

Wilson Review of Support for Scottish Exporting – Cross Government Joint Working Group 2015

Preamble

In March 2015, the UK Government published its response to the Wilson Review of Support for Scottish Exporting. This announced the creation of a short life cross-government Joint Working Group to deliver a practical and operational response to key recommendations in the Wilson Review.

The UK Government response identified two linked and overarching themes for action:

- **Delivering simplicity and clarity across the diverse portfolios of high quality public and private export support available to businesses in Scotland.**
- **Achieving greater collaboration, co-operation and alignment between the organisations providing support to Scottish exporters.**

The Joint Working Group, chaired by the Scotland Office, brought together representatives from UK Trade & Investment (UKTI), Scottish Government and Scottish Development International (SDI). Together the Group has created the attached action plan which sets out the work now on-going to address recommendations in the Wilson Review which can be jointly addressed by the governments and respective delivery agencies.

Whilst the Wilson Review focuses on Scotland, the overarching themes have significant pertinence across the UK. Through regular monthly Partnership Forums, UKTI is working with the devolved administrations more widely to improve and expand the export offer for business across the whole of the UK and to ensure that UKTI's sectoral expertise and global geographic reach compliment services delivered by the devolved administrations.

The fact that a wide range of businesses, business representative bodies and trade associations contributed to the Wilson Review, is illustrative of the strong interest across all sectors in delivering effective support to Scottish exporters. Going forward, the organisations that were involved in the Joint Working Group will continue to promote co-operation and alignment between providers of export advice and support in Scotland, to ensure the best service possible for the Scottish business community.

The Joint Working Group was established to outline a course of action: it was never the intention to replace or replicate established working arrangements. Responsibility for delivering the agreed actions, outlined in the annex to this document, will fall to the delivery agencies. Work to address the Wilson Review recommendations will also be detailed in the forthcoming Trade and Investment Strategy for Scotland¹.

Going forward, both governments and the respective delivery agencies are committed to continuing to strengthen the relationship between UKTI and SDI and to making constructive use of available

¹ [Scotland's Economic Strategy](#), March 2015, signalled the Scottish Government's intention to develop a new Trade and Investment Strategy for Scotland. The new Strategy is due to be published in early 2016.

resources to help Scottish businesses achieve their export ambitions. Ministers have a strong interest in effective implementation of the action plan.

Wilson Review of Support for Scottish Exporting – Joint Action Plan

Delivering simplicity and clarity across the diverse portfolios of high quality public and private export support available to businesses in Scotland.

A simple digital offer for business

- The ‘mygov.scot’ website will provide a single point of access for online information on government services for businesses in Scotland, with information aimed directly at business users and improved signposting to other websites.
- A Digital Forum involving UKTI, SDI, the Welsh Government, Invest NI and London & Partners (along with MIDAS² and Business Birmingham partners) has been established to share these agencies’ approaches to the digital delivery of services with a view to building on best practice, preventing duplication and making trade and investment services both easier to find and access digitally and available to a wider group of companies. This will include information on exporting being clearly signposted on UKTI and SDI websites, along with links to advice and support available from UKTI, SDI and UK Export Finance.
- In line with this wider agenda, SDI is rolling out a ‘Digital First’ approach in Scotland which will improve the digital availability of, and access to, trade and investment services.

Achieving greater collaboration, co-operation and alignment between the organisations serving Scottish exporters.

The Partnership Forum - trade and investment representatives from UKTI and SDI (together with representatives from London & Partners, Invest NI and the Welsh Government) are working together to jointly progress initiatives to maximise delivery of trade and investment opportunities across the UK. These initiatives are focused on:

- targeting innovative and high growth SMEs;
- realising high value opportunities;
- promoting locations and clusters of opportunity, to attract high quality inward investment; and
- building strategic relationships.

The Partnership Forum reports to the strategically focussed Executive Forum of Chief Executive representatives from the devolved administrations on a six monthly basis.

