

Scottish Seafood Exports Taskforce – second meeting update

Press release

Second meeting brings together key industry figures with ministerial and official representatives of the UK Government to help cut EU red tape.



EU red tape that has been creating delays to seafood industry exports from the UK is being cut, the Scottish Seafood Exports Taskforce heard today (Friday 26 February).

The second meeting brought together key industry figures with ministerial and official representatives of the UK Government. The Scottish Government was represented both by officials and Fergus Ewing, Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy.

UK Fisheries Minister Victoria Prentis joined the virtual event, hosted by the Scotland Office, and told the taskforce that streamlining of paperwork required by the EU had taken place as a result of industry feedback.

UK Fisheries Minister, Victoria Prentis said:

We are ensuring exports keep flowing and are fixing issues such as the same information being entered multiple times.

We have held 11 workshops to discuss issues and progress so far, and we will continue to work closely with the industry and the Scottish Government to address any outstanding concerns.

Chairing the taskforce meeting, UK Government Minister for Scotland David Duguid said:

We have instigated specialist work to map the seafood process from catch to customer. The idea is to identify and then eliminate choke

points that have arisen across the supply chains.

He said discussions are ongoing to ensure the industry gets the best out of support schemes offered by both the UK Government and the Scottish Government.

Today's focus was on efficiency and costs, and it was helpful to hear from Tavish Scott, CEO of the Scottish Salmon Producers' Organisation, who has agreed to head a working sub-group that will drill down into specific areas where the industry tells us it is facing problems.

Further information:

- The Scottish Seafood Exports Taskforce, hosted by the Scotland Office, emerged from ongoing consultation with the seafood and aquaculture industry. While background work takes place daily, the taskforce convenes formally fortnightly.
- The taskforce's remit is to be an overarching body delivering action on medium to long-term issues for the industry, and to complement Defra's weekly seafood working groups with the aim of increasing confidence in the seafood and aquaculture supply chains.
- The taskforce has a core membership drawn from the catching, processing, exporting and aquaculture sections of industry and can invite industry experts and specialists to join on an ad hoc basis.
- The UK Government has last week announced that the £23m fisheries support fund is being expanded to offer support to a wider range of businesses – including the catching and shellfish sectors.

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