



Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP
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Lord Pickles
Chair, The Advisory Committee on Business Appointments
1 Horseguards Road
London SW1A 2HQ

By email: acoba@acoba.gov.uk

5th December 2022

Dear Eric,

Thank you for your letter of 22 November, relating to Mr Hancock's appearances on two television shows. I agree with the Committee's assessment that Mr Hancock has not adhered to the Business Appointment Rules by failing to seek the Committee's advice in advance of signing up to these appearances.

Regardless of the limited risk presented by these appearances, Mr Hancock should have sought ACOBA's advice before entering into the engagements with ITV and Channel 4. I agree that undertaking a series of short-term appearances on the assumption they constitute 'one-off' engagements should not be used as means of not complying with the Rules. It is vital that all individuals who have held Ministerial positions are seen to abide by the requirement to seek advice about any appointments or employment they wish to take up within two years of leaving office.

I note the Committee's assessment that the risks surrounding media appointments are limited, and typically subject to the conditions that former Ministers are already required to abide by following their departure from office. Due to the highly visible nature of the roles and minimal risks to the integrity of government, we agree with the Committee's advice that further action would be disproportionate in this case.

I agree that applications for roles of limited risk to the integrity of government should be processed in a more streamlined manner to allow the system to focus on those roles where

the issues are particularly complex and challenging. As you are aware, my officials have been working with the secretariat of your Committee to put in place a proportionate process to this effect, and more guidance on this will be made available to applicants in the near future.

I would like to thank the Committee for your ongoing work on these matters.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Oliver Dowden', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

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