



CABINET OFFICE

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From John W Fairclough FEng
Chief Scientific Adviser

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CONFIDENTIAL

Rt Hon Kenneth Clarke QC MP
The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
Minister for Trade
Dept of Trade & Industry
1 Victoria Street
London SW1

18 February 1988

Dear Chancellor,

EUROPEAN COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS AND THE EUROPEAN TRANSONIC WINDTUNNEL (ETW)

at flap
You suggested in your letter of 31 January to the Foreign Secretary that there was a need to take a broader view of European collaborative projects and to try to choose between them well in advance according to where our real interests lie. You asked whether any new arrangements needed to be put in place to make sure that this happened.

This is very much in line with my own thinking as you will have seen from my letter of 2 February. I believe that we need to take decisions on important scientific or technological collaborative ventures in an orderly fashion not only before we commit ourselves to them but also reviewing the costs and benefits of our involvement at each stage. My remit does give me general responsibility for co-ordinating our approach on international S & T matters and I have become increasingly conscious of the need for improvement in this area.

My own view is that there is nothing wrong with the machinery; it is just that we are not using it properly. We have E(ST) and OD and their supporting official committees as well as the Defence Equipment Policy Committee which scrutinises major defence projects including collaborative ones. But perhaps we are not using it effectively and there is too much uncertainty about what decisions need to be taken by whom and when. I should like therefore to propose the following.

First, my officials are already assembling a timetable of forthcoming decisions affecting our international S & T collaboration, covering both the civil and the defence side. These decisions will be taken in an existing ministerial or official forum as appropriate. But the timetable will help ensure that they are planned well in advance. It should be regularly updated and Departments should ensure none of their major projects is omitted from it. Cabinet Office officials can then keep an overall eye on where we stand.

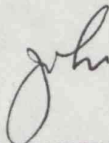
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Secondly, any decision on a collaboration should take account of related projects. It should be standard practice for Departments to include a paragraph on this before a paper goes forward to Ministers. My officials would be ready to help in the drafting of this.

Thirdly, my officials should continue to work with Departments on the principles of managing international projects (along with domestic ones) as I suggested in my earlier letter.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary, the Secretary of State for Defence, Sir Robin Butler as well as to other members of E(ST).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'John', with a stylized, cursive flourish.

JOHN W FAIRCLOUGH

AEROSPACE: Av'br
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