

Alison McGovern MP
House of Commons,
London, SW1A 0AA

Dear Ms McGovern,

Re: PQ 128610: To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, how many staff employed by the Equality and Human Rights Commission are working on the gender pay gap.

I am writing further to your written question of 20 February 2018, in which you asked how many staff employed by the Equality and Human Rights Commission are working on the gender pay gap.

You'll be aware of the two sets of regulations requiring public, private and voluntary sector employers with 250 or more employees to publish their gender pay gap information, and that the reporting deadlines are 30 March 2018 for the public sector and 4 April 2018 for the private/voluntary sector. The Commission has the statutory power to enforce these regulations and we take very seriously the need to do so. By holding employers to account, they can be a catalyst for change and encourage positive steps to be taken to address the gender pay gap. That is why, subject to resources, we have committed in the first year to initiating enforcement action against 100% of employers who have not reported.

Our enforcement of the regulations was not envisaged when our current spending review settlement was reached so we have requested a small amount of money to cover this work. We currently have two members of the legal team working full-time on preparing for the enforcement of the regulations but we need at least five full-time members of staff in order to uphold our commitment to 100% enforcement in the first year. Without the additional funding, we would be required to fund the work from our own budget, which would mean that we had to scale back significantly the amount of enforcement work that we can do and reduce resources available for work across other protected characteristics.

You will no doubt be aware that sex discrimination in the workplace is already an important strategic issue for the Commission. Our work around pregnancy/maternity-related flexible working, unconscious bias in recruitment, sexual harassment and the gender pay gap forms a rounded and coherent programme of work on this systemic issue which involves a flexible level of

resource committed to the issue of the Gender Pay Gap more broadly (for example communications and policy development).

Yours sincerely



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Chief Executive

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