



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

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BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS APPLICATION FOR ADVICE: Sir Laurie Bristow KCMG, former Strategic Advisor, Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office. An unpaid appointment with the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI).

1. Mr Bristow sought advice from the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments (the Committee) under the Government's Business Appointment Rules for Former Crown Servants (the Rules) on an unpaid role he wants to take up with the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI). The material information taken into consideration by the Committee is set out in the annex.
2. The purpose of the Rules is to protect the integrity of the Government. Under the Rules, the Committee's remit is to consider the risks associated with the actions and decisions made during time in office, alongside the information and influence a former Strategic Advisor at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office may offer RUSI.
3. The Committee has advised that a number of conditions be imposed to mitigate the potential risks to the Government associated with this appointment under the Rules; this does not imply the Committee has taken a view on the appropriateness of this appointment for a former Strategic Advisor in any other respect.
4. The Rules¹ set out that Crown servants must abide by the Committee's advice. It is an applicant's personal responsibility to manage the propriety of any appointment. Former Crown servants are expected to uphold the highest standards of propriety and act in accordance with the 7 Principles of Public Life.

The Committee's advice

¹ Which apply by virtue of the Civil Service Management Code, The Code of Conduct for Special Advisers, The Queen's Regulations and the Diplomatic Service Code

5. When considering this application, the Committee² took into account this appointment is unpaid³. Generally, the Committee's experience is that the risks related to unpaid roles are limited. The purpose of the Rules is to protect the integrity of the Government by considering the real and perceived risks associated with former ministers joining outside organisations. Those risks include: using privileged access to contacts and information to the benefit of themselves or those they represent. The Rules also seek to mitigate the risks that individuals may make decisions or take action in office to in expectation of rewards, on leaving government. These risks are significantly limited in unpaid cases due to the lack of financial gain to the individual.
6. The Committee took into account that Mr Bristow met with the RUSI while in post as part of his role as Strategic Advisor. However, he did not make any policy or commercial decisions specific to the organisation. As above the Committee noted this is an unpaid role and therefore the risk of reward is limited. While there are inherent risks associated with access to sensitive information and contacts, the standard conditions below, preventing him from drawing on his privileged information and using his contacts to the unfair advantage of his new employer, will sufficiently mitigate the risk in this case.
7. Taking into account these factors, in accordance with the Government's Business Appointment Rules, the Committee advises this appointment with **The Royal United Services Institute** be subject to the following conditions:
 - he should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of himself or the persons or organisations to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to him from his time in Crown service;
 - for two years from his last day in Crown service, he should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK government or any of its Arm's Length Bodies on behalf of Royal United Services Institute (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients); nor should he make use, directly or indirectly, of his contacts in the government and/or ministerial contacts to influence policy, secure business/funding or otherwise unfairly advantage Royal United Services Institute (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients);
 - for two years from his last day in Crown service he should not provide advice to Royal United Services Institute on the terms of, or with regard to the subject matter of, a bid or contract with, or relating directly to the work of the UK government or any of its Arm's Length Bodies.
8. The advice and the conditions under the government's Business Appointment

² This application for advice was considered by Jonathan Baume; Andrew Cumpsty; Sarah de Gay; Isabel Doverty; The Rt Hon Lord Pickles; Mike Weir; Lord Larry Whitty. Dr Susan Liautaud and Richard Thomas were unavailable.

³By unpaid the Committee means that no remuneration of any kind is received for the role. Applicants must declare where it is agreed or anticipated they may receive remuneration or some other compensation at some stage in the future.

Rules relate to your previous role in government only; they are separate to rules administered by other bodies such as the Office of the Registrar of Consultant Lobbyists or the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards. It is an applicant's personal responsibility to understand any other rules and regulations they may be subject to in parallel with this Committee's advice.

9. By 'privileged information' we mean official information to which a minister or Crown servant has had access as a consequence of his or her office or employment and which has not been made publicly available. Applicants are also reminded that they may be subject to other duties of confidentiality, whether under the Official Secrets Act, the Ministerial Code/Civil Service Code or otherwise.
10. The Business Appointment Rules explain that the restriction on lobbying means that the former Crown servant/Minister "*should not engage in communication with Government (Ministers, civil servants, including special advisers, and other relevant officials/public office holders) – wherever it takes place - with a view to influencing a Government decision, policy or contract award/grant in relation to their own interests or the interests of the organisation by which they are employed, or to whom they are contracted or with which they hold office.*"
11. Mr Bristow must inform us as soon as he takes up this work or if it is announced that he will do so. We shall otherwise not be able to deal with any enquiries since we do not release information about appointments that have not been taken up or announced. This could lead to a false assumption being made about whether Mr Bristow has complied with the Civil Service code. Similarly, he must inform us if he proposes to extend or otherwise change his role with the organisation as depending on the circumstances, it might be necessary for him to seek fresh advice.
12. Once this appointment has been publicly announced or taken up, we will publish this letter on the Committee's website.

Andrea Benjamin
Committee Secretariat

Annex - Material information

The role

1. RUSI is a think tank with UK-registered charity status. RUSI's website states it is *'the world's oldest and the UK's leading defence and security think tank. Its mission is to inform, influence and enhance public debate on a safer and more stable world'*. It focuses on *'Military Sciences, International Security Studies, National Security and Resilience Studies, Nuclear Proliferation, Financial Crime and Defence, Industries and Society'*.
2. Mr Bristow stated this is a part time, unpaid position as a distinguished fellow. He stated his role will be to: *'Participate in RUSI's research, contribute to RUSI's written outputs, chair sessions, speak at RUSI events, join relevant dinners, assist with stakeholder engagement. Advise on future development of programmes, in particular relating to Russia, Afghanistan, European security.'* He envisioned the role to include contact with policy in HMG working on relevant issues, in order to understand HMG policies and their background but there will be no role in lobbying or advising on a bid or contract with the government.

Dealings in office

4. Mr Bristow stated he met with RUSI on a number of occasions in forms of discussions in line with his responsibilities and chaired a weekly meeting with senior experts, which RUSI also attended. He stated there is a commercial relationship between FCDO and RUSI however he made no commercial or contractual decisions regarding the organisation. He also had no commercially sensitive information on RUSI or their competitors.

Department Assessment

6. The FCDO confirmed the details provided by Mr Bristow in his application. The department saw no concerns with this appointment, adding that the standard conditions should be applied.

