

Ministry of Defence

28 October 2026

Application to establish an independent consultancy under the Business Appointment Rules from Dr Rebecca Weston FREng, FInstP, FNucl, MBA, former Director General, Warhead Group at the Ministry of Defence.

Thank you for submitting an application for advice under the Business Appointment Rules (the Rules) to the Civil Service Commission (the Commission) on behalf of **Dr Rebecca Weston, FREng, FInstP, FNucl, MBA**, formerly Director General, Warhead Group at the Ministry of Defence (MOD). The application is to establish an **independent consultancy**. Further detail on the content of the application is in the Annex. The Commission's advice is required as Dr Weston is a former civil servant at SCS Pay Band 3. Her last day of service was 24 October 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 should be made subject to the following conditions:

1. Privileged information – Dr Weston should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of herself or the persons or organisations to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to her from her time in the Civil Service, which extends to any role where she continues to represent the UK government or its arm's length bodies.
2. Lobbying – For two years from her last day in the Civil Service, until 24 October 2027, Dr Weston should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK government or its arm's length bodies on behalf of her independent consultancy (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients). She should also not use, directly or indirectly, her contacts in the government

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

and/or Civil Service to influence policy, secure business/funding or otherwise unfairly advantage her independent consultancy (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients).

3. Bids and contracts – For two years from her last day in the Civil Service, until 24 October 2027, Dr Weston should not provide advice to any company or organisation on behalf of her independent consultancy on a bid or contract relating to the UK government, its arm's length bodies, or NATO Command.
4. Limitation to the role: unknown clients – For two years from her last day in the Civil Service, until 24 October 2027, Dr Weston is prevented from advising on and work regarding any policy or operational matter she had a material role in developing or determining, or where she had a material relationship with the relevant client, during her time as Director General, Warhead Group.
5. Business development – For two years from her last day in the Civil Service, until 24 October 2027, Dr Weston should not become personally involved in lobbying contacts in government and organisations she has developed during her time in the Civil Service for the purpose of securing business for her independent consultancy.
6. Independent consultancy – For two years from her last day in the Civil Service, until 24 October 2027, before accepting any work for her independent consultancy and/or before extending or otherwise changing the nature of her work, Dr Weston should seek advice from the Commission. The Commission will decide whether each piece of work is consistent with the terms of the consultancy and consider any relevant factors under the Rules. This excludes work that falls into the following categories: unpaid roles; non-executive charitable roles; academic roles (such as teaching, research or peer review); journalism and media appearances (excluding corporate or management roles in media organisations); or one-off speaking engagements. In these cases, the other conditions outlined in this letter will still apply.

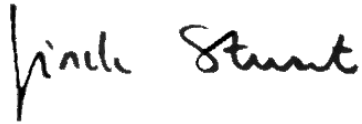
Dr Weston confirmed her understanding of, and adherence to, the conditions that apply to her independent consultancy.

The Rules set out that civil servants must abide by the Commission's advice. It is Dr Weston's personal responsibility to manage the propriety of any appointment and to understand any other rules and regulations she may be subject to, including in relation to ongoing non-civil service roles, in parallel with the Commission's advice.

The Commission's jurisdiction and the conditions set out in this letter relate only to the Rules as they apply to Dr Weston's former role as Director General, Warhead Group. Any conditions which apply in relation to her current Non-Executive roles are to be determined by the departments concerned.

Dr Weston must seek advice before accepting any work for her independent consultancy and/or before extending or otherwise changing the nature of her work. 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, reading "Gisela Stuart". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G'.

Gisela Stuart

First Civil Service Commissioner

Annex A: The application

Applicant assessment

1. As Director General, Warhead Group at the Ministry of Defence (MOD), Dr Weston was accountable for the lifecycle production, safety and performance of the UK's nuclear weapons, overseeing a complex portfolio of major projects and programmes valued at approximately £40 billion over 30 years. In this role, she defined the strategy for the Atomic Weapons Establishment to deliver current and future nuclear warhead systems. Additionally, she led the Warhead Group – comprising approximately 350 civil servants, including those in Nuclear Transport Operations within the Defence Nuclear Organisation – and served as a member of the Defence Nuclear Enterprise Leadership Team.
2. Prior to her role in government, Dr Weston had over twenty years of experience in the civil nuclear sector, including as Chief Operating Officer for the Sellafield nuclear site in Cumbria.
3. Dr Weston stated that she will be setting up her own consulting service operating in the civil nuclear sector and associated regulated industries. She noted that it is likely to provide advice to clients on the structure, development and operation of organisations within a nuclear licenced regime, or the development and deployment of innovative approaches and new technologies in a nuclear context.
4. Dr Weston confirmed that her role would not involve executive authority, commercial representation or lobbying activity. The consultancy does not intend to bid for, negotiate, or advise on contracts connected with any specific policy, regulatory, commercial, or procurement decisions in which she was personally involved during her time in the civil service.
5. Dr Weston stated she had no clients to disclose at this time. Her commissions could range from start-up or small private organisations to larger arm's length bodies, supply chain organisations or management consultancy firms.

Ongoing roles with government

6. Dr Weston confirmed that she continues to represent the government as:
 - a Non-Executive Director (NED) at Great British Energy Nuclear;
 - an independent member of the Nuclear Regulatory Implementation Panel; and
 - a technical adviser to the Strategic Advisory Board of the Nuclear Fuels Programme.

