

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 13 September 2017 11:50
To: [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Request for recent ERG sample materials

Hi [Redacted]

Thanks for your quick response. Yes, we would keep any further briefing notes you send us in confidence. I can imagine how busy you must be at the moment so very much appreciate your assistance. I would be grateful if you could send us a sample as soon as you can. Do let me know if you have further questions.

Kind regards

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Head of Policy and Assurance

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From: [Redacted]
Sent: 13 September 2017 10:54
To: [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Request for recent ERG sample materials

Hi,

[Redacted]

[Redacted] But yes in principle I will send you some briefing notes.

Are you able to guarantee, as per last time, that these would not be made public?

[Redacted]

Kind regards

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 12 September 2017 12:18
To: [Redacted]

Subject: Request for recent ERG sample materials

Importance: High

Dear

My (former) colleague was in touch with you last summer regarding IPSA's routine assurance review of materials provided to MPs by 'pooled services'. You kindly provided sample materials produced by the ERG, including briefings and research notes and also answered some questions about the governance, set-up and costs of the organisation. We concluded in our review that the ERG materials reviewed were compliant with the Scheme of MPs' Business Costs and Expenses, in that they were not party-political but were factually based, albeit in support of one particular position on the issue of UK membership in the EU.

As you know, there has been some news coverage of the ERG recently, and we have also received correspondence from some MPs and members of the public who raise questions and concerns about the fact that taxpayers' money is being used to support a single-issue research group. IPSA has been of the view that funding for single-issue research is not problematic, as long as it supports an MP's parliamentary functions; is not party-political; and does not contravene any other parts of the Scheme (e.g. it does not constitute campaigning or election expenses).

However, in order to reassure ourselves that ERG materials continue to be compliant with the rules of IPSA's Scheme, we would appreciate the opportunity to review further materials produced in recent months. In particular, I would be grateful if you could send a sample (similar to what you sent us last year) of materials produced for ERG subscribers since the date of the election (8 June). As this is a time sensitive matter, I'd be grateful if you could send these as soon as possible.

I would just say at the outset that we are not assuming that the materials produced by the ERG recently do fall foul of the Scheme, but given the attention these have attracted we believe it is prudent to seek additional assurance.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

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