Shared UKTI/SDI agenda - trade and investment representatives from UKTI and SDI are working together to:

- consider what services these agencies deliver to companies at different stages of exporting and how to achieve the best possible alignment in services and use of expertise;
- develop training/guidance for in-market staff on Scotland’s exports and inward investment priorities;
- jointly design and deliver UK-wide initiatives (for example the UK Explore Export roadshows, Exporting is GREAT campaign and UK Financial Centres of Excellence) in

² Manchester’s inward investment agency.

Scotland, ensuring that these recognise and take account of Scotland's strengths and involve key partners; and

- co-ordinate activity around high growth markets such as India and China.

Working with partners

SDI has established a new Community of Practice which brings together the range of organisations in Scotland involved in supporting exporters and attracting investment to Scotland. Public sector members of the Community of Practice include Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Enterprise, Business Gateway, Visit Scotland, UKTI and Scotland Office, alongside organisations such as SCDI, the Confederation of British Industry Scotland, China British Business Council, Scottish Cities Alliance, Scottish Chambers of Commerce and Scottish North American Business Council. Its role is to:

- co-ordinate events across Scotland and provide support to partner organisations;
- identify opportunities for joint working on visits by potential investors, market awareness events and trade missions; and
- ensure greater visibility of internationalisation activity across Scotland.

The Community of Practice will meet on a quarterly basis.

A SIMPLE DIGITAL OFFER FOR BUSINESS	
ACTION	PROGRESS & NEXT STEPS
<p>The 'mygov.scot' website will provide a single point of access for online information on government services for businesses in Scotland, with information aimed directly at business users and improved signposting to other websites.</p>	<p>In recognition that exporting is a key interest for SMEs, mygov.scot is designing and delivering a pipeline of work to provide access to relevant information and support.</p> <p>Following an initial release in early 2016 of exporting information on mygov.scot, actions for further development and streamlining the exporting landscape will be agreed and delivered with key stakeholders.</p>
<p>Work will be taken forward through the Digital Forum to share approaches to the digital delivery of services with a view to building on best practice, preventing duplication and making trade and investment services both easier to find and access digitally and available to a wider group of companies. This will include information on exporting being clearly signposted on UKTI and SDI websites, along with links to advice and support available from UKTI, SDI and UK Export Finance.</p>	<p>In line with the Digital Agenda, two meetings of the Digital Forum have now taken place.</p> <p>Data, Marketing, Digital Services and Customer Mapping are the key areas of discussion for improvement, in order to ensure complete digital alignment across UKTI and the devolved administrations. Once agreement has been reached, exporting support will be clearly signposted on UKTI and SDI websites to ensure an effective and simple digital customer journey.</p> <p>The second meeting of the Digital Forum took place in Scotland in November 2015 and focussed on Scottish Enterprise's Digital First approach which uses a fast turnaround Agile methodology to make continual improvements to the digital delivery of services on international trade and investment.</p> <p>Partners in the Digital Forum are committed to digitising international trade services and joint working to progress this will be a priority through 2016 and beyond.</p>
<p>SDI's 'Digital First' approach in Scotland will improve the digital availability of, and access to, trade and investment services.</p>	<p>Although still in its early stages, the Digital First approach is already helping to reach, and support, more companies through digital channels. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Webinar Pilot Programme was introduced in September 2015; • a revised export service landing page on scottish-enterprise.com went live in October 2015; • a new Export Diagnostic Tool was launched and made available to customers in November

