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August 2022

Dame Meg Hillier MP [*by email*]
Chair of the Committee of Public Accounts

From Tamara Finkelstein CB
Permanent Secretary

Dear Meg,

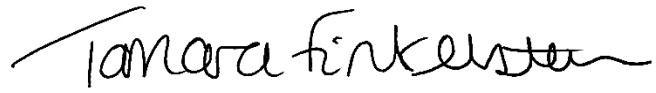
Re: Defra's management of infrastructure to protect against animal health outbreaks

At our PAC meeting on 13 July, we committed to write to the Committee "about how regular current risk failures are at the site and the regularity of the failures" which we understood to mean the frequency of Health and Safety incidents arising on the Weybridge site.

As we reported to the Committee, we have enhanced the Defra 'client' capability to manage the facility since 2015, which means we are able to mitigate the majority of risks to prevent them becoming incidents. In terms of the most serious incidents, the built environment at Weybridge has had no RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) reportable incidents or Health and Safety Executive interventions in the past twelve months.

There were two RIDDOR reports during 2021. One relating to reactive maintenance of a door closure and an injury to a contractor caused by a lifting operation they were carrying out. In addition to these incidents there have been periodic infrastructure related events, such as sporadic power cuts and equipment failures, but overall, we have a well-developed Facilities Management contract. This has ensured that all incidents have been rectified quickly by teams with the right professional skills. Our mitigation plans focus on protecting the sensitive science activities on site.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tamara Finkelstein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the word "Finkelstein".

TAMARA FINKELSTEIN CB
Permanent Secretary