

PATENT ASSIGNMENT

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CONVEYING PARTY DATA	
Name	Execution Date
THE CENTRAL SCIENCE LABORATORY (CSL) REPRESENTING THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS	03/23/2009
RECEIVING PARTY DATA	
Name:	THE FOOD & ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH AGENCY (FERA) REPRESENTING THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS
Street Address:	SAND HUTTON
City:	YORK
State/Country:	UNITED KINGDOM
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PROPERTY NUMBERS Total: 1	
Property Type	Number
Application Number:	12282247
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ATTORNEY DOCKET NUMBER:	BJS-2491-95
NAME OF SUBMITTER:	B. J. Sadoff
Total Attachments: 4 source=2491-95-change-of-name#page1.tif source=2491-95-change-of-name#page2.tif source=2491-95-change-of-name#page3.tif source=2491-95-change-of-name#page4.tif	

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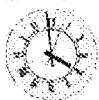
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Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 23 March 2009

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Business Rates

The Minister for Local Government (John Healey): Following the motion "to regret that the Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement) (Local Lists) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2009 (SI 2009/204), laid before the House on 10 February, will not prevent several port companies from becoming insolvent", the Government are placing their response on record.

A number of debates have taken place this year with reference to the occupiers of the properties affected by the ratings review of ports. The Government have listened carefully to the concerns put forward by the affected occupiers who, as a consequence of being separately assessed for rates from 1 April 2005 are in receipt of unexpected and significant backdated rate bills.

In the current economic conditions, the Government have constantly emphasised that they are concerned about the impact of significant and unexpected backdated rates liability on businesses. The ratings system has to be fair and equitable to all, and there is not a legislative solution for waiving tax liability which does not confer a disadvantage among other rate payers who have paid the rates that are legally established and due.

However, we believe, in the current economic circumstances—that there is a general case to assist all businesses liable to receive large, unexpected backdated bills that have to be paid immediately, as is the case with a number of companies, including some port-based businesses across the UK.

Following the Chancellor's announcement in the pre-Budget report, therefore, the Government have put in place an unprecedented scheme to help all businesses, which may include some occupiers of ports, to pay significant and unexpected backdated rates liabilities over a period of eight years.

The Valuation Office Agency have also put in place special fast-track arrangements for ratepayers with backdated bills who want to

question or challenge their assessment following the ports review, and will give priority attention to these cases at all stages.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Food and Environment Research Agency

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Hilary Benn): I am pleased to announce that The Food and Environment Research Agency (FERA) will vest on 1 April 2009 as an executive agency of DEFRA.

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FERA brings together the Central Science Laboratory (CSL), the UK Government Decontamination Service (GDS) the Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate (PHSI), Plant Varieties and Seeds Division (PVS) and Plant Health Division (PHD). It has a starting complement of 900 staff and will have an annual turnover of £72 million.

FERA's purpose is to provide robust evidence, rigorous analysis and professional advice, underpinned by world class research, to help DEFRA, other Government Departments and other stakeholders support and develop a sustainable and secure food chain, a healthy natural environment and protect the global community from deliberate chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) or major accidental hazard material (HazMat) incidents.

As an executive agency of DEFRA, FERA plays an important role in helping to deliver the Department's strategic priorities. These are to:

- Secure a healthy natural environment for us all and deal with environmental risks;
- Promote a sustainable, low-carbon and resource-efficient economy; and
- Ensure a thriving farming sector and a sustainable, healthy and secure food supply.

Provides operational policy and regulation in support of these priorities, particularly in respect of plant and bee health, crop varieties and seeds. In addition, it undertakes and delivers high quality support and input into other regulatory issues relevant to its area of responsibility. FERA has responsibility to support Government in responding to and recovering from emergency situations, by providing relevant capability, scientific evidence, analysis and advice. Including the GDS in FERA enables a wider breadth and coherence of service offering to Government, and will enhance the national emergency response and recovery capability and UK resilience. It will also strengthen the science capability underpinning GDS functions and areas of expertise. FERA also provides research and development, advice and services to other public and private sector organisations on a commercial basis. The agency will have a remit to develop wider market opportunities alongside its work for Government. This will build on the skills that underpin its sustainable future and will maximize the value to the taxpayer of its unique knowledge and facilities.

FERA will work closely with other Government Departments and contribute to their PSAs. For example:

- Climate change (Department for Energy and Climate Change).
- Regional economic performance (Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform).
- International poverty reduction and achieving MDGs (Department for International Development).
- Counter-terrorism (Home Office).
- Safer communities (Home Office).
- Innovation and skills (Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills).
- Health and well-being (Department of Health).
- Food safety, choice and healthy eating—support for the Food Standards Agency (FSA) strategic priorities.
- Environment, sustainability and rural affairs (Welsh Assembly Government).

The agency will continue CSL's established remit in supporting government and industry food security objectives. Through its scientific expertise FERA:

is recognised both nationally and internationally in the areas of food chain safety and quality, and food security. It is part of a national network of laboratories specifically established to

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respond to CBRN incidents, which might include malicious-accidental food contamination, and has national status as the UK National Reference Laboratory for the FSA and Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) for specific chemical analyses in food including dioxins, mycotoxins, trace elements and pesticides;

has a dedicated food safety and quality operation, which provides scientific capacity, capability and advice to underpin the food-related objectives of DEFRA, the FSA, Pesticides Safety Directorate (PSD), VMD and other industry, and international stakeholders; and

has significant international influence with experts on European Food Safety Association (EFSA) panels, and is also heavily involved in European food research programmes. For example the agency is leading a major EU research project called TRACE on the traceability and authenticity of food. (More information at www.trace.eu.org/menu/project/).

FERA will continue to deliver the business functions and services that have been provided by its constituent parts. For example it will provide the following services to the agricultural and horticultural industries:

- Plant clinic services—global pest and disease identification services.

LIAISON—contains information on registered agrochemical products for all UK crops.

ENICA—interactive European network for industrial crops and their applications.

BeeBase—information for beekeepers.

Certification schemes for seeds and propagating material.

Registration and breeders rights schemes for new plant varieties.

Proficiency testing schemes—FERA operates several schemes which provide the food, water, environment and plant health industries with assessments of the technical performance of their analysis laboratories.

Details of all its services are available on FERA's website at: <http://services.csi.gov.uk/fera>

In the short term stakeholders should not be affected by the formation of FERA and will receive the same professional services they currently enjoy. As the new agency develops I expect to see stakeholders benefit from improved services in the following areas:

stakeholders have access to a "one-stop" service in support of sustainable agriculture and food safety;

scope for a more efficient and integrated approach to EU legislation, and therefore simpler, more cost-effective regulation;

co-location of policy and scientific databases, improved risk assessment, more seamless transfer of diagnostic results through integration of databases resulting in more rapid management action, and better, faster disease control at lower cost;

development of service provision in international consultancy, advice and training for the PVS and PHSI elements of the new agency as a result of greater critical mass and collaboration with CSt. where expertise in these markets already exists; and

more cohesive approach to supporting and informing the central Government approach to developing CBRN related policies.

FERA will operate under the net control accounting regime. As an on-vote agency, FERA will be included within the annual report and consolidated accounts for DEFRA. It will have an annual turnover of £72 million. This includes the recently announced new funding for bee health of £4.3 million. FERA will be audited by the Auditor and Comptroller General and will produce its own annual report and accounts.

I have set the Food and Environment Research Agency the following performance targets for 2009-10:

Regulation, Policy and Risk

To develop plant variety and seed, and plant and bee health policies in order to help achieve the Government's strategic priorities. To target activities, which reduce risks to commercial crop production and environment, assist trade facilitation and reduce regulatory burdens in accordance with Hampton principles.

Research and Assurance

To deliver outputs from applied research and monitoring/surveillance to deadline, which meet agreed quality standards and answer questions, and present them in a way that is useful to policy makers and other delivery bodies. To convert research outputs into innovative products and services.

To raise audit, risk management, security and quality standards and expectations. To deliver key outcomes against the 2006 science audit implementation.

Response and Recovery

To influence and deliver emergency response and recovery strategies and practical capability across the public sector, including ongoing assessment of supplier capability and capacity.

Sustainability

To consolidate the implementation of FERA, ensuring that stakeholders are fully informed of progress, and influence over and satisfaction levels for customers raised. To ensure that resources, including site accommodation and collaborative working, are maximised to best potential and meet benefits' realisation and sustainability targets.

To recover the full economic costs of the agency's services from Government Departments, agencies and external customers, ensuring delivery of efficiency targets.