	2015; SDI will continue to test and develop options to improve digital access, in order to provide better value, higher quality tailored support for companies.
PARTNERSHIP FORUM	
ACTION	PROGRESS & NEXT STEPS
<p>Work will be taken forward through the Partnership Forum to jointly progress initiatives focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> targeting innovative and high growth SMEs; realising high value opportunities; promoting locations and clusters of opportunity, to attract high quality inward investment; and building strategic relationships. 	<p>The Partnership Forum meets quarterly, supported by working groups as required.</p> <p>In addition, UKTI and SDI meet monthly to progress joint initiatives.</p> <p>Current priorities are digital services, staff training and development and joint working on increasing the number of new exporters. The Partnership Forum is also exploring opportunities for joint working on inward investment opportunities, especially among the devolved administrations.</p>
SHARED UKTI/SDI AGENDA	
ACTION	PROGRESS & NEXT STEPS
<p>UKTI and SDI will jointly review the services they deliver to companies at different stages of exporting and how to achieve the best possible alignment in services and use of expertise.</p>	<p>SDI has mapped its own and UKTI's services against the export customer journey and, with UKTI, is examining these for potential improvements. This will be completed by the end of operating year 2015-16.</p>
<p>UKTI and SDI will jointly develop training/guidance for in-market staff on Scotland's exports and inward investment priorities.</p>	<p>Development of training/guidance for in-market staff is underway and will be completed by the end of operating year 2015-16.</p>
<p>UKTI and SDI will jointly design and deliver UK-wide initiatives (for example the UK Explore Export roadshows, Exporting is GREAT campaign and UK Financial Centres of Excellence) in Scotland, ensuring that these recognise and take account of Scotland's strengths and involve key partners.</p>	<p>UKTI and SDI worked closely together on delivery of the annual Explore Export event in Edinburgh on 6 November, attended by over 150 businesses. This event facilitates one-to-one meetings with export advisers for Scottish businesses with an interest in selling overseas or expanding their overseas sales. Businesses also have the opportunity to attend seminars and visit partner organisations in the exhibition area.</p> <p>UKTI and SDI are working with partners to develop opportunities to reach and support more Scottish companies via the Exporting is GREAT campaign. As part of the campaign, the Export Hub (a specially adapted truck which will host seminars, workshops and one-to-one meetings with export advisers) will tour Scotland</p>

	<p>from 29 February to 4 March 2016.</p> <p>UKTI and SDI are working together to develop proposition material which will showcase the Scottish financial services sector as one of eight regional UK Financial Centres of Excellence. The initiative is expected to be launched in Scotland in early 2016.</p>
<p>UKTI and SDI will co-ordinate activity around high growth markets such as India and China.</p>	<p>Relevant teams within UKTI and SDI are engaged in a range of activity around the key markets of India and China. Current examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work on a joint approach to Chinese internet retailer Alibaba around ‘Scotch is Great’; • work with UKTI China to bring a marine energy delegation from the Zhoushan region to England and then to Scotland; • support by UKTI for SDI’s cross sector trade mission to the UAE, including a site visit in Dubai organised by a Globalscot; and • joint work on identifying opportunities in China for Scottish independent schools, including a Chinese inward delegation in late 2015 facilitated by UKTI.
<p>WORKING WITH PARTNERS</p>	
<p>ACTION</p>	<p>PROGRESS & NEXT STEPS</p>
<p>A new Community of Practice will bring together the range of organisations in Scotland involved in supporting exporters and attracting investment to Scotland in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • co-ordinate events across Scotland and provide support to partner organisations; • identify opportunities for joint working on visits by potential investors, market awareness events and trade missions; and • ensure greater visibility of internationalisation activity across Scotland. 	<p>One of the early tasks of the Community of Practice has been to agree to and create central recording of events and activities taking place in Scotland and overseas. This will enable partners to work together efficiently on events to ensure that all companies in Scotland, across different regions, can access support and services. It will also prevent duplication where events are aimed at similar target groups.</p> <p>The Community of Practice is also starting to consider how the different partners can cooperate on the information available to partners and to companies digitally.</p> <p>Planned meetings of the Community of Practice will consider opportunities for joining up activity under the High Value Opportunities Programme and ongoing development of the GlobalScots network.</p>