



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

RURAL AFFAIRS, CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Richard Lochhead MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food
and Environment
Scottish Government

c/o Clerk to the Committee
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Tel: (0131) 348 5051

Via email only

e-mail:
racce.committee@scottish.parliament.uk

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Dear Cabinet Secretary,

Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee scrutiny of forthcoming subordinate legislation

I am writing regarding the Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee's forthcoming work schedule and the subordinate legislation it is anticipated will be referred to the Committee ahead of the dissolution of Parliament.

The Committee discussed its work programme for the period between January and March at its meeting on 16 December and is aware there are numerous items of subordinate legislation which will be laid during this time which the Committee will be required to consider. The Committee is concerned that the volume of subordinate legislation anticipated, at a time when the Committee will likely be considering Stage 2 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Bill, will not allow the Committee sufficient time to give these instruments appropriate levels of scrutiny.

More importantly, the proposed volume will not allow stakeholders and members of the public with an interest in the topics covered by this subordinate legislation sufficient opportunity to engage in the democratic process. In the opinion of the Committee, this jeopardises the transparency and accountability which the public have a right to expect from the procedures of the Scottish Parliament.

I am writing on behalf of the Committee to urge the Scottish Government to carefully consider which pieces of the subordinate legislation due to be laid ahead of dissolution are strictly necessary within this timeframe. The Committee also seeks assurances of the quality control processes adhered to in laying subordinate legislation, given recent experiences of errors and the delays these can cause.

The Committee requests confirmation this prioritisation exercise has taken place and details of the screening applying to instruments to ensure they will not result in further delays or additional instruments being required.

I would be grateful if you could respond to this request in writing by 15 January 2015.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Gibson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rob Gibson MSP
Convener

CC Nigel Don MSP, Convener, Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee
 Joe FitzPatrick MSP, Minister for Parliamentary Business