Departmental assessment

7. The MOD noted it had no concerns regarding Dr Weston's ongoing roles in government as the privileged information and lobbying risks are mitigated by the standard conditions.
8. The MOD acknowledged there was a significant overlap between companies involved in civil and defence supply chains in the nuclear industry. However, the available talent pool is narrow due to the academic and intellectual threshold required to work at a senior technical level in the nuclear sector. The MOD assessed that precluding Dr Weston from defence nuclear technical work would be counterproductive as the government may wish to draw on her expertise in the future as a sole trader.
9. The MOD assessed the risk of perception of unfair advantage to potential future clients of Dr Weston's consultancy to be low. This was based on the MOD's knowledge of her previous employment, and the consultancy's focus on civil nuclear and organisational design. The department recommended that this be further considered on a case-by-case basis as prospective clients are identified.
10. The MOD recognised that, while Dr Weston has connections at the highest level of the defence nuclear enterprise, she joined the Civil Service from industry and has spent most of her career outside of government. The department recommended that the risk of improper influence for any future commissions be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
11. The MOD reinforced that Dr Weston should not become involved in defence lobbying or any commercial defence bid writing as part of her consultancy, as this could prejudice ongoing contract awards or commercial negotiations.
12. The MOD recommended the standard conditions, in addition to:
 - the requirement to confirm with the Civil Service Commission for each commission she takes up;
 - a ban on advising on relationships with any company in UK MOD supply chains with which she had any involvement while in office, except where such companies are also in the civil nuclear supply chain;
 - a ban on using government and/or ministerial contacts to influence policy, secure business/funding, or unfairly advantage her consultancy; and
 - a ban on using contacts in businesses over which she exercised influence while in office to win work for her independent consultancy.

The Commission's analysis

13. *Risk of reward.* As Dr Weston is establishing a new independent consultancy and does not yet have any clients. The creation of an overarching entity only means that the risk of reward for decisions or actions taken in office is low.
14. *Access to information.* As Director General, Warhead Group, Dr Weston had access to a range of sensitive information on the UK's current nuclear weapons arsenal, as well as future projects and strategy. The primary risk that Dr Weston's knowledge could provide an unfair advantage to potential clients arises from the significant overlap between the civil and defence nuclear sectors. While the passage of almost a year since her departure generally reduces the currency of such information, this mitigation is significantly weakened by her ongoing access to privileged information and key stakeholders through her roles as a Non-Executive Director at Great British Nuclear and an independent member of the Nuclear Regulatory Implementation Panel. Furthermore, given the national security context of her former post, the strategic insights gained as Director General, Warhead Group retain a high degree of currency despite the time elapsed. The Commission noted that the risk Dr Weston may draw on this sensitive information is mitigated by the standard privileged information ban.
15. *Limitation to the role.* The most acute risk exists where the advice provided by Dr Weston's consultancy directly overlaps with the specific policy or operational matters she oversaw in office. Additionally, Dr Weston's ongoing NED and panel roles provide real-time visibility on commercial and regulatory frameworks, maintaining currency of sensitive information. Therefore, the Commission agreed with the MOD's recommendation to apply a targeted restriction to address the potential overlap between the civil and military nuclear sectors. Under this limitation, Dr Weston is prevented from advising any future clients of her independent consultancy on work regarding any policy or operational matter that she had a material role in developing or determining, or where she had a relationship with the relevant client during her time as Director General, Warhead Group at the MOD. The Commission considers that this restriction, combined with the privileged information condition, effectively mitigates the risks associated with her access to sensitive information.
16. *Improper influence.* As a senior official, there is a risk that Dr Weston's government contacts may present an unfair advantage to potential clients of her consultancy work. Given the lobbying ban that applies to all former senior civil servants, Dr Weston cannot have contact with ministers or officials that could reasonably be seen as seeking to influence government. The risks

relating to lobbying and/or involvement in government bids and contracts are mitigated by the standard conditions.

17. *Independent consultancy.* This advice provides Dr Weston consent only to set up a consultancy, subject to a number of conditions. Due to the overlap between the civil and defence nuclear sectors, Dr Weston should seek advice from the Commission before accepting any work for her independent consultancy and/or before extending or otherwise changing the nature of her work. However, the Commission's view is that this requirement should exclude any work that falls into the following categories: unpaid roles; non-executive charitable roles; academic roles (such as teaching, research or peer review); journalism and media appearances (excluding corporate or management roles in media organisations); or one-off speaking engagements. In these cases, the other conditions outlined in this letter will still apply.
18. *Business development restriction.* While Dr Weston possesses a wide network developed prior to her civil service role, she also holds contacts developed solely as a result of her Director General, Warhead Group role. The Commission considers that there is a risk that she could be perceived to provide an unfair advantage to her independent consultancy were she to draw on those specific contacts to secure new business. The Commission therefore agreed that Dr Weston be prevented from lobbying contacts acquired solely from her time in office for the purpose of securing business for her independent consultancy.
19. *The Commission's jurisdiction.* The Commission's jurisdiction exists solely in relation to the Rules, and the risks associated with Dr Weston's former role as Director General, Warhead Group. While the Commission notes the potential for conflicts of interest arising from the ongoing NED roles held by Dr Weston, these roles are governed by separate departmental conduct frameworks and fall outside the remit of the Commission. The decision to impose the conditions in this letter is intended to mitigate risks specifically related to her time in the Civil Service. Any risks which may arise from other roles are to be managed by the relevant government bodies concerned.