



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

Nobel House  
17 Smith Square  
London SW1P 3JR

T 08459 335577  
helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk  
www.defra.gov.uk

Sir Christopher Rose  
Chief Surveillance Commissioner  
Office of Surveillance Commissioner  
London  
SW1V 1ZU

**From Bronwyn Hill**  
Permanent Secretary

*Fh* March 2013

*Dear Sir Christopher,*

**COVERT SURVEILLANCE**

Thank you for your letter of 10 January enclosing Sir David Clarke's inspection report about Defra's policies and procedures in place to control covert surveillance activities subject to the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (RIPA) Act 2000.

I am pleased that Sir David's report recognises that a substantial amount of work has been done to meet the recommendations of the 2010 report and confirms that Defra is maintaining RIPA awareness, thus reducing the risk of any unauthorised covert activity.

I accept the first three recommendations relating to Defra's Policy and Operational Document, awareness training and the authorisation process. I accept in principle the fourth recommendation for the Marine Management Organisation to be invested with covert surveillance powers, subject to further discussions with the Home Office. Our Ministers have written to Home Office Ministers seeking agreement to take this forward.

I am attaching a table that summarises our response to the recommendations in both the 2010 and 2012 reports.

*Yours sincerely,*

**BRONWYN HILL**