



DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY  
1-19 VICTORIA STREET  
LONDON SW1H 0ET

TELEPHONE (DIRECT LINE) 01-215 5662  
GTN 215  
(SWITCHBOARD) 215 3000

From the  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State  
for Corporate and Consumer Affairs

*N. Fletcher.*

*31/10*

The Rt Hon John Biffen MP  
The Lord Privy Seal and Leader of  
the House of Commons  
Privy Council Office  
Whitehall  
London SW1A 2AT

31 October 1983

*pa*

*John Biffen*

*RT  
31/10*

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC INTEREST GROUPINGS

*will request if required*

Thank you for your letter of 6 October in reply to my letter of 13 September about the interest of the staff of the House of Lords European Communities Scrutiny Committee in obtaining for this Committee the replies to the Department's forthcoming consultative document on the draft Regulation on the European Economic Interest Grouping.

I am also grateful to Willie Whitelaw, Rhodes Boyson and Adam Butler for their views.

Following your agreement, officials here have written to the staff of the House of Lords Scrutiny Committee explaining that the forthcoming consultative document will be accompanied by a covering letter stating that its recipients may be shortly receiving requests from the Lords Committee for their views; the staff of the Lords Scrutiny Committee have also been told that they will be given a list of those to whom the consultative document is being sent. They are also being informed that any future requests for similar co-operation will have to be examined on their merits and, therefore, that they cannot necessarily assume that Departments will be in a position to help again in this way.

As it may be convenient in the future to be able to refer to this letter I attach a copy of it.

I am sending copies of this letter and enclosures to the other recipients of this correspondence.

*Alex Fletcher*

ALEX FLETCHER

COMPANIES LEGISLATION DIVISION

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY  
SANCTUARY BUILDINGS  
20 GREAT SMITH STREET  
LONDON SW1P 3DB

Telephone (Direct dialling) 01-215) 5955  
GTN 215) .....  
(Switchboard) 215 7877



P Rees Esq  
The Clerk  
Sub Committee E  
Select Committee on the European  
Communities,  
House of Lords,  
LONDON SW1A 0PW

24 October 1983

*Dear Rees,*

On 3 August, your colleagues Newman, Higginson and Stoodley saw me in order to discuss the Select Committee's examination of the EC draft Regulation on the European Economic Interest Grouping. At that meeting I explained that the Department would be publishing later this year a further consultative document on the draft Regulation and on the additional national legislation required to supplement it, in order to seek the views of industry, commerce and the professions on these matters. At this meeting, Newman and his colleagues said that it would greatly assist the Committee in its work if it could see copies of the replies sent to the Department in response to the consultative document, for example by writing to those receiving the Department's consultative document asking whether they would be prepared to make available to the Committee their replies.

Although it might be presented as something of an innovation in the relationship between Parliament and Government Departments, we are ready to go along with the Committee's wishes. I should, however, explain that any future requests by a Select Committee for a similar procedure to be adopted in relation to consultation with industry, etc, over other items of Community legislation would have to be considered on their merits and that agreement on this occasion should not be regarded as implying any undertaking as to the future.

I shall be writing shortly to those in industry, commerce and the professions explaining that your Committee will also be seeking their views on the consultative document. I will send you as soon as possible a copy of my letter and of the consultative document, together with the list of people to whom I am writing.

I am sending copies of this letter to Wilson, the Clerk of the House of Commons Select Committee on European legislation.

*Yours*

*David Steel*

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31 OCT 1961

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