



Department for
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Dear Cathryn,

Thank you for your report on the regulation of fusion energy and for the RHC's wider work on supporting the Government on regulatory reform of important technological innovations. It is critical that regulation is appropriate to enable the development of promising new technologies, so I am very grateful for your contribution to this area.

Fusion energy would be the ultimate clean power solution, delivering clean, safe, inexhaustible energy with no long-lived radioactive waste. BEIS has already been considering how the UK's fusion regulatory framework could enable public and private sector fusion programmes to plan for the future and ensure that fusion is regulated appropriately and proportionately. As such, you will be pleased to know that we plan to publish a full consultation on Fusion Regulation later this year, enabling all stakeholders and the public the chance to have their say.

The RHC's comprehensive report is therefore a helpful and timely contribution to this conversation. This is particularly with regards to the UK's STEP (Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production) programme which aims to develop, by 2040, what is expected to be the world's first prototype fusion power plant, to deliver energy to the UK grid.

The Government agrees with the RHC that the lower intrinsic hazard of the fusion process when compared to fission is an incredibly important factor in considering the regulatory framework for fusion. It is also important to recognise the hazards in the fusion process and the overall technical uncertainty given that fusion is still a developing technology. The complexity of this issue means that the Government cannot yet take a firm view on the RHC's recommendations. However, BEIS commits to respond fully, in line with the RHC Charter, once it has considered responses to the forthcoming consultation in early 2022.

I am very grateful to the Regulatory Horizons Council for their important and valued contribution to the subject of fusion regulation, and for helping to show that the UK is serious about fusion and unleashing innovation across the UK.

Yours sincerely,

AMANDA SOLLOWAY MP

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