HM Treasury, 1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

13 March 2026

Dear CEOs and dutyholders,

**IMPLEMENTING THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY TASKFORCE REVIEW**

I am writing to you alongside the publication of the Government Response to the Nuclear Regulatory Taskforce led by John Fingleton. This is a critical report in ensuring we work together to build the nuclear capacity we need at pace. It will require substantial change from Government, from regulators and from industry at all levels of the supply chain. We will implement the measures we have outlined by December 2027.

Nuclear power and the renewal of the nuclear deterrent are strategic priorities for the United Kingdom. Nuclear power will play a critical role in delivering our clean energy ambitions, but also driving the UK's energy security well into the future. The nuclear deterrent is the cornerstone of our national security, providing the ultimate safeguard of the UK's values and way of life for over 70 years, and is as critical now as it has ever been. Success in both these areas is vital for our economic growth, energy, and national security objectives. The urgent need to deliver means that we need to work together to avoid delay, inertia, and the prioritisation of process over outcome.

The Government is committed to safe standards and outcomes. A new approach will not dilute the UK's commitment to nuclear safety; it will enable resources to be focused on the most significant risks. The Government expects regulators and industry to treat nuclear programme delivery as a national priority. Safe, but timely and cost-effective, deployment of nuclear power, defence nuclear infrastructure and capabilities, decommissioning works, and other related infrastructure is directly in the public interest.

The Nuclear Regulatory Taskforce found both that regulators can overreach, leading to gold plating, and that companies do not challenge that overreach often enough. It also found that companies can choose expensive bespoke solutions rather than more efficient standardised options. The report highlighted three fundamental drivers of high cost and delay in the nuclear sector: risk aversion, the priority of process over outcome and a lack of incentives aligned with the public interest.

The Government will work with regulators and industry to ensure that we all take time and cost efficiency as seriously as if they were in a competitive market. We must all put serious effort into stripping away duplicative or gold-plated processes, overly complex guidance, rules, and regulations, both in our own organisations and in supply chains. We should focus resources on

the most safety-critical issues. We should evolve from a culture that resists new technology and practice to one that actively enables their safe implementation.

The accountability for progress rests not just with Government, but with the leadership of each organisation across the civil and defence nuclear sectors, including the supply chain. The Nuclear Regulatory Taskforce Review makes clear that an essential route to better outcomes is a more joined-up and collaborative set of work across organisational boundaries. Across and between the public and private sectors engagement and dialogue on regulatory decisions – including both those taken by regulators and within private sector organisations, should be default. We should move immediately towards more transparent information and advice sharing, with an emphasis on a culture of constructive problem-solving. This should include coordinating actions, and sharing lessons and best practice to ensure that this new culture is embedded across the industry.

Timeliness and predictability of decision-making are essential to successful delivery. Alongside the commitments the Government has made to implement the recommendations of the review, I am asking you to rigorously review your internal processes, incentives and performance management approach to identify where complexity, delay, or uncertainty can be reduced, and to ensure that responsibility for decision-making is understood and supported by clear timelines and effective oversight.

Please assess the way your organisation approaches risk management and challenge yourselves on whether those responsible for risk management are properly equipped and empowered to make proportionate judgements on acceptable risk, or if the location or mandate of those decision-makers should change. The Government has an active interest in the performance and speed of the system as a whole. **Delay is not a neutral outcome; it carries its own risks**. The Government will support you in making prompt, well-reasoned, evidence-based decisions, including where those decisions involve managed risk.

I am therefore asking you to respond within six months setting out:

- How you, your organisation and your supply chain plan to improve the timely and cost-effective delivery of the Government's nuclear programme while maintaining safe outcomes.
- What changes you are making to your or others' processes and systems that will improve pace, proportionality and coordination, especially measures which will adopt a more proportionate approach to risks that are already within robust legal limits.
- What measures your organisation will take to respond to the cultural issues identified within the Taskforce's report.
- Where relevant, how contractual arrangements can be modified to ensure incentives are aligned to the prompt delivery of projects.
- What savings you expect this to produce in terms of both time and cost.

HM Treasury, 1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

The significant response time is to allow for board-led engagement at all levels of your organisation before responding. I ask that you separate your responses into those parts you are comfortable with Government publishing and those that are commercially sensitive, keeping in mind the ambition for a substantial step change. Please let your relevant points of contact in Government know the identity of your organisation's Senior Responsible Owner for this programme of change.

In addition to implementing the recommendations of the Nuclear Regulation Taskforce we are also taking steps to ensure the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) in particular is set up in a way to maximise the success of our national priorities. We are merging the Defence Nuclear Safety Regulator with the ONR, with appropriate national security safeguards, and we will be legislating to give the ONR an explicit secondary mandate to support delivery of growth, energy, and national security objectives through the nuclear sector. Across the regulatory system for which the Government is responsible we will take further steps where needed to ensure the level and speed of change we are seeking.

Finally, I would like to reiterate that the Government views these changes as an enormous opportunity for the nuclear sector to deliver more effectively in these nationally important areas. We want to work with you to deliver this radical reset at pace.

Given the positive reaction to the review in the sector, I expect the support of everyone in the sector, whether in a leadership, management or delivery role, private or public sector, military or civilian, in delivering these changes.

Rachel Reeves

**RT HON RACHEL REEVES MP**
Chancellor of the Exchequer