sarah Chambers, Director, ORED, officials from ORED's Feed-in Tariffs (FITs) Team and REA	None
17 November 2011	REA meeting on biomass attended by an official from DECC's Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) team	None
28 November 2011	Meeting with REA on RHI Phase 2 development attended by an official from DECC's RHI team	None
2 December 2011	Meeting with REA attended by Fiona Mettam, Head of the RHI team and another official from DECC's RHI team	None
6 Dec 2011	Meeting between Sarah Chambers, Director, ORED and REA and another Trade Association	None
5 Jan 2012	Meeting between Sarah Chambers, Director, ORED, an official from the FITs Team and REA	None
18 January 2012	Meeting with REA attended by Fiona Mettam, Head of the RHI team and other officials from DECC's RHI team	None
23 Jan 2012	Meeting between Sarah Chambers, Director, ORED, an official from the FITs Team and REA	None

<sup>1</sup> Includes other relevant teams within DECC

26 January 2012	Meeting between Sarah Rhodes, Head of Land-based Renewables and REA	None
2 February 2012	DECC-REA Update on Renewables Obligation (RO) & Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) sustainability with Paul Thompson, REA	None
2 February 2012	Meeting with REA to discuss options for sustainability regulation and the RHI, attended by officials from the RHI team	None
14 February 2012	On-site Renewables Group attended by officials from DECC's Heat & Industry Team	None
20 February 2012	Meeting with REA to discuss deep geothermal providing renewable heat to 2020 attended by David Wagstaff, Head of the Distributed Energy/Heat Team and officials from the Heat & Industry Team	None
23 February 2012	Meeting between Sarah Chambers, Director, ORED, an official from the FITs Team and REA	None
27 February 2012	Meeting between Sarah Chambers, Director, ORED, an official from the FITs Team and REA and another organisation	None
27 February 2012	Meeting on support for bioliquid electricity generation in the Renewables Obligation with Paul Thompson, REA and nine other organisations.	A note was taken by REA but they requested that we do not release it as it is confidential. <b>We are therefore withholding it under Section 41(1) of the Act.</b> Information is exempt under Section 41(1) if it was obtained from any other person (including another public authority) and its disclosure would give rise to an actionable breach of confidence. For the second condition to apply, the information concerned must have the necessary 'quality of confidence' in that the information is not trivial nor is it readily available by other means. We believe that both these conditions apply.
13 March 2012	Meeting between Sarah Chambers, Director, ORED, an official from the FITs Team and REA and a ground mount solar company	None
13 March 2012	Meeting between Sarah Chambers, Director, ORED, an official from the FITs Team, DECC Economists and REA	None
27 March 2012	1-1 Catch-up meeting between Hugh McNeal, CEO, ORED and Gaynor Hartnell, REA	None, as it was a catch-up meeting
28 March	Joint DECC, Defra, DfT meeting	None

2012	with REA representatives to discuss progress on the Bioenergy Strategy	
29 March 2012	Meeting between Sarah Rhodes, Head of Land-based Renewables and REA	None
18 April 2012	Meeting with REA to discuss the non-domestic RHI consultation, "Providing certainty and improving performance in the Renewable Heat Incentive" and the two-tier tariff, attended by officials from the RHI Team	None
23 April 2012	Meeting between Sarah Chambers, Director, ORED, officials from the FITs Team, a DECC Economist and REA	None
2 May 2012	Meeting between Sarah Chambers, Director, ORED, officials from the FITs and Strategy & Delivery Teams and two other organisations	None
15 May 2012	Biomass Heatgroup Meeting attended by officials from the RHI Team	Attached separately with names of staff below Senior Civil Service redacted
28 May 2012	Meeting between Sarah Chambers, Director, ORED and REA	None
31 May 2012	Meeting between Sarah Chambers, Director, ORED, an official from the FITs Team and REA and another Trade Association	None
25 June 2012	1-1 Catch-up meeting between Hugh McNeal, CEO, ORED and Gaynor Hartnell, REA	None, as it was a catch-up meeting
29 June 2012	Meeting to discuss EMR	no meeting note yet

### Meetings between officials in ORED and RUK since 1 October 2011

<b>Date</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Meeting note</b>
20 October 2011	DECC Officials/RUK – catch-up meeting with Alex Campbell, RUK	None, as it was a catch-up meeting
4 November 2011	DECC Officials/RUK – catch-up meeting	None, as it was a catch-up meeting
8 December 2011	General catch-up meeting. Agenda items: 2030 targets, Consenting lessons learned, Habitats Review, Oil and gas consenting, Stakeholder resources	None, as it was a catch-up meeting
13 December 2011	Meeting between Sarah Rhodes, Head of Land-based Renewables and RUK	None
17 January 2012	Meeting between an official from ORED and Paul Askew, RUK	None
20 January 2012	Catch- up meeting with RUK to discuss offshore renewables supply chain issues	None, as it was a catch-up meeting
25 January 2012	Catch- up meeting with RUK to discuss offshore renewables supply chain issues	None, as it was a catch-up meeting
8 February 2012	General catch-up meeting. Agenda items: Stakeholder charging: industry response, 2030 targets, RUK's 2012 communications strategy, Consenting workstream: roundtable and matters arising, Global Offshore Wind 2012: promotions and programme	None, as it was a catch-up meeting
13 February 2012	Meeting between Sarah Rhodes, Head of Land-based Renewables and RUK	None
14 February 2012	Meeting between an official from ORED and the aviation lead in RUK	None
22 February 2012	Meeting between officials from ORED and RUK to discuss interaction with the Oil and Gas Industry	None
27 February 2012	Catch- up meeting with RUK to discuss offshore renewables supply chain issues	None, as it was a catch-up meeting
20 March 2012	An official from ORED attended RUK's Consents and Licensing Group	None
27 March 2012	Catch- up meeting with RUK to discuss offshore renewables supply chain issues	None, as it was a catch-up meeting
30 March 2012	Catch- up meeting with RUK to discuss offshore renewables supply chain issues	None, as it was a catch-up meeting
12 April 2012	Meeting between officials from ORED and RUK onshore wind team re the BiGGAR report on economic benefits of onshore wind	None
17 April 2012	Aviation Management Board meeting, of which DECC and RUK are members	None
20 April 2012	Catch- up meeting with RUK to discuss offshore	None, as it

	renewables supply chain issues	was a catch-up meeting
30 April 2012	Catch-up meeting with RUK to discuss offshore renewables supply chain issues	None, as it was a catch-up meeting
2 May 2012	Meeting between officials from ORED and UKTI with Nick Medic, RUK to discuss offshore wind supply chain	No note taken by DECC attendee
23 April 2012	Meeting between officials from ORED and RUK onshore wind team plus another re the BiGGAR report on economic benefits of onshore wind	None
4 May 2012	General catch-up meeting. Agenda items: EMR Stakeholder funding, Global Offshore Wind 2012, HRA review analysis, Oil and Gas clause, launch of the Cost Reduction Task Force(CRTF) report	None, as it was a catch-up meeting
10 May 2012	Joint Nature Conservation Committee meeting attended by officials from ORED and RUK	None
10 May 2012	An official from ORED attended RUK's Consents and Licensing Group	None
14 May 2012	1-1 Catch-up meeting between Hugh McNeal, CEO, ORED and Maria McCaffery, RUK	None, as it was a catch-up meeting
21 May 2012	Introductory chat between an official from ORED and Paul Askew, RUK on aviation barriers to wind deployment, specifically radar interference mitigation	None, as it was an introductory meeting
29 May 2012	Officials from ORED attended a meeting of the RUK Marine Strategy Group to present the latest information on electricity market reform (EMR)	None
29 May 2012	Meeting between officials from ORED, RUK and a supply chain company to discuss offshore wind supply chain	No note taken by DECC attendee
31 May 2012	Meeting between Sarah Rhodes, Head of Land-based Renewables and RUK	None
1 June 2012	Offshore wind health & safety meeting attended by officials from ORED and RUK	None
12 June 2012	Introductory meeting between an official from ORED and the RUK marine energy lead	None, as it was an introductory meeting
2 July 2012	Catch-up meeting on radar mitigation attended by officials from ORED with Paul Askew, RUK	None, as it was a catch-up meeting
2 July 2012	1-1 Catch-up meeting between Hugh McNeal, CEO, ORED and Maria McCaffery, RUK	None, as it was a catch-up meeting

