

## Regulatory Policy Committee - meeting minutes

Monday 18 May 2015  
1 Victoria Street, London

**Present:** Michael Gibbons (Chairman), Jonathan Cave, Alexander Ehmann, Jeremy Mayhew, Martin Traynor, Sarah Veale, Ken Warwick; secretariat.

**Also attending:** Stephen Hodgson (items 1-4, Better Regulation Executive (BRE)) Liz Cooper (items 1-3, BRE), Lord Lindsay (item 4, Chairman - United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS)), Paul Stennett (item 4 CEO - UKAS), Malcolm Hynd (item 4, External Affairs Manager - UKAS), Hiroko Plant (item 4, BIS analysis),

### 1. Minutes of the previous meeting, updates and matters arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed, subject to minor drafting changes.

No changes to the register of interests were declared.

In discussing the case work pilot members were interested to know why the handful of departments choosing to not take part were doing so. Feedback so far suggests either a preference for seeing how the pilot impacts on other departments ratings or limited resources within BRUs to communicate/manage a revised process internally in the short term.

### 2. Framework review

Stephen Hodgson updated the committee on events since the election, including the appointment of BIS SofS and ministers, but stressed the ministerial portfolios are yet to be confirmed.

### 3. Advice to incoming ministers

The secretariat outlined the process for finalising the letter, and tailoring it to the better regulation minister when confirmed.

The secretariat introduced the item on the analytical annex, clarifying that it was not intended to accompany the introductory letter but to provide a key reference document summarising the analysis of the last few months. This can then be used as briefing in advance of meetings, and potentially shared with ministers.

Members had a number of comments on the content and drafting of the paper.

The secretariat committed to circulating a revised letter and analytical annex.

In reflecting on the SaMBA discussion the committee recognised the need to

ensure that departments were more aware of the RPC's expectations, including within the current rules and any revised framework. These will be developed, alongside any other necessary RPC led guidance, once the framework is settled.

#### **4. Presentation – United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS)**

Lord Lindsay introduced the work and history of UKAS, including commenting how accreditation is used often in tandem rather than instead of regulation. Malcolm Hynd talked to the presentation.

Members wanted to explore how consideration of accreditation/UKAS's role could practically be woven into the regulatory scrutiny process in a more systematic way. But, highlighted that to support this type of approach there needed to be greater clarity on the costs associated with accreditation.

Lord Lindsay explained that flexibility of implementation and the industry ownership of the standards are seen as key – they are not only likely to be effective but tailored to deliver more benefits to the businesses than is likely to be achieved under regulation, but due to constraints on the available of economist support UKAS were not in a position to demonstrate this in a robust and systematic manner.

Members felt further consideration should be given to whether there should be a requirement as part of the IA process to demonstrate that departments have considered consulting with UKAS/accreditation. At present it can be difficult for the RPC to really understand where there are not genuine alternatives, and this is something that should be reflected in the development of the alternatives work, and potentially in any future RPC guidance on expectations for considerations of alternatives.

#### **5. Case prioritisation (triage) process**

The secretariat introduced the paper covering the triage criteria, highlighting that these could be used to inform a more nuanced allocations process in the short term, in advance of any more significant structural changes within the team. The purpose of the prioritisation process was highlighted as intending to both smooth case loads for members, but also to ensure that simpler cases were not unduly held up by complex cases. The experience for the RPC and those working on the cases may not be significantly different, but some benefits are expected for departments. In respond to comments from Hiroko, the secretariat committed to exploring further the evidence on queueing theory to demonstrate these potential benefits.

Members agreed the proposition in the paper that, in trying to identify the types of cases, the main purpose of a prioritisation process was to separate the straightforward and unstraightforward cases (including those with significant impacts or complex methodologies), rather than focusing on identifying potentially red-rated cases.

#### **6. Methodology**

The methodology note has been prepared and circulated separately

## 7. AOB

The Chairman, and all members, thanked Irene for her hard work and dedication from the inception of the RPC – as a founding member of the RPC secretariat she has been instrumental in making the organisation it is.