

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

19 August 2026

Paid appointment with the National Centre for Atmospheric Science: Application under the Business Appointment Rules from Professor Paul Monks CB, former Chief Scientific Adviser at the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.

The Civil Service Commission (the Commission) has considered an application for advice under the Business Appointment Rules (the Rules) from **Professor Paul Monks CB**, formerly Chief Scientific Adviser at the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ). The application is for a paid, part-time role as **Interim Executive Director** at the **National Centre for Atmospheric Science (NCAS)**. Further detail on the content of the application is in the Annex. The Commission's advice is required as Professor Monks is a former civil servant at SCS Pay Band 3. His last day of service was 30 September 2025.

The purpose of the Rules is to protect the integrity of the government. They aim to avoid any reasonable concerns that: a civil servant may be influenced in their official duties by the risk of reward; a civil servant may improperly exploit access to information; and an organisation may gain an improper influence through the employment of a civil servant.

The Commission's advice¹ is that the appointment with the NCAS should be made subject to the following conditions:

1. Privileged information – Professor Monks should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of himself or the persons or organisations to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to him from his time in the civil service.
2. Lobbying – For two years from his last day in the civil service, until 30 September 2027, Professor Monks should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government or its arm's length bodies on behalf of the NCAS (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients). He should also not use, directly or indirectly, his contacts in the government and/or civil service to influence policy, secure business/funding or otherwise unfairly advantage the NCAS (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and

¹ See [Advice under the Business Appointment Rules](#) for details applying to all advice issued by the Civil Service Commission.

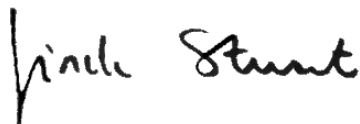
clients).

3. Bids and contracts – For two years from his last day in the civil service, until 30 September 2027, Professor Monks should not provide advice to the NCAS on a bid or contract relating to the UK Government or its arm's length bodies.

The Rules set out that civil servants must abide by the Commission's advice. It is Professor Monks' personal responsibility to manage the propriety of any appointment and to understand any other rules and regulations he may be subject to in parallel with the Commission's advice.

Professor Monks must seek advice if he proposes to extend or otherwise change his role with the organisation. Once this appointment has been publicly announced or taken up, the letter will be published on the Civil Service Commission's website.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gisela Stuart'.

Gisela Stuart

First Civil Service Commissioner

Annex A: The application

1. According to its website, the National Centre for Atmospheric Science (NCAS) is a research centre, supported and primarily funded by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)². NERC operates as a constituent council within UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), an arm's-length body sponsored by the UK government.

Applicant assessment

2. As Interim Executive Director, Professor Monks stated he will provide overall leadership to the NCAS, setting the vision, strategy, and direction for the organisation. His role will involve working with the Management Board to guide the organisation, overseeing scientific strategy and research programmes through the Science Director, and ensuring the delivery of key research themes such as climate, weather, and air pollution. Additionally, he will manage operations and resources through the Operations Director, while translating strategy into practical organisational outcomes. Furthermore, the role entails coordinating a distributed UK research network across universities and facilities, and providing strategic oversight and governance to ensure accountability and performance.
3. Professor Monks confirmed his role will not involve contact with government.
4. Professor Monks was Chief Scientific Adviser to the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), formerly the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, between October 2020 and September 2025. In this role he said he provided independent science and engineering advice for the development and delivery of policy.
5. Professor Monks stated he was not responsible for any regulatory, funding or commercial decisions specific to the NCAS during his last two years in the civil service.

Departmental assessment

6. DESNZ stated that its relationship with UKRI-NERC / NCAS is primarily as a public-sector science and research partner. The department said that NERC-funded science and expertise may inform departmental evidence,

² The Natural Environment Research Council is the UK's primary agency for funding and managing research, training, and knowledge exchange in the environmental sciences. It is a non-departmental public body of the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology.

policy development and wider government understanding of atmospheric science, climate, weather, air pollution and related areas.

7. DESNZ confirmed Professor Monks was not involved in decisions specific to NCAS during his time in post. The department noted that his only official contact with the company was scientific and advisory in nature.
8. DESNZ does not consider Professor Monks to possess sensitive information or any knowledge of unannounced or impending changes in government policy that may provide an unfair advantage to NCAS.
9. DESNZ did not express any concerns with the appointment and recommended the standard conditions.
10. Separately, DESNZ noted that while Professor Monks does not currently anticipate any dealings with government, his activities may be subject to the department's ongoing monitoring of compliance under the Business Appointment Rules and he must notify them if his role changes.

The Commission's analysis

11. *Risk of reward.* DESNZ confirmed that as Chief Scientific Adviser, Professor Monks' contact with the NCAS was limited to scientific engagement, research alignment and the use of scientific evidence to support departmental policy. The department confirmed he was not responsible for regulatory, funding or any other decisions affecting the NCAS. Therefore, the risk that the offer was made as a reward for decisions made during his time in office is low.
12. *Access to information.* As the former Chief Scientific Adviser to DESNZ, Professor Monks had access to a wide range of sensitive information. While this creates a risk regarding privileged insight, over nine months have passed since he left office which significantly reduces the currency of any information he may still hold. Further, the risk of him exploiting this information to gain an unfair advantage is significantly limited by the fact that the NCAS is a public-sector science partner funded via UKRI-NERC. Consequently, the risk related to his access to information is considered limited. Any remaining risk is appropriately mitigated by the privileged information ban as part of the standard conditions.
13. *Improper influence.* Professor Monks stated that his role will not involve contact or dealings with government or lobbying on behalf of the NCAS. Further, his role is focused on internal organisational leadership, meaning he is unlikely to undertake government-facing or lobbying responsibilities. It is also significant to note that the NCAS is an independent research centre

which is supported by the NERC, a non-departmental public body of the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and so already operates within the public sector research framework. The Commission therefore considered that Professor Monks' role represents a continuation of public-interest research governance rather than a transition into commercial lobbying or private enterprise. The risk around the perception of lobbying the government is therefore mitigated by the standard conditions.