

Message

From: Mark Cheeseman [mark.cheeseman@cabinetoffice.gov.uk]
on behalf of Mark Cheeseman <mark.cheeseman@cabinetoffice.gov.uk> [mark.cheeseman@cabinetoffice.gov.uk]
Sent: 15/09/2020 2:11:47 PM
To: Name Redacted @beis.gov.uk
BCC: Name Redacted @cabinetoffice.gov.uk
Subject: BEIS SR Bid and Counter Fraud

Hi Name Redacted,

I hope you are well. I wanted to reach out to you as we build into the Spending Review. I am not sure if you are aware, but the Centre of the Counter Fraud Function has been quite intensely supporting BEIS through C-19, both in the Business Grants and the various loans to businesses (most significantly Bounce Back Loans).

As it has been a point of national crisis, we have been happy to step up and support the department. We bid to HMT for resources to do this, and were awarded this. As a result, we have been able to support in risk assessments, data pilots, sourcing intelligence and investigation capacity.

However, this funding runs out at the end of 20/21. From my perspective as the lead for the Government's Counter Fraud Function C-19 has highlighted the limitations of BEIS counter fraud capacity and capability (something that has not been needed so urgently before). In other spaces (HMRC, DWP, DHSC) we have been able to help by supporting the skilled resource in the business - but in BEIS this has proved more challenging as there is no Counter Fraud Function with intelligence, investigation, sanctions, prevention and data capability. You have a small (2FTE) and keen policy team, but they do not have the experience or capacity that would have supported the context we all found ourselves in C-19.

My strong encouragement is for BEIS's SR bid to include a significant uplift in the department's Counter Fraud capability. There is likely to be significant fraud to be picked through retrospectively in some of the BEIS schemes, and any future stimulus to businesses is likely to come through BEIS (in line with the recent local grants scheme). I have discussed this with Name Redacted, the two SROs on the key schemes.

If you would like any support from me or one of my team to review your bid, please do ask as I will prioritise it - there is a lot of risk going through BEIS at the moment and we really want to help. In addition, once the bid is, or is not, funded, I would also be happy to help in the build up of that capability.

Finally, as I am writing, just a reminder that the UKs Anti Corruption Strategy included a commitment from government that all departments would have a senior lead from fraud who was a qualified member of the Counter Fraud Profession. This year the Counter Fraud Profession is developing the training and assessment programme for these leads, but it is I thought it would be helpful to drop a reminder on this, I know it was discussed with the Fraud Policy team at the last SR (so I hope it stayed on the list). My feel would be that this would be at SCS level in BEIS, in line with MoD, DfE and DHSC.

Happy to talk through if helpful.

Mark

			<p>Mark Cheeseman Director, Fraud, Debt and Grants Director, Government Counter Fraud Function Chair of the Counter Fraud Profession Board E: mark.cheeseman@cabinetoffice.gov.uk</p> <p><small>Irrelevant & Sensitive</small></p> <p>Follow us on Twitter @cabinetofficeuk</p>
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Please note, I may send emails early or late to help me work flexibly and balance my work and home commitments. I do not expect others to be replying at those times.