Some personal information has been redacted from the information that we have released above. Regulation 12(3) of the EIRs, with reference to Regulation 13, provides an absolute exemption for personal data which then falls to be dealt with under the Data Protection Act 1999. Personal data can only be released in accordance with the data protection principles. In particular,

the first data protection principle requires that disclosure must be fair and lawful and must comply with one of the conditions in Schedule 2 of the Data Protection Act. We do not consider it fair to release the names of junior staff (in the case of Government Departments this is usually taken to mean those below the Senior Civil Service) and do not think that any of the relevant conditions apply.

You have also requested information relating to meetings between (1) DECC Ministers and (2) officials from ORED and lobbyists for the REA and RUK. We do not maintain details of lobbyists for the REA and RUK. Therefore, it is not possible to identify information falling within scope of this part of your request. However, if you are able to provide names of individuals or companies of specific interest please contact the Department again and we will consider your request as a new case.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal reviews should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to me.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

**Office for Renewable Energy Deployment (ORED)**



## First attachment

<b>Stakeholder:</b>	<b>REA (Gaynor Hartnell and Tricia Wiley)</b>
<b>Attendees:</b>	<b>Name of officials redacted</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>21/02/11</b>

<b>Headlines:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>REA concerns over a single mechanism for all low carbon. Renewables industry favours Premium-FIT, but not sure what weight that has in comparison with CCS and Nuclear.</b></li><li>• <b>Need to consider self-supply generators. How will they receive subsidy when don't sell into the market.</b></li><li>• <b>Suggest use a day ahead index.</b></li></ul>
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## Notes: [OPTIONAL]

### **EMR**

- REA questioned how the CfD fitted with government's policy on no subsidy for nuclear.
- Concerned that response of renewables industry to the consultation would be discounted in favour of views from the wider market.
- Self-supplying generators need to be considered under the CfD institutional arrangements. If they don't sell into the market there will need to be a central contracting institution, rather than simply bilateral relationships with suppliers.
- Suggest use a day ahead index for the CfD.

### **RO Transition**

- Prefer a choice of mechanisms before 2017.
- Asked if any flexibility on the 2017 date for closing the RO if the EMR project was delayed – we explained no.
- Concern that the whole value of the ROC is grandfathered
- Would like certainty on transition arrangements as soon as possible – there is some hiatus at the moment until industry knows what is going to happen.

## Second attachment

**From:** (Office for Renewable Energy Deployment)

**Sent:** 01 November 2011 11:22

**To:** (DECC ORED); (Legal Services); (DECC); (Office for Nuclear Development); (DECC CSSS); (DECC); (Commercial); (Finance); (Energy Markets & Networks); (International Climate Change); (Energy Markets & Networks); (Energy Markets & Networks); (Energy Markets & Networks); (Energy Markets & Networks)

**Cc:** (Office for Renewable Energy Deployment)

**Subject:** Meeting with REA regarding Fixed ROC

Name redacted and I met with around 25 members of the REA yesterday to talk them through the options we are considering for the fixed-ROC mechanism (slides attached for info) to be introduced in 2027. Key points raised in the meeting were –

- Majority support for our preferred option A – Levy on Suppliers
- Although some questioned whether it would be problematic to have Ofgem as both regulator and counterparty if a ROC purchase contract was required and said preferred to see Govt acting as counterparty
- Felt it would be most straightforward if the fixed ROC is administered by the same institution as the FIT CfD.
- Asked what would happen in the event of a supplier going into administration, would there be some form of mutualisation process or would Govt become liable
- Asked if we could provide a timetable for implementing the transitional arrangements – i.e. when will we be consulting on changes to the ROO etc
- Questioned whether there would be changes to State Aid clearance given there would no longer be a buyout fund, and whether this would have implications for projects over 125MW needing to notify separately – **Name redacted**, probably helpful if I put something in the diary to have a quick chat about this.
- Felt that assuming arrangements concerning frequency of payments were at least as good as they are now then would be acceptable – weren't particularly pushing for arrangements to be improved

Name redacted

Renewables Obligation  
Department of Energy and Climate Change