Further details of FERA's role and responsibilities are given in its corporate documents: the Framework Document, the Strategic Direction and Corporate Plan 2009-10 to 2011-12, and the Business Plan 2009-10. Copies of which will be placed in the Libraries of the House and will be published on the agency's website at:

<http://services.csi.gov.uk>

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Iraq (Locally-Employed Staff)

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (David Miliband): In my statements of 9 and 30 October 2007, (*Official Report*, 9 October columns 27-28WS and 30 October columns 30-33 WS), I gave details of the ex gratia assistance to be provided to Iraqi staff working for our armed forces and civilian missions in Iraq. I also said that we may review the eligibility criteria in the light of experience.

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Together with my right hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for Home Affairs (Jacqui Smith), Defence (Mr. John Hutton) and International Development (Mr. Douglas Alexander), I have taken stock of the operation of the scheme to date.

The scheme distinguishes between Iraqi staff employed on or after 8 August 2007 ("serving staff") and staff whose employment terminated on or before 7 August 2007 ("former staff"). Both serving and former staff are entitled to apply for a financial package, or to express an interest in resettlement to the UK.

Eligible serving staff as defined under the scheme are entitled to apply for a financial package or for exceptional leave to enter the UK directly, outside the immigration rules. In total, we have received applications from over 500 serving staff of whom some 400 have been assessed as eligible. Of these some 250 have chosen the financial package and the remainder have chosen resettlement to the UK. To date, 15 principal applicants and 32 dependants.

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have been resettled; a further 71 principal applicants and 126 dependants have been cleared to travel; and applications are being considered from 39 principal applicants and 65 dependants.

Eligible former staff as defined under the scheme are entitled to apply for a financial package or for resettlement to the UK under the Gateway Protection programme, within which up to 600 places have been allocated for staff and their dependants. To date, over 150 former staff and their dependants have been resettled under Gateway; a further 110 former staff and their dependants have been accepted and will travel shortly. The number of new applications is diminishing and we remain on target to meet our commitment to resettle up to 600 eligible former staff and dependants, by the end of March 2010.

Since the introduction of the scheme, we have actively monitored and improved arrangements for processing Gateway cases. Our embassy in the designated third country, which has been reinforced for this purpose with a dedicated staff member, has worked closely with the local authorities and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to develop and refine procedures for facilitating the timely and orderly movement of former staff and dependants from Iraq, and to offer assistance and advice on arrival. In 2008, we changed the system for providing financial support available to those undergoing Gateway screening in order to ensure that they do not suffer financial hardship while in the third country. Rather than a lump sum subsistence payment, each principal applicant receives a subsistence payment, plus 10 per cent. of that sum for each dependant to a limit of five dependants, for each month spent in that country.

We have concluded that the categories of staff able to apply for the assistance under the scheme, and the eligibility criteria set out in my statements of October 2007 remain valid and should therefore be maintained without change. Any set of objective criteria will always lead to instances where individual applicants fall outside their scope. But we continue to believe that the rationale for these criteria remains valid: allowing us to focus assistance on those staff who have had the closest and most sustained association with us, in circumstances which we judge to be uniquely difficult. We have also taken the view in the light of our experience of implementing the scheme that these objective criteria represent the fairest and most practical way of doing this.

Staff who left our employment on or before 7 August 2007 have now had around 16 months to decide whether to apply for the scheme. As a result of this and in view of the declining rate of applications, we consider that the time is right to close the scheme to new applications from former staff. We need to allocate resources effectively in support of the operation of the scheme, particularly as we draw closer to the draw down of UK forces from Iraq, as set out by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister in his statement of 18 December 2008, *Official Report*, columns 1233-5. New applications from former staff for both financial and resettlement benefits under the scheme will cease to be accepted from 1200 Arabian standard time on 19 May 2009. Appeals against decisions will continue to be considered until 30 June 2009. We shall work with our missions in Iraq to ensure that full publicity is given to the closure of this scheme in the local media.

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Employing Departments and the Home Office are continuing to review the future of the elements of the scheme that apply to serving staff, and I shall make a further statement on this at a future date.

During my recent visit to Iraq I was greatly impressed by the continued dedication and commitment demonstrated across the board by our Iraqi staff. We could not have made our contribution to the rebuilding of Iraq their service and, in some cases, sacrifice. I would like to take this opportunity in the House to thank our Iraqi staff for the continued dedicated service they provide to our armed services and civilian missions in Iraq. The scheme for assistance is designed to reflect our enduring debt to them. I am pleased it has proved popular and effective.

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