



Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP  
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Lord Pickles  
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6<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Dear Eric,

Thank you for your letter of 7 September to the former Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster concerning Sir George Zambellas' acceptance of a paid role advising the Hellenic Republic.

The Cabinet Office agrees with the Committee's assessment that Sir George has not adhered to the Rules by accepting a role without receiving the Committee's advice in advance. I understand from your correspondence that Sir George previously approached the Committee to request advice to set up his own consultancy company. He subsequently provided advice to the Hellenic Republic on a private basis, not via his consultancy. This meant that the Committee did not have the opportunity to assess the role and provide advice before Sir George accepted it.

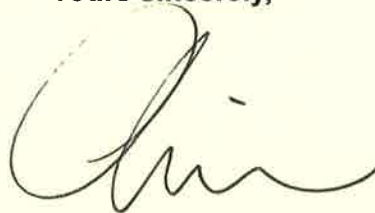
I note that Sir George proactively sought advice from the Committee to confirm whether he was in breach of the rules and that there is no overlap with the responsibility he had previously as former First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff. I also note Sir George's confirmation that he did not provide advice on lobbying or utilised information gained during his time as a Crown servant.

I agree with the Committee's assessment that the circumstances of this breach and Sir George's actions limits the risk involved. From the correspondence you enclosed, I

understand that Sir George has apologised for this error. Given the elapse of 20 months between his time in office and the commencement of the role for the Hellenic Republic, and his willingness to raise the issue with ACOBA himself, I believe further action would be disproportionate in this case. The publication of this correspondence has ensured public transparency on this issue and will clarify to those who are subject to the Rules that they should proactively seek advice from the Committee on whether an application needs to be made for new endeavours.

I would like to thank the Committee for bringing this to my attention and for your continuing work in this area.

**Yours sincerely,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'O Dowden', written in a cursive style.

**Rt Hon. Oliver Dowden CBE MP  
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster**