



Department for International Trade

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Angus Brendan MacNeil MP
Chair of the International Trade Committee
International Trade Committee
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25th October 2018

Dear Angus,

As you are already aware, over the past year the Department for International Trade (DIT) has been working to develop a trade remedies framework for the UK to protect domestic industries against injury caused by unfair trading practices. As part of this process, we intend to establish a new non-departmental public body, the Trade Remedies Authority (TRA), which is currently being legislated for by the Trade Bill. The TRA will be a UK-wide body responsible for conducting trade remedies investigations and proposing measures to remove any injury suffered by UK industry caused by dumping, subsidies or unforeseen surges of imports. The TRA's functions are set out in the Taxation (Cross-Border Trade) Act 2018.

The UK is a strong supporter of free trade. But this does not mean trade without rules. Trade remedy measures support free trade by ensuring it is also based on rules, in accordance with the UK's international obligations to the World Trade Organisation and our traditions.

We cannot risk leaving UK industry unprotected against these unfair trading practices. That is why it is in our national interest to ensure the TRA is established and appropriately staffed in case we do not negotiate a deal prior to the UK's departure from the European Union.

I hope all opposition parties in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords will give support to the Trade Bill to ensure that no UK industries, or parts of the UK, are at risk of being left unprotected.

As Chair of the International Trade Committee, where the Department's preparations to establish the TRA have been discussed, I wish to provide you with an update on recent progress we have made in ensuring the TRA has the right leadership in place. I previously wrote to you on 10th May 2018 regarding the recruitment process for the future TRA Chair. I am now pleased to announce that that this process is now complete, and I have made the decision to appoint Sir David Wright to DIT as TRA Chair Designate.

Sir David presents an outstanding profile in international and bilateral trade policy. His distinguished career includes serving as the UK's former ambassador to both the Republic of Korea and Japan. He was the first Chief Executive of British Trade International and, subsequently, UK Trade and Investment. Sir David also brings an impressive non-executive record, having served as Vice-Chairman of Barclays Capital until March 2018. I am confident that Sir David's unique experience in international trade, diplomacy and non-executive roles make him the ideal candidate.

Sir David will initially be appointed to DIT as TRA Chair Designate until the Trade Bill receives Royal Assent and the TRA is legally established, which is, of course, subject to the will of Parliament. Once this has taken place, it is my intention to formally appoint Sir David as TRA Chair. The total length of Sir David's term – across both roles – will be three years.

I can also announce that Claire Bassett has been recruited to DIT as TRA Chief Executive Designate. Claire offers extensive public body leadership experience, having most recently served as Chief Executive of the Electoral Commission. Prior to that, she was Chief Executive of both the Parole Board for England and Wales and the Criminal Cases Review Commission.

Once the TRA has been legally established, the TRA Chair will be responsible for making a final decision on the appointment of a TRA Chief Executive, subject to my approval. This is consistent with the appointment powers set out in the Trade Bill.

I am also pleased to say that the future TRA's wider senior leadership team has also now been recruited to DIT – including its Chief Economist, Chief Operating Officer, General Counsel and Joint Chief Investigators. It is our intention that they will be transferred to the TRA once it has been legally established.

Sir David, Claire and the senior leadership team will join the Department's 'shadow' TRA function in its Reading office premises in Northgate House in the near future. Located in the heart of Reading, Northgate House offers excellent transport links and will enable the TRA to serve the whole of the UK effectively. Reading has one of the highest concentrations of relevant skills in the country and this is in addition to having access to Reading's university and leading businesses. By securing these office premises now, we have ensured that future TRA staff have a location in which to be properly trained in preparation for the UK's exit from the EU and the TRA being legally established through Royal Assent of the Trade Bill.

I hope this provides further assurance that my department is taking the necessary steps to provide a safety net for domestic industries by the time the UK leaves the EU.

I am placing a copy of this letter in the House Libraries.

*yours sincerely,
Liam*

THE RT HON DR LIAM FOX MP
Secretary of State, Department for International Trade
& President of the Board of